

Genuine Repentance

Salvation is a process and can be seen as three phases:

1. **Salvation from the penalty of sin.** This initial step of salvation is when you come to faith in Jesus Christ who paid the judicial price of your sins.
2. **Salvation from the power of sin.** As your faith grows and you become more like Jesus Christ, this process is called sanctification. To "sanctify" means to "be holy", "consecrate", or "to separate and devote to God".
3. **Salvation from the presence of sin.** "Glorification" is this future aspect of salvation. It is a process that takes place over a period of time and is completed when the Believer receives his resurrected body and become a true image of God. It is the final step of sanctification and conclusion of the whole salvation process in which a Believer is made completely pure and enables complete access into the presence of God (Rev 21:27).

Repentance can be confusing to understand, because it is involved with the first two phases of salvation. What constitutes genuine repentance?

1. Use a Bible dictionary and look up "repentance." For example: a) search "studylight holman." b) select "Holman Bible Dictionary," c) locate "repentance."

2. Carefully observe these two passages (Judas Iscariot - Matt 27:1-5 and Paul to the Ephesian church - Acts 20:18-21). Who is the object of repentance? Who is offended? Who received the repentance?

Now when morning came, all the chief priests and the elders of the people conferred together against Jesus to put Him to death; and they bound Him and led Him away, and handed Him over to Pilate the governor.

Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." But they said, "What is that to us? You shall see to it yourself!" And he threw the pieces of silver into the temple sanctuary and left; and he went away and hanged himself. (Matt 27:1-5, NASB)

And when they came to him, he said to them, "You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, how I was with you the whole time, serving the Lord with all humility and with tears and trials which came upon me through the plots of the Jews; how I did not shrink from declaring to you anything that was beneficial, and teaching you publicly and from house to house, solemnly testifying to both Jews and Greeks of repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. (Acts 20:18-21, NASB)

3. As you read parts of Peter's sermon on the Day of Pentecost, what behavior do you observe of the men of Israel that demonstrates their repentance?

"Men of Israel, listen to these words: Jesus the Nazarene, a Man attested to you by God with miracles and wonders and signs which God performed through Him in your midst, just as you yourselves know - this Man, delivered over by the predetermined plan and foreknowledge of God, you nailed to a cross by the hands of godless men and put Him to death. But God raised Him from the dead, putting an end to the agony of death, since it was impossible for Him to be held in its power. (Acts 2:22-24, NASB)

"Brothers, I may confidently say to you regarding the patriarch David that he both died and was buried, and his tomb is with us to this day. So because he was a prophet and knew that God had sworn to him with an oath to seat one of his descendants on his throne, he looked ahead and spoke of the resurrection of the Christ, that He was neither abandoned to Hades, nor did His flesh suffer decay. It is this Jesus whom God raised up, a fact to which we are all witnesses. Therefore, since He has been exalted at the right hand of God, and has received the promise of the Holy Spirit from the Father, He has poured out this which you both see and hear. For it was not David who ascended into heaven, but he himself says:

'THE LORD SAID TO MY LORD,
"SIT AT MY RIGHT HAND,
UNTIL I MAKE YOUR ENEMIES A FOOTSTOOL FOR YOUR FEET.'"

Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified."

Now when they heard this, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what are we to do?" (Acts 2:29-37, NASB)

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Teacher Notes

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Review with the student the three phases of salvation. This provides a framework they can use in the development of their system of theology.

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A sample definition for repentance is "a feeling of regret, a changing of one's mind, and / or turning from sin to God."

Take some time to discuss these concepts behind the statement of "I'm sorry" and the various levels of meaning one may intend and / or manipulate with.

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Ask the student: what do you observe of Judas Iscariot?

With his betrayal, Judas offended Jesus; however, his repentance was directed towards Jewish religious authorities!

Ask the student: what do you observe of the apostle Paul's statement to the Ephesians?

Paul always speaks of sin as an offense to God, and he instructs the Ephesians to direct their repentance to God.

Ask the student: which of the two examples of repentance is genuine? Discuss why and why not.

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Ask the student: as you observe the men of Israel, what did they "change their mind" on? Why did they change their mind?

They were convicted by the eyewitness evidence of the apostles and their culpability. Jesus was not a blasphemer and charlatan "king of the Jews." Jesus Christ is the resurrected Lord Messiah Son of God! The men of Israel changed their mind on what was true.

Ask the student: what did the repentance by the men of Israel entail?