

REPENTANCE

The English word for repentance is rooted in Latin and not in Hebrew or Greek. Therefore the English dictionary defined repentance as “an exercise of penitence.” As a result of this English definition, the idea of grief and sorrow over sin became associated with repentance rather than the Greek word (metanoia) which means, “to change the mind.”

As a result, the idea of grief and sorrow regarding personal sin rather than a change of mind became associated with the gospel of salvation.

The unbeliever cannot exercise penitence to cleanse or forgive himself of sin whether Adamic or personal that is why Jesus Christ came into the world – “It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, among whom I am foremost of all.” (1 Tim.1:15)

“And the blood of Jesus His Son cleanse us from all sin.” (1 John 1:7b)

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9)

It is noteworthy that the Greek word (metanoia) is rarely used outside the synoptic gospel. Paul used it only 5 times and John never used it (Rom.2:4; 2 Cor.7:9-10; 12:21; 2 Tim.2:25).

This lesson will study FIVE aspects of the doctrine of Repentance for apologetic (theology defense of Christian doctrine).

“Only conduct yourselves in a manner worthy of the gospel of Christ; so that whether I come and see you or remain absent, I may hear of you that you are standing firm in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel.” (Phil.1:27)

1. “There is in the OT no special term for repentance or to repent.” (TD of NT, pg.980)

However, the concept of repentance is found in the OT ritual law and prophetic word of God.

The Hebrew word (tsom) [fasting] is used for the concept of rituals of the Law like fasting (1Sam.7:6; Dan.9:3, 20).

The Hebrew word (shub) [return, attitude change] is used for the concept of prophetic word (Amos 4:6, 8, 9-11; 2 Cor.3:15-16; Joel 2:12-13).

There is a third Hebrew word (nicham) [emotions, feelings, remorse] is used for the Greek equivalent (metamelomai) (Num.23:19). It is remorse that comes at the bitter end of a sinful and foolish way (Matt.27:3).

2. The NT concept of repentance is found in the Greek word (metanoia)

[to perceive afterward; to adopt another view]. “It is the correction of mistaken view intellectually valued judgment and commonly a momentary realization rather than the entry of a state.” (TD of NT, pg.980)

The transitive use emphasizes that the subject changes its mind about the object. In the parable of the Lost Sheep, it is used this way – “there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner (subject) who repents (metanoie / p.a.ptc) [verb] (the object is the message of grace salvation in Jesus Christ) than over 99 righteous persons who need no repentance.” (Luke 15:7)

Principle of repentance: Repentance is necessary in the subject when a change of mind is necessary regarding the object.

2. With the prophetic preaching of John the Baptist regarding the Coming of Christ, repentance was no longer associated with the Law and prophet but with the gospel of Christ.

John preached a baptism of repentance or change of mind or view towards the offering of forgiveness of sins (Mark 1:4; John 1:25-34).

John baptism of repentance was a sign of the interruption in Jewish Age by the Coming of Christ (Acts 19:4). Jesus preached the same message (Matt.4:17; Mark 1:14-15; Luke 24:46-47)

“And that repentance for forgiveness of sins should be **proclaimed in His name** to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem.” (Luke 24:47) “Proclaimed in His name” means that Jesus Christ is the universal sin-bearer.

“And there is salvation in no one else; for there is no other name under heaven that has been given among men, by which we must be saved.” (Acts 4:12)

3. Repentance is not a separate mandatory step in the mechanics of grace salvation. The error is due to the Latin interruption of it as “an exercise of penitence.”

“A serious error occurs when it is added to faith as an essential condition of salvation.” (Chafer)

“Metanoia does not emphasize emotion nor stand beside faith as an added essential for salvation.” (Expository Jct. Of bible Words, pg.522)

Repentance meaning to feel sorry for sins or to give up sinning as a prerequisite to believing in order to be saved is just not biblical.

The occasion of missionary evangelism may require repentance as a necessary step towards believing when a change of mind is necessary for turning away from other objects of salvation or mechanics of salvation other than grace through faith in the gospel of Jesus Christ (1 Cor.15:3-4; Rom.1:16; Eph.2:8-9).

4. Repentance in the Christian Way of Life (CWL) involves a change of mind compatible with word of God.

A change of mind that comes from realizing that the previously held view was doctrinally wrong (Luke 17:3-4; 2 Cor.12:21; Acts 8:21-22; Heb.6:1-6).

“With gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth, and they come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.” (2 Tim.2:25-26)