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You come become a Christian right now as you read this, by personally placing your faith and trust in Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior; believing that he is God's only begotten Son, that he died on the cross for you and that he was raised from the dead and is now seated in heaven at the right hand of God the Father. *“Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved..” Acts 16:31a* And when you do trust Christ, and Christ alone, as your Lord and Savior, then go to God the Father in heaven in prayer and tell him so. Tell him that you have believed on his Son, thank him for his Son, and thank him for forgiving your sins and saving you! *“That if you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord”, and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved.” Romans 10:9,10* *“For, “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” Romans 10:13* *“Therefore, being justified by faith (declared righteous), we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.” Romans 5:1*

November 2017 Christian Repentance

“For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” 2 Corinthians 7:10

Intro:

The message of repentance has been often preached down throughout the years and usually directed towards unbelievers. But what does it mean to repent? Does it mean to feel sorry for our sins? Is it only for unbelievers, or is it directed toward the people of God also? Is it something that occurs after we feel sorry for our sins? And what does “godly sorrow” mean anyway?

There seems to be a major lack of understanding in the churches today concerning repentance where the emphasis is on getting believers to feel sorry over their sins, accompanying tears are even better, and then through the tears the individual will have a change of heart and repent before the Lord. So we will look at who needs to repent, and what repentance really is.

The English word **repent** comes from the Latin word for pain. It does not come from, nor is it related to the Greek word for repent, which is *metanoia*. The **Latin** has it as re + poeniteo, which means to feel pain again. The **Spanish** is arrepentirse; the **Italian** is pentire; and the **French** word is repentir. So the translators took the word *metanoia* and used a Latin word to define it, but they didn't use the Greek language's definition to define it! The early translators of the KJV and most versions today have all been influenced by the doctrines of Rome.

When you follow their idea you do end up with things such as: being pained in one's heart, regretting your actions, feeling guilt in the soul, feeling sorry over what you have done and all the other things that deal with the emotions. While the Greek word *metanoia* has nothing to do with those ideas whatsoever; it simply denotes having a change of mind and nothing to do with one's feelings.

So who needs to repent? If one is not a believer in Christ they need to repent. 1) They need to change their minds about having a need for a Savior, and to have their sins forgiven. 2) They need to realize that they have sinned against an holy God and are deserving of Hell and the Lake of Fire where they will end up if they do not believe on Christ. 3) They need to turn to Christ for forgiveness in salvation. 4) And they need to believe on Christ as their Savior.

If one is a believer in Christ and is caught up living in the world system, or not sitting under the teaching of the Word of God in some church that teaches Bible Doctrine, then they need to repent. 1) They need a change of attitude about their lifestyles and the non-doctrinal churches they attend. 2) They need to turn their souls back to doctrinal teaching and living in the true spiritual dynamic. 3) And they need to start living by faith again, trusting the Lord and claiming the promises of God. If Bible Doctrine isn't the most important thing to you, you need to repent. You need to have a change of mind, turn your soul back to the Word, and start living by faith.

In context Paul is writing his 2nd letter to the Corinthians. In the 1st letter he reprimanded them harshly for their lack of proper conduct, their carnality, their cosmos thinking and their lack of priority of not putting Christ first in their life, instead of gratifying their lusts and chasing after the materialism found in the world system, the things that the unsaved chase after.

But after he did this he was hit hard by the prospect that he might have come down too hard on them!. He was concerned that he was too harsh and might have damaged their souls and discouraged them from going on in the Christian life. A concept that many Pastors are familiar with. We know how easy it is to get side-tracked by the material pursuits of this life, the lusts of the flesh and hanging around the wrong kind of people. And we sometimes use rebukes to prevent that, but sometimes we feel that we might have overdone it and hurt them, hence Paul's concern.

But good news for Paul his rebuke of them had created in them a “godly sorrow” that caused them to get back on the right track again with a righteous fervor for the things of the Lord! And they were able to avoid, or get out of, the snare of the devil. 2 Timothy 2:25,26, “*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance (change of mind) to the (epignosis) acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*”

Definition:

People have a misunderstanding on this matter of repentance and conversion. And usually distort the meaning of repentance into “feeling sorry” for their sins, which is not the case. To help us in our understanding of what is meant by repentance is seeing, first of all, that there are three Greek words that are generally used in the matter of repentance: **1) strepho**, *epistrepho* and *apostrepho* of the *strepho* word group, **2) metanoeo**, and **3) metamelomai**.

Some OT passages dealing with the matter of repentance and conversion: “*If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, **turn from their evil**, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*” Jeremiah 18:8 “*Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. **Return unto me**, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?” Malachi 3:7 “*They will not frame their doings **to turn unto their God**: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD.*” Hosea 5:4 “*And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he stiffened his neck, and **hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD** God of Israel.*” 2 Chronicles 36:13 “*Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and **turn yourselves from your idols**; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.*” Ezekiel 14:6*

Conversion comes from the *strepho* word group: *strepho*, *epistrepho*, *apostrepho* and *anastrepho*, from which we get the ideas of to turn to, to turn from, to return to and conversion, which is derived from the Latin word conversio – a turning around. It originally came from the idea of **turning the soul to the brightest star in the sky**. The poets and philosophers took the word *strepho* to denote **the turning of the soul to God**, and that idea has been its definition ever since.

The word began with the idea of turning and later on it developed into the idea of turning to, or turning toward something. When it was used, the idea of what or whom one was turning to was the important

thing, not what one was turning from. And in the Bible it is always God and his Son, Jesus Christ, as the one we are turning our souls to that is of paramount importance, not what we are turning from.

Now if one was caught up in something that was holding them back from turning to God, then *apostrepho* would be used. Of course the important thing is that it is God they are turning to, but in varying situations they are told **to turn from** this or that in their turning to God. Such as in the case of idolatry, “*Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord GOD; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations.*” Ezekiel 14:6

This **conversion**, or turning the soul to God, is described as a **turning from evil**. “*If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.*” Jeremiah 18:8.

Conversion can refer to a **returning to the Lord**, “*Even from the days of your fathers ye are gone away from mine ordinances, and have not kept them. Return unto me, and I will return unto you, saith the LORD of hosts. But ye said, Wherein shall we return?*” Malachi 3:7.

Man can be **so permeated by the evil** he is involved in that he **resists** such turning to God, “*They will not frame their doings to turn unto their God: for the spirit of whoredoms is in the midst of them, and they have not known the LORD.*” Hosea 5:4.

Man can become so arrogant and bitter that he will not turn to the Lord, or return to the Lord. “*And he also rebelled against king Nebuchadnezzar, who had made him swear by God: but he **stiffened his neck**, and **hardened his heart from turning unto the LORD** God of Israel.*” 2 Chronicles 36:13

It is God who gives the impulse to conversion, that is, it is God who first moves man toward repentance and conversion. “*I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: **turn thou me, and I shall be turned**; for thou art the LORD my God.*” Jeremiah 31:18 “**Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned**; renew our days as of old.” Lamentations 5:21 “*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; **if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth**;*” 2 Timothy 2:25 It is God who first initiates in grace toward man, but man can resist and reject this gracious act of kindness toward him. Man still does have free will.

So *strepho* in itself meant to turn to God. And whenever the hearer heard the message they knew exactly what was expected of them. The same thing applied with *epistrepho*, especially for believers to turn to God, or to return to God and start drawing near to God. And for us it referred to start living in the spiritual life once again. When *apostrepho* was used it meant the same thing as *epistrepho*, except emphasis was laid on the things that they were involved in that were holding them back, so they needed to turn from these things so they could turn to God. It was all a part of the dynamic of turning.

Metanoeo is another word used in the matter of **repentance**, but the concept behind its meaning is not the turning of the soul, but **a changing of one's thinking and attitude!** *Strepho* and *metanoeo* were frequently used with each other and often as synonymous terms, but there was a difference. *Strepho* would be the all encompassing term concerning repentance, while *metanoeo* would be the term used that looked at but one aspect of it.

Obviously one could not turn to God, or return to him as the case may be, and we're looking at this from the standpoint of Christians repenting, unless there has been a complete and total change of mind about the believer's involvement in the world system, his flesh nature activity, the things of the devil and his attitude concerning learning Bible Doctrine in a local church.

If the unbeliever is in view there first must be a change of mental attitude about Jesus Christ, who he is, what he's done for us and where the unbeliever stands as a sinner under condemnation, that he's on his way to Hell and that he must come to Christ in faith to be saved. Once he has that change of mental attitude, which is what repentance is, then he will turn to Christ and come to him to be saved. While the believer must turn back to the Word of God.

Now when most people hear the word **repent**, they immediately think that means they are to feel sorry for their sins! But that's not what the Greek word *metanoeo* means. *Metanoeo* meant to change the mind, not feel sorry about something. When the Bible was translated into English, the translators chose the English word *repent*, which had its origin from the Middle English word *repenten* from around 1250–1300, which is found in the Old French *repentir* from *re + pentir* - to be contrite, which goes back to the Latin *rēpent* - stem of *rēpēns*, the present participle of rēpere - to crawl, to creep, which resulted in the following present day ideas of what people mistakenly think repentance is all about: to feel remorse for; to be contrite about; show penitence for, to feel sorry, to feel regret, self-reproach, to be contrite for past conduct; regret or be conscience-stricken about a past action, attitude, etc..

Now that's what the English word *repent* means, but that's not what the Greek word *metanoeo*, which is the word used in the Bible, means! *Metanoeo* simply meant to change the mind! Now if one wanted to denote such ideas as feeling sorry for what you have done, feeling regret over past actions, (and we all have had some of those), to feel guilty, or to have remorse and sorrow, and even to connote acts of penance, then there is a Greek word that addresses those ideas and it's *metamelomai*!

But here's where we have to make an important distinction. It does not follow that if one has had a change of mental attitude, that they will necessarily regret their actions! Repentance, *metanoeo*, does not always end up in feeling sorry over something. And it does not follow that just because one regrets what they have done that they have had a change of mental attitude! Repentance does not always mean there is regret and regret does not mean that there has been repentance, as was the case with Judas.

Here we get into the psychological makeup of different people, when we talk about the idea of regret versus repentance. Some people's repentance will be accompanied by tears, sorrow and regret. While other people's repentance will not be accompanied by any of them! Yet they both have the same thing in common; they have had a change of mental attitude toward God, his Son and his Word. People are different and how they react emotionally to certain things differs from person to person.

In many Christian circles today the whole emphasis is placed on feeling sorry for one's sins in this matter of repentance, (another carry over from the mother goddess cult), which really gets into the idea of regret. **But regretting your actions, even when accompanied by tears, does not mean that you have had a change of mind!** See Esau and Judas as examples of that.

We want to emphasize an important concept in a believer having a change of mind and that is **this change of mind will want to know the truth!** They will now want to know the truth, serve the truth, and pursue after the truth their entire lives. Truth will be paramount in their lives! Not a religious

denomination, not after some particular school of theology – but the truth.

Another concept found in having true repentance, that is, a true change of mind, is that **it will result in the individual having an *epignosis* knowledge of God's Word.** *Epignosis* knowledge comes from the believer in Christ metabolizing the teaching of God's Word by faith. “*In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;*” 2 Timothy 2:25 “*Opponents must be gently instructed, in the hope that God will grant them repentance leading them to a knowledge of the truth.*” 2 Timothy 2:25 NIV

When an **unbeliever repents** and believes on Christ as his Savior, a changing of the mind, turning to Christ and believing on him, then that new believer will be brought to a local church by the Holy Spirit where he can sit under the teaching of the Word of God and start metabolizing it by faith. His change of mind has resulted in him getting *epignosis* doctrine.

When a **believer in Christ** has got away from the Word, drifted off course in his life, gone back out into the world, got wrapped up in carnal living, or simply got involved in some church group that doesn't teach the Word of God, and I mean teach, where its format isn't entertainment, programs, etc., but teaching Bible doctrine, and he or she has a change of mental attitude, (true repentance), that believer will end up under a church ministry that does teach the Word resulting in *epignosis* for them.

H. Paul's letter caused them sorrow. v.8

“*For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.*” 2 Corinthians 7:8 - 'οτι ει και ελυπησα 'υμας εν τη επιστολη ου μεταμελομαι ει και μετεμελομην βλεπω γαρ 'οτι 'η επιστολη εκεινη ει και προς 'ωραν ελυπησεν 'υμας.

1. “*For though I made you sorry with a letter;*” - *hoti ei kai elupesha humas en te epistole.* The word **sorry** here is the orist active indicative of *lupeo* and Paul is saying that he did. *Lupeo* meant to cause pain in the mind, to grieve, or be distressed in the soul. Some translations have this as sorrow, others as being sorry, while **lupeo** simply denoted some kind of mental, or emotional pain.

2. “*I do not repent,*” - *ou metamelomai.* The word here in the passage for **repent** is the present passive indicative of *metamelomai*, which actually means to **regret!** To **regret** is a feeling of sadness over something that has been done or a missed opportunity. It's a feeling where you wish you hadn't done something, or could take back an action.

Paul had given them quite a “dressing down”, afterward he wondered if he had been too harsh, so he began to **regret** his actions. But after that he found out that his words had had a positive result, he stopped regretting it. We could also translate the idea of *lupe* here with the following, “For though I caused you **emotional distress** with a letter”. I do not **repent** is *metamelomai*, which means to regret. In the present passive indicative it's saying, “I am not regretting it”.

There are three words in this passage that sometimes are thought of synonymously, but actually have 3 different meanings describing a separate activity in the soul: *lupeo*, *metamelomai* and *metanoia*.

1) **Lupeo** is the word for grief, but it also means to be sad, or to cause pain in the soul, or being convicted in the soul, or distress in the soul, or, as we say today, emotional distress without being too specific of what kind of emotional distress one is feeling.

2) **Metamelomai** does not mean to repent, but to feel remorse for one's actions, to be sorry for something one has done, to regret one's actions, doesn't mean that one has had a change of heart, but only that he regrets what he has done. As in the case of Judas who sold the Lord out for 30 pieces of silver. Matthew 27:3, "Then Judas, which had betrayed him, when he saw that he was condemned, **repented** himself, and brought again the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders,"

He felt sorry for what he had done; he regretted his actions, but there was no change of heart. A lot of people have felt sorry over what they have done, but unless there's a change of heart it's meaningless! Men have raped, killed, murdered, stolen, lied, deceived, cheated on their wives and every other form of OSN activity and the next day feel great remorse, but it's all meaningless if they have not had a change of heart.

3) **Metanoia** is where we get down to something that really has substance and significance. This is the word usually translated as "repentance", but it does not connote the ideas of feeling guilty, sorrow, remorse or regret. What it speaks of is defined in its compound meaning: *meta* – to change, and *noia* – the mind. It speaks of having a complete change of mind, or heart, as we say today.

Once can have a change of mind without feeling, guilty, sorry, remorseful, or regretting one's actions! Once can also have regret over their actions and still not have a change of mind. These things need to be understood in the Christian's mind because churches today are full of people trying to get other people to feel sorry for what they have done! Changed hearts are what is needed, not a bunch of people wallowing in guilt!

3. "Though I did repent:" - *ei kai metemelomen*. The word for **repent** here, (*regret*), is the imperfect passive indicative of *metamelomai*. Now the imperfect tense describes an activity that was going on in the past, but came to an end. Paul had been regretting the letter he sent to them thinking it was too harsh, but he stopped regretting it because of the dynamic change it produced in their souls and lives!

This lets us look into the heart of the communicators of God's Word. God's men love the people that God gives them to minister to; they want to see them grow, prosper, and more than anything to go on in the Word and do the will of the Father. We also know how strong the pull is of the world system and how strong the OSN is in our souls. We don't want to hurt them, or make their lives miserable, and we certainly don't want to see them pull away and go on in a different direction. But God has sent us to give his people the truth no matter how harsh it can be at times and regardless of their reaction to it.

4. "For I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season" - *blepo gar hoti he epistole ekeine ei kai pros horan elupesen humas*. We need to understand that Paul wrote his letter under the filling of the Holy Spirit, so what he said was spot on; it was something that God wanted his people to hear.

God is totally objective when it comes to these matters, but sometime we communicators can become quite subjective when dealing with people we love. God is righteous and he wants his people to walk in righteousness, and when we don't, then sometimes verbal rebukes and hurt feelings surface on the part

of the intended audience. It's not that God purposely wants to hurt us; it's that he's trying to get us to turn around and start living the way he wants us to!

Repentance is such a wonderful thing; it's like a beautiful brand new day of spring. It brings the believer closer to the Lord; it changes old harmful ways; it gives the believer a new lease of life and zeal for the Lord; it restores old loves and friendships that one has lost; and it results in the believer living a life that is constructive for himself, those around him and society in general, instead of living a life that has destructive results.

I. Sorrowed unto repentance. v.9

“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing.” 2 Corinthians 7:9 - νυν χαιρω ουχ 'οτι ελυπηθητε αλλ' 'οτι ελυπηθητε εις μετανοιαν ελυπηθητε γαρ κατα θεον 'ινα εν μηδενι ζημιωθητε εξ' 'ημων. “Now I am rejoicing, not because you were grieved, (or emotionally distressed), but because your grief resulted in a total change of mind: for you were grieved according to the standard of God and were not harmed by us”.

Repentance entails a 100% change of the mental attitude towards the Word of God and all other things that pertain to Christ, as well as, a 100% change against the world system and all the other things of the world and that includes living in the flesh nature and the things of the devil. This passage reveals the things that come about as the result of repentance.

1. *“Now I rejoice,” - nun chairo.* *Chairo* is the present active indicative of to **rejoice** and it does not denote human happiness, as according to the flesh nature, but to the spiritual phenomenon of inner joy as the result of the ministry of the Holy Spirit operating inside of us. “Now I am rejoicing”.

Paul had been regretting his letter to them because he felt it might have been too harsh, but after he found out that it had produced an entirely different soul dynamic in these believers he was **now**, *nun*, rejoicing. As the Apostle John wrote, 3 John 1:4, *“I have no greater joy than to hear that my children walk in truth.”*

It's such a pity that so many Christians refuse to believe, or listen to, the many Pastor-Teachers out there when they tell them that Bible Doctrine is the only way to go. Instead they chase after the things of the world, or the lusts of the flesh, come under demonic influence, or associate with non-doctrinal people. If they could set aside their arrogance and rebellion, their self-will and stubbornness and follow the way of Christ and submit themselves to the teachings of God's Word.

2. *“Not that ye were made sorry” - ouch hoti elupethete.*

The word **sorry** is the aorist passive indicative of *lupeo*, which was the word for **grief**, but it also meant to be sad, or to cause pain in the soul, or be convicted in the soul, or distress in the soul, or, as we say today, emotional distress without being too specific of what kind of emotional distress one is feeling.

3. *“But that ye sorrowed to repentance:” - all' hoti elupethete eis metanoian.* Here the word **sorrowed** is the aorist passive indicative of *lupeo*, which is a culminative aorist telling us that their inner grief,

pain, sorrow, or emotional distress of the soul, even being convicted in the soul culminated in a change of the mental attitude.

The preposition eis is used here with *metanoian* telling us that their inner conviction, pain, or emotional distress resulted in them having a change of attitude! Here we have inner grief working out the proper way and that is to have a change of attitude about how they're living their lives, toward Bible Doctrine and doing the Father's will.

The **grief according to God** doesn't keep dragging us down into misery, guilt, self-condemnation and the like, but has an end goal in mind and that is bring about a profound and total change of mind! "Return to me", God says; "come out from among them", he says; "be ye holy", he says; "seek his face", he says; "love not the world, neither the things in the world", he says. These things and more are descriptive of believers who need to repent and what they will be like after they repent!

God's OT people became like this where they wanted to be like the world, but here's what God said. Ezekiel 20:32, "You say, "We want to be **like the nations, like the peoples of the world, who serve wood and stone.**" **But what you have in mind will never happen.**" God took us out of the world and saved us; he took us out of a world ruled by the devil, so if his people think they want to be like the world, they've got another think coming! James 4:4, "Ye adulterers and adulteresses, know ye not that the friendship of the world is enmity with God? whosoever therefore will be a friend of the world is the enemy of God."

4. "For ye were made sorry after a godly manner;" - *lupethete kata theon*. For you were grieved according to God, or according to the standard of God. The inner distress of soul that these believers were experiencing was according to the standard of God where he has an end goal in mind for them. He doesn't want this to be a lifetime of misery, but one that results in a change of attitude in believer's souls where they are no longer following after the ways of the world system, nor are they seeking to gratify the lusts of the flesh, nor are they living in their self righteous hypocrisy, but are giving themselves over to living the Christian life of love and peace in the filling of the Holy Spirit.

5. "That ye might receive damage by us in nothing." - *hina en medeni zemiothete ex' 'hemon*. The word **damage** is the orist passive subjunctive of *zēmioō*, which meant to be damaged or harmed. Of course what is in view here is their souls. There is no way that Paul, or any other doctrinal communicator of God, that wants to harm the souls of God's people - just the opposite!

Pastor's are very sensitive to hurting believer's souls; the last thing we want to do is scar them, hurt them, or send them over the edge into despair. But the grief according to God doesn't do that, in fact, it's just the opposite it accomplishes inner pain, yes, but pain that results in repentance. And it is all based upon the clear, accurate and even forceful teaching of God's Word.

J. Repentance brings deliverance. v.10

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death." 2 Corinthians 7:10 - 'η γαρ κατα θεον λυπη μετανοιαν εις σωτηριαν αμεταμελητον κατεργαζεται 'η δε του κοσμου λυπη θανατον κατεργαζεται.

1. “*For godly sorrow worketh repentance*” - *he gar kata theon lupe metanoian ... katergazetai*. Godly sorrow, or the grief according to God is the result of God working in the heart and life of the individual to bring him or her around to repentance.

The word **worketh** is the present middle indicative of *katergazomai*, which looked at the operation of something that accomplished something. So we can translate it as the grief according to God brings about repentance, or accomplishes repentance in the individual's soul.

2. “*To salvation*” - *eis soterion*. As we have seen, the preposition *eis* has the following ideas in it: 1) direction, 2) goal, 3) movement, 4) arrival, 5) and results. *Kata* denoted that something was done in conformity to what God's purpose for grief is, which is to bring about a change of mind, and *eis* denotes the ultimate results of having a change of mind and that is deliverance from something.

The word *soterios* should not be strictly applied only to salvation, for it means to be saved or delivered from something, usually something bad, harmful, or destructive. It often is used to denote being delivered from carnality, involvement in the world system, the sin unto death, the things of Satan, doing the will of Satan as one of his prisoners, etc.. 2 Timothy 2:26, “*And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.*”

When believers leave off living the faith rest life in the filling of the Holy Spirit and get away from Bible Doctrine, then they lose the protection the spiritual life has for their souls. Once that happens their souls are exposed to the ravages of the indwelling sin nature and the attacks of demons; the results of which will be destructive to their souls plunging them into much misery. Repentance, the change of the mind toward the Word of God, will deliver them from the ravages of reversionism.

December 2017 Christian Repentance

3. “*Not to be repented of:*” - *ametamelētos*. The word is the same as *metamelomai* which meant to have regret, or to feel sorry about something, but with the *a* – negative prefix attached to it, it means to not feel sorry about something, or to have no regret over it. When one is caught up in the world system, or under the destructive control of some element of the sin nature, or in reversionism outside the life of the spiritual life dynamic and you are delivered from that, then you can be sure there is no regret when you get out of it. And there is no regret over the things and people you left behind either!

There is the analogy of the straying sheep who wandered away from its master and got caught up in the briars and brambles of the thickets. It calls out for its master, the shepherd then goes over and takes his crook and proceeds to pull him out leaving quite a bit of his wool behind. The wool refers to our production in this life, and when we are caught up in the world system and the Lord takes us out, we often will leave quite a bit of our money behind. You can be sure the sheep doesn't want to go back into the thicket and every believer taken out of reversionism doesn't want go back to it either!

4. “*But the sorrow of the world worketh death*” - *he de tou kosmou lupe thanaton katergazetai*.

There is the world system and the things of the world; and there is a love for the world system and the desire to have the things the world has to offer. When a believer sets his heart on having these things and being a part of the world system, when he has become entrenched in the system where his heart, his dreams, thoughts and aspirations are centered around the world system sets the stage for grief.

Grief, as we know, is a separation from, or loss of a love object. When the believer realizes that he will never have the things of the world like so many other people have, or if he has some of them and loses them, then grief sets in because he is still attached to the world. Grief is the emotional pain of what we call de-attachment. Believers can become attached to the things of the world, but when they are de-attached from them, then grief enters in, usually also accompanied by anger.

Grief over the world system shows that the believer is “worldly”. And death here is a synonymous term for reversionism. As it says in Ephesians 5:14, “*Wherefore he saith, Awake thou that sleepest, and arise from the dead, and Christ shall give thee light.*” The Christian in reversionism is one who is living in the flesh nature, gratifying their lusts and is totally focused on the world system to see what he or she can get from it. Believers who live like that are living outside of the spiritual life dynamic. So for them to repent, it's like arising from the dead!

K. The benefits of repentance. v.11

“*For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.*” 2 Corinthians 7:11 - *ιδου γαρ αυτο τουτο το κατα θεον λυπηθηναι 'υμας ποσην κατειργασατο 'υμιν σπουδην αλλα απολογιαν αλλα αγανακτησιν αλλα φοβον αλλα επιποθησιν αλλα ζηλον αλλ εκδικησιν εν παντι συνεστησατε εαυτους 'αγνους ειναι εν τω πραγματι.*

1. “See what this godly sorrow has produced in you” – *idou gar auto touto ta kata theon lupethenai posen kateirgasato*. To **see** is the aoist middle imperative of *eidon*; **sorrow** is the aoist passive infinitive of *lupeo*; and to **produce** is the aoist middle indicative of *katergazomai*.

Paul is commanding them to see using the verb horao, in that, he wants them to think about all the positive benefits that repentance has brought about for them. The aoist imperative tell us that he wants them to do this **now**, and the middle voice tells us they will be **benefited** for doing it. Think about our lives before we were saved and now look at them. Think about our lives and the condition of our souls before we got on doctrine and now look at them. Do you want to go back? No!

Horao meant to observe something with a discerning eye, that is, to use thought in the matter. It is to look at what has happened and let that sink in. Before repentance we were wrapped up in the **world system of Satan**, but now we are absorbed into the doctrinal system of God. The **Doctrinal System of God** entails attending a local church, or are a part of a local church ministry, under the doctrinal teaching of a grace oriented Pastor-Teacher, living in the dynamic of the new man that God created in us empowered by the filling of the Holy Spirit.

If a believer departs from the doctrinal system of God by: 1) being negative to doctrine, or having an emotional reaction to some doctrines that are taught; 2) refuses to assemble under face to face teaching; 3) having rebelliousness, resentment, or refusal to submit to the Pastor-Teacher's authority; 4) refuses to live in the new nature by putting off the old nature through confession of sin to God; 5) refuses to submit to the filling of the Holy Spirit; 6) careless about, or refuses to apply BD to their life, then that believer will eventually end up in reversionism.

So we want to look at the two systems that are in operation here on earth. There is the doctrinal system of God, then there is everything outside of it referred to as the world system of Satan. The word **world** is *kosmos* and it denotes an orderly arrangement of things. The word **system** is defines as a regularly interacting or interdependent group of items forming a unified whole comprising a method of procedure for one's life.

We translate the word *cosmos* as the world system because it is an interlocking concept of things that are designed to keep the people on earth under the control of Satan. The world system is his way of controlling the planet, which he took over when Adam sinned against God. Luke 4:6, “*And the devil said unto him, All this power will I give thee, and the glory of them: for that is delivered (paradidomi – handed over, or transfer of power), unto me; and to whomsoever I will I give it.*”

The doctrinal system of God is based upon: the Word of God; faith in it and faith in God; the filling of the Holy Spirit; attendance or identification with a local church that teaches God's Word; a life of integrity; and a life of obedience to God. The world system of Satan is based upon: lusts, sin, carnality, pride, arrogance, money, materialism, etc., etc.. It is comprised of 3 major concepts: 1) religion, 2) economics, 3) government. It is anti-God, anti-Christ, anti-faith, anti-grace and anti-Bible Doctrine.

When believers are caught up in one or more areas of sinning, then they are to **confess** their sins to God. 1 John 1:9, “*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*” But if we are living our lives outside of the doctrinal system of God and are living in the world system of Satan, then we need to **repent!**

Satan's system is based upon: human good, human sin, human viewpoint, Satanic viewpoint, no local churches that are doctrinal, no spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher, (the guardians of the doctrinal system of God), no spiritual gifts rather men and women operating in the areas of their own strengths and abilities, no new nature operation, no worship of *Yahweh*, (Satan wants it for himself) and no grace, rather it is based upon man's works where man gets the glory not God.

His system has peoples, nations and governments; it has the means of educating, rather indoctrinating, which does not include the local church; it has its centers of religion that are not based upon the truth of God's Word; it utilizes deception, lies, half-truths, legalism and self-glorification; it has a political and economic structure. It has its goals, means, pursuits, desires, drives, ambitions to occupy men's time.

Many are the Christians whose hearts are in the world system. They may attend some type of a church and have some form of religious ritual they adhere to throughout the day, but they do not live by the dynamic found in the doctrinal system of God. These believers need to come to their senses, realize where they are, see how far they have fallen and get back into the Word of God. We call this having a change of mental attitude, or **repentance**.

Carnality is where the believer has momentary lapses into the flesh nature, or a pattern of living in the flesh nature. It is in the flesh that the resident sin nature in the body is in control and the believer will go into various forms of legalism or lasciviousness. They will be under the control of the lusts of the flesh nature, (over 28 of them), or the emotions of the flesh nature, (7 of them). These believers will need to confess their sins to God and start focusing once again on BD and the faith rest drill.

Reversionism is where the believer, who by now is totally under the control of his/her sin nature, and has rejected the entire doctrinal system of God. Their pride may have lifted them up to the place where their self righteousness is paramount. In their legalism they are right in their own eyes and the things they are doing they are doing for God. Other believers may go to the opposite end and start living in various forms of lasciviousness. What they need to do is have a change of mental attitude toward Bible Doctrine and the spiritual life God has given them, turn their souls once again to God and his Word and start living by faith once again.

Repentance is a change of mental attitude and a turning back to the Doctrinal System of God. **System** being a group of units so combined as to form a whole comprising a method of procedure for one's life. **Doctrinal** because it is based upon the teaching of the Word of God. And **God** because he is the One who created it and gave it to us as a gift for us to live by in his grace, so as to satisfy his justice. In repentance there is also the two ideas of conversion and faith. **Conversion** is a turning of the soul back to God and his Word, which also says that we must turn away from that which we are presently occupied with, and **faith** is the idea of faith in God and his Word.

It is made up of the following units: 1) Bible Doctrine, 2) the local church, 3) Pastor-Teacher, 4) Spiritual gifts ministering to the body of Christ, 5) living in the new nature, 6) putting off the old nature, 7) the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, 8) confessing sin biblically, 9) thinking DVP, 10) prayer, 11) fellowshiping with other believers, 12) worshipping God in spirit and truth, 13) walking by faith, 14) application of BD to one's life, 15) living one's life by the standard of grace, 16) doing the will of the Father, 17) personal sacrifice of one's own goals, 18) undeserved suffering, 19) spiritual renewal, 20) meditation on God's Word, 21) separation from people who do not walk with God.

2. “*What carefulness it wrought in you*” - *posen humin spouden*. *Spouden* had the following ideas in it: earnestness, zeal, diligence, hasten to do a thing, to exert oneself, to put oneself to do something for someone, to stop putting yourself out any longer for our own lusts and pleasures, but now to do things for Christ and his Word.

Many Christians seem to go in cycles. They started “on fire” for the Lord, but then after awhile start to cool off. They hire a new Pastor, or bring in some Evangelist, or traveling preacher, who gets people built back up, then they want to get involved in the ministry, give money, help out in some way, then they start to cool off.

But when believers have a repentant change of mental attitude toward the doctrinal system of God, they will be wanting all the doctrine they can get and do what they have to do so they can be fed the Word. They often will even move to another town where doctrine is being taught and will avail themselves of that doctrinal Pastor's teaching every opportunity they have. *Spouden* denotes that change in mental attitude toward Christ and the things of the Lord that repentance accomplishes.

3. “*What clearing of yourselves,*” - *alla apologian*. *Apologia* is a verbal defense of something from which we get the word apologetics. It's to stand up for what's right, for truth, for doctrine, for grace, for the things of the Lord, for righteousness, etc.. Instead of going along with the evil in our society, you stand up for what's right by opening your mouth and speaking doctrinal truth.

1 Peter 3:15, “*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear:*” is the Christian giving an answer, verbally defending himself of why he has the sure hope of eternal life. Not to grab every passer by in the street, but an answer to the one who asks you the reason for your hope.

Apologia is to stand up and defend the different aspects of the doctrinal system of God. We take our stand on grace versus works, not only in the area of salvation, but in how God blesses us in grace after we're saved; we take our stand for faith versus works; we take our stand on Bible Doctrine versus all the religious programs and entertainment concepts going on in churches today. We stand for the local church, the Pastor-Teacher, spiritual gifts ministering to the body of Christ, living in the new nature, putting off the old nature, the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, confessing sin biblically, thinking DVP, prayer, fellowshiping with other believers, worshiping God in spirit and truth, walking by faith, application of BD to one's life, living one's life by the standard of grace, doing the will of the Father, personal sacrifice of one's own goals, undeserved suffering, spiritual renewal, meditation on God's Word, separation from people who do not walk with God.

4. “*Yea, what indignation,*” - *alla aganaktessin*. *Aganaktessin* had the idea of being irritated over something and came to be known as indignation. It's an anger aroused over something that is base, distasteful, or evil. It is an anger that proceeds from personal integrity. It's similar to the idea of God's wrath, which is his anger that is aroused over sin. For us, it's anger aroused over evil.

Where at one time, while the believer was in reversionism, they were loving, or at least accepting the evil going on around them in their sinful societies. Whatever the laws were, whatever the sinful conduct the people in society were doing, they accepted and did nothing about them, nor even spoke up against them, but all that changed after they repented.

Psalms 97:10, “Ye that love the LORD, **hate evil**: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked.” Proverbs 8:13, “The fear of the LORD is to **hate evil**: pride, and arrogancy, and the evil way, and the froward mouth, do I hate.” Amos 5:15, “**Hate evil**, love good; maintain justice in the courts. Perhaps the Lord God Almighty will have mercy on the remnant of Joseph.” Romans 12:9, “Love must be sincere. **Hate what is evil**; cling to what is good.”

Again we go back to the two systems on earth today; there is the doctrinal system of God and there is the cosmos system of Satan. Satan's system is based upon lies, deception, covetousness, greed, corruption, materialism, lusts, emotions, religion, pride, boasting, self-glorification, the rejection of Bible Doctrine, the rejection of faith and the rejection of grace. While God's system is just the opposite. After repenting the believer's soul is now indignant to those things he left behind in the world.

5. “Yea, *what fear*,” - *alla phobon*. There is a good and bad sense to the word **fear**. In the bad sense it speaks of being afraid of something getting to all the various ideas found in the fear complex. But in the good sense there is the idea of having a healthy respect for something, thus causing the individual to change his ways or correct his actions.

Here **fear** is used in a good sense meaning to have a respect for God and his ways. God loves us and has saved us and we are his children, but he still is righteous and just and will deal with sin, whether it is found in our lives, or the unsaved out there. The fear of God knows that and has a healthy respect for the ways of God; consequently one's fear of God motivates one to live righteously.

The unsaved and wicked have no fear of the Lord, and neither do Christians living in the world system and carnality. The tyrant, Nimrod, had no fear of the Lord, but he wanted man to fear him. This is the pattern of the tyrants of the world. That's what Abraham said about Abimelech and his country. Genesis 20:11, “And Abraham said, Because I thought, Surely the fear of God is not in this place; and they will slay me for my wife's sake.”

Psalms 111:10, “The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of wisdom; all who follow his precepts have good understanding. To him belongs eternal praise.” Proverbs 1:7, “The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of knowledge, but **fools** despise wisdom and instruction.” Proverbs 9:10, “The **fear of the Lord** is the beginning of wisdom, and knowledge of the Holy One is understanding.”

The humble believer, the doctrinal believer, understands that God is righteous, he is perfectly holy and he is just. And as such his righteous nature is displeased with sinful conduct and so his justice demands that he punishes it! And so, not because he is terrified of God, but that he has a healthy respect for God's ways, he adjusts his soul and life to conform to the divine standard. The fool and the wicked care not for the ways of God, nor do they respect them, so they continue on in their wickedness and folly.

6. “Yea, *what vehement desire*,” - *alla epipthesen*. One of the two Greek words for **desire** that we are most familiar with is *epithumia*, which denotes an intense desire for something and usually is a bad desire that the Word translates as lusts. It also has a connection with inner hostility. But the word *epipthesis* is used in a good sense and it denotes an intense longing for something or someone.

It was used of: 1) the Corinthians longing to see the Apostle Paul. 2 Corinthians 7:7, “And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you, when he told us your **earnest desire**, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me; so that I rejoiced the more.”

2) Paul's longing to see the Romans. Romans 1:11, "For I **long** to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;" 3) The Christian's longing for the new body. 2 Corinthians 5:2, "For in this we groan, **earnestly desiring** to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven;" 4) The longing of Paul for the Philippians. Philippians 1:8, "For God is my record, how greatly I **long** after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ." 5) Epaphroditus' desire to see them. Philippians 2:26, "For he **longed** after you all, and was full of heaviness, because that ye had heard that he had been sick." 6) The Thessalonians longed to see Paul. 1 Thessalonians 3:6, "But now when Timothy came from you unto us, and brought us good tidings of your faith and charity, and that ye have good remembrance of us always, **desiring greatly** to see us, as we also to see you." 7) Paul longed to see Timothy. 2 Timothy 1:4, "**Greatly desiring** to see thee, being mindful of thy tears, that I may be filled with joy;" 8) And the Christian's longing for doctrine. 1 Peter 2:2, "As newborn babes, **desire** the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

The word is intensive and shows one is tender-hearted and has a deep longing to be with someone. Reversionism hardens the hearts resulting in a believer not being able to have that level of tender-heartedness, but when a believer repents one of the things you will see is a tender love for the brotherhood to fellowship with others around Christ and his Word.

7. "Yea, what zeal," - *alla zelon*. **Zelos** is to seek or desire something eagerly; it's to be very interested in something to the point where one pours himself into it, that is, he seeks after it with his mind, heart, body, soul, time and finances. Christian repentance brings about a renewed interest in the things of the Lord with the above mentioned criteria.

After a Christian has repented they're interested in going to church once again to hear the Word of the Lord; they line up with the authority structure of a Pastor; they start living by faith again, praying, fellowshiping with other believers, wanting to be filled with the Holy Spirit and doing the will of God. You'll see them helping around the church, giving money in grace and doing whatever they can do to further the things of the Lord. All that in addition they will put behind them all the things they were caught up in the world with and their pre-repentance lifestyle.

8. "Yea, what revenge!" - *all' ekdikēsin*. The word **revenge** here is *ekdikēsis* and it denotes that which proceeds from – ek, justice – dike. **Justice** is that which is right; the things that line up with justice. When we have *ekdike* it refers to bringing about justice, or establishing that which is right and fair. To avenge someone, or to seek revenge really come from this word and it refers to correcting injustice.

The problem is that we, which are believers in Christ, are not to seek revenge or justice ourselves, but to put matters into the Father's supreme court in heaven. Romans 12:19, "Dearly beloved, **avenge not yourselves**, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, **Vengeance is mine**; I will repay, saith the Lord." There is nothing wrong with vengeance for it is justice in action; the thing is we can never bring it about according to the standard that true justice requires, so we are to hand it over to the Lord and he will do it and do it correctly and perfectly.

After believers have repented you will see a profound change in them where they will want to see justice done; they will be champions of what's right! They have gotten back into the doctrinal system of God, which proceeds out of his justice, and will have a renewed interest in the things that are right and the desire to further them.

M. The effect this has on the communicators of God's Word.

2 Corinthians 7:13, “Therefore we were **comforted** in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all.” - δια τουτο παρακεκλημεθα επι τη παρακλησει 'υμων περισσοτερος δε μαλλον εχαρημεν επι τη χαρα τιτου 'οτι αναπεπαυται το πνευμα αυτου απο παντων 'υμων.

Because of this, or, therefore, we have been encouraged. To **encourage** here is the perfect passive indicative of *parakaleo*. The passive voice tells us that this action took place outside of the Apostles by something other people have done. And the perfect tense tells us that that was a progression in all this that came to completion with existing results.

This gets into the hearts of the Apostles, Pastors and other communicators of God's Word. Pastors are generally underpaid, overworked, taken for granted, maligned, slandered, criticized and blamed for every problem there is while they do a lonely thankless job that is probably the most difficult thing in the world to do that often leaves them in discouragement.

Although there are many hirelings out there who do it for the money, power and glory, these men do it because they love Christ and his Word! So when believers turn around for the Lord and become on fire for the things of God once again they are greatly encouraged! As the Apostle John wrote in 3 John 1:4, “I have **no greater joy** than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.”

We are the shepherds of Christ's sheep; we love him and we love his sheep and the only thing we live for is to see his sheep live for him! And when they go off whoring out into the world system and start living their lives in the lusts of the flesh, it greatly saddens and discourages us. Our lives consist of, as his servants: Christ, his Word and his sheep!

So when his sheep go off wandering around in the brambles of the World system away from the spiritual life dynamic of the Lord, we become bothered, worried, even upset, so we sometimes thump them over the head with words to get them to turn around. We teach, preach, rebuke, chew out, plead, exhort, encourage, counsel and almost beg for them to turn around. When they don't they are chalked up as a casualty of the Angelic Conflict and we put them in the hands of the Lord. But when and if they do turn around we are greatly encouraged by it.

When a PT has one of these “knuckleheads” in his ministry 2 Timothy 2:24-26 tells us how to handle them. “And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth; And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.”

We must not be argumentative with them for there is no point in doing so for they think they are in the right, even though they are wrong. We must be polite and courteous with them, even if they aren't, dealing with them like you would “special needs” children. Have the ability to teach. Patient with them. And having a spirit of meekness understanding that we are what we are in God's kingdom based solely on the grace of God.

Now Paul tells Timothy there is also to be the mental attitude of hope, optative mood, that God will grant them the mental attitude of repentance so they can get back into BD and the faith rest dynamic and that they can escape from the trap of the devil who has taken them captive to do his will.

So who needs to repent? Obviously unbelievers in that they need to have a change of mental attitude of who they are before God – sinners, and that they need to be forgiven through faith in Christ. They need to turn their souls toward Christ in faith and at the same time, turn their souls away from the world and everything in it. Then there needs to be the matter of faith, and for them, it is faith in Christ. Faith alone in Christ alone.

For the believer in Christ repentance is needed if if doctrine, the teaching of the Word of God, isn't the most important thing to you in life, they need to repent. If doctrine is something that you merely fit into your life when you have time, then you need to repent. If you are involved in community affairs, the things of the world, in pursuing after your own interests, or chasing after your own lusts, or going after money, materialism, your career, houses, cars, boats, etc., then you need to repent.

If there is anything, or anyone, that is preventing or hindering you from your intake and application of the Word of God to your life, then repentance is necessary. If doctrine isn't the number one thing in your life, then you need to repent. If your attendance in the local church under the teaching of the Word of God is deteriorating, then you need to repent. If you have become bored with, or disinterested in doctrine, then you need to repent.

If you are under constant discipline, due to your lifestyle and/or apathy toward the Word, you need to repent. If you are friends of the world, or your friends are of the world, you need to repent. If you have not made a clear cut choice to separate yourself from the world and the people of the world; choosing Christ and all things pertaining to him instead, then you need to repent.

If you do not have a love for the truth and a hatred for what's wrong, you need to repent. If Christ, his Word, the local church, Bible Doctrine, truth, grace, righteousness, faith and doing God's will isn't your passion in life, then you need repentance. If you would rather be someplace else than being in the House of God talking in his Word, then you need to repent.

Pastor Mike