

Escaping The Snare Of The Devil

“And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” 2 Timothy 2:26

Intro:

This passage is directed toward believers in Jesus Christ, who through either their own negative volition in rejecting Bible Doctrine, or through their own carelessness allowed themselves to drift away from it, have now been taken captive by Satan and are doing his will in their lives.

Paul outlines the problem in his first letter to Timothy and it dealt with those believers who went after money in their lives and how it ended up for them. *“For the love of money is the root of all evil: which while some coveted after, they have erred from the faith, and pierced themselves through with many sorrows.” 1 Timothy 6:10* In this letter he deals with the problem of those, who had defied the authority of the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher, and the end result of that put them under Satan’s hold. But he also deals with the remedy for them escaping this snare of the devil!

X. Some needed spiritual qualities of the Pastor-Teacher. v.24

“And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,” 2 Timothy 2:24 - δουλον δε κυριου ου δει μαχεσθαι αλλ ‘ηπιον ειναι προς παντας διδακτικον ανεξικακον

The **first thing** that Paul does is remind Timothy that he is a servant of Jesus Christ, and as such, he is to reflect the nature and character of the Lord in his dealing with people. The **next thing** he needs to remember is that the people he is ministering to **belong to Jesus Christ!** These are people that Christ loves and died for, who have been taken captive by the devil, and the goal is to get them free from the grasp of Satan over them!

He then uses the emphatic no, ou, combined with the word, dei, something one must do, something one has to do, both of which tells us that the Pastor absolutely **must not argue with them**. Sometimes it’s hard to do this because of both our natures, ours and those we are ministering to, but we absolutely are not allowed to get into an argument with them.

The word for **strive** is the present middle infinite of *machomai*. *Machomai* was not about a simple disagreement, or difference of opinion, but was a war of words, actually a battle of words. Sometimes it’s rendered quarrels.

What we have here are **two opposing viewpoints**. On the one side we have the believer, who has rejected the truth of doctrinal teaching, or some particular doctrine, and on the other side we have the Pastor-Teacher, who stands on the doctrinal position. The two opinions could not be further apart! And no amount of arguing is going to bridge the gap. And remember also, this believer has been taken captive by the devil, so everything that comes out of their mouth is going to reflect the devil’s opinion! And as such, there is nothing we can do, humanly speaking, that is going to win them over to the Biblical side. The solution lies in them having a change of mental attitude, not arguing with them.

“But be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient,” – *all’epion einai pros pantas didaskitikon anexikakon* Now he begins this with the conjunction of contrast, *alla*, which is used to contrast the idea of instead of arguing with these negative believers, who have been taken captive to do the will of Satan, with how God wants us to deal with them, which is **to deal with them with gentleness and patience**.

The word for **gentle** is *epios*. Now there is a word for **meekness**, *prautes*, which actually is directed toward God's dealings with us, in that we accept his dealings with us as being wise, fair, loving, etc., and we do so without murmurings, arguments, resistance, or resentment. But *epios* deals with one’s demeanor when dealing with people. It gets into the idea of the way a person behaves towards others. Arthur Way translates it as being **courteous**, and that’s a good one, while the translators also use the word **kind**. The Greek writers used this word to describe a nurse with trying children, or teachers dealing with stubbornly disobedient children, who refuse ordinary methods of treatment.

The preposition pros is used here to denote our personal dealings with, not just these types, but to all people, positive and negative alike, even if they are in opposition to sound doctrine. No blowing our stacks, no flying off the handle, but dealing with them like a patient mother with trying children. And even if they act shamefully toward us, we are still to be courteous toward them.

Obviously this level of grace is not found in the flesh, but is an extra grace given to the Pastor-Teacher, (as he is filled with the Holy Spirit), so he can deal with difficult people as the Lord would and as the Lord wants him to do! Even when their conduct does not deserve it, he is still to have the demeanor and the dealing with them, of a patient nurse, mother, or teacher.

Able to teach is *didaktikon* and it meant to be skillful in teaching, which tells us that the Pastor-Teacher's ministry in the local church is to be one of teaching the Word of God! (I wonder if that's why we find it in his spiritual gift description?). But to be skilled at teaching, one first needs to be properly trained in learning how to exegete the Word, trained in the orthodox doctrines of the Word and then to be active in studying and teaching of the Word.

The word for **patient** is *anexikakon* and it meant to bear evil treatment from others without resentment. Sad to say, this goes with the territory of being a Pastor in a local church, being treated despicably by those you minister to out of love and grace.

The word *anexikakon* was a composite of three words: ana – up, echo – to hold, and kakos – evil. The word for **evil**, *kakos*, refers to that which is evil, or bad, in nature, but it also includes the idea of the effect it has on others. That which is being done to the Pastor is not only evil in nature, or wrong as we would say, but it's also destructive in the effect it has on the Pastor and on his family!

Some translations have translated *anexikakon* as patient, others as not resentful, which is jumping ahead to a conclusion, for it meant to forebear evil treatment. The word **patience** using *makrothumia* takes us into another world, for patience is needed when dealing with people in the ministry in a lot of areas and for many reasons. Why don't they attend class more regularly? Why don't they get their acts together? *Makrothumia* patience meant to not get angry when dealing with people.

But this word goes beyond the ordinary use of patience when dealing with people, for their evil is being directed at you the Pastor! They want to hurt you! They are directing their evil, their hate, and their insolence toward you in a destructive way seeking to hurt, or destroy, you, your family and/or your ministry! But we're to bear up under it and move on in faith with the Word.

Y. Opposition to the Pastor-Teacher. v.25

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;” 2 Timothy 2:25 - εν πραοτητι παιδευοντα τους αντιδιατιθεμενους μηποτε δω αυτοις ‘ο θεος μετανοιαν εις επιγνωσιν αληθειας

In meekness is *en prauteti* and it refers not to one’s outer behavior, but rather towards his mental attitude, his inward disposition. Some words emphasize our behavior, other words our dealings with people, but this word speaks of that which one cannot see for it reveals our frame of mind, our disposition toward God. **It speaks of the soul that is in submission to God’s rule over him. It accepts God’s dealings with you and it accepts God’s provisions for you! Pride turns away from what God provides for us in grace, while meekness humbly and willingly accepts his provisions!**

Toward God, meekness is that frame of mind that accepts God’s dealings with you as being good and fair, therefore it does not resist him, it does not fight him, nor argue with him, nor does it resent what he is doing, or allowing, to happen in your life. It is the mental attitude that is oriented toward the love of God, the grace of God and the plan of God, and is in total subjection to his will. As Job said, *“And said, Naked came I out of my mother’s womb, and naked shall I return thither: **the LORD gave, and the LORD hath taken away; blessed be the name of the LORD.**” Job 1:21* *“But he said unto her, Thou speakest as one of the foolish women speaketh. What? **shall we receive good at the hand of God, and shall we not receive evil? In all this did not Job sin with his lips.**” Job 2:10*

The mental attitude of prautes, meekness, toward men bears up under insult and injury knowing that they are working a grace in your soul propelling you toward spiritual maturity and completion. Also, meekness knows that this too could not befall you unless it had been allowed, or directed at you, from God, who also provides you the ministry of the Holy Spirit to carry you through it.

Meekness is closely related to humility showing that the believer is in total subjection to the Father’s authority over him. *“Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and **giveth grace to the humble.**” 1 Peter 5:5* The epitome of this grace is found in Jesus Christ. *“Take my yoke upon you, and learn of me; for I am **meek** and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls.” Matthew 11:29*

Meekness does not suggest the word as we use it today where an individual portrays a false sense of humility, or is self-effacing, as we see so much of in people who are “religious”, which is nothing more than a front for their legalism, pride and self righteousness. But it defines a mental attitude that is in subjection to God’s will for one’s life and accepts his authority over him allowing him to do with him as God sees fit. It is pliable clay in the master’s hands.

Meekness is not weakness, neither in character, demeanor, or in dealing with people and situations! Many Christians associate meekness with one who is mousy, wimpy, never raising his voice, going around looking half-whipped. If they see a believer, who is bold, dynamic, authoritative and dogmatic they think that he is arrogant, which is not true.

What they don’t see is that a man, Pastors included, can be authoritative and dogmatic, which they mistakenly associate with arrogance, and yet **on the inside of his soul be meek before God!** Meekness is that state of mental attitude that one has toward God. And it is from this mental attitude that the Pastor-Teacher must instruct those who oppose him.

He must instruct is the present active participle of *paideuo*. The present participle denotes that instruction in the Word is to be a way of life for the Pastor-Teacher. But this concept does not sit all by itself for it is connected to the idea of **meekness**, *en praoteti paideuonta*. *En plus the locative* tells us that the action of the verb takes place in the sphere of something, which is revealed here as being in the sphere of meekness! The PT is to be teaching the Word of God to his church in the sphere of personal humility before God.

The Pastor-Teacher's soul must not only be in total subjection to the will and authority of God over him, the same as any naval commander would be in total subjection to the admiral of the fleet, but he must also accept whatever comes his way from God and whatever provisions that God supplies to him in life: money, housing, clothing, food, spouse, etc..

Now the communication of the Word can run the gamut from conversational type of teaching all the way to being chewed out, so, you can be chewed out by a man who is humble! And his pulpit ministry, which is what his ministry is, is to be continually teaching God's people the Word in the hope that God will grant those in rebellion a change of mental attitude!

The word *paideuo* was used for the household training of children. When used of the PT it denotes that he has the authority to use the mode of communication necessary to chasten with words those who are getting careless, or going away, from the Word. He can gently instruct believers, or he can rebuke them. He can encourage them, or exhort them. But when he does, it is to be done in the sphere of his own personal humility before God.

Paul commanded Timothy, (there's authority again), to correct, rebuke and encourage for the time will come when believers will not put up with sound doctrine. "*Preach the word; be instant in season, out of season; reprove, rebuke, exhort with all longsuffering and doctrine. For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears; And they shall turn away their ears from the truth, and shall be turned unto fables.*" 2 Timothy 4:2-4 Which is what apostasy is all about.

Those that oppose themselves. The NIV has it as, "**Opponents** must be gently instructed". The Greek has it as, *tous antidiatithemenous*, which is the present middle participle of *antidiatithemi*. It is a compound verb from *anti* – against, *dia* – the intensive idea, and *tithemi* – to place. The best English word that conveys the idea, although lacking the intensity of the concept, is the word **opponent**.

In the middle voice it has the idea of being reflexive, in that it speaks of believers, who have set **themselves**, against the Pastor of the church. And have gotten to this place where it now has become a pattern for them. And we want to note that it isn't the Pastor, who has brought them to this place, nor the doctrines that he is teaching, but they **themselves** out of their pride and negative volition!

They have put themselves in direct opposition to the doctrinal teaching ministry of the Pastor-Teacher in a local church, either by their speech, and/or their actions. And in so doing they are **in opposition** to the concepts of: the grace of God, the Word and living by faith. The result of which is that they are not only opposing God's grace, by opposing the Pastor he has provided for them, they are **also hurting themselves in the process!** In grace, God forgives us, gives us the indwelling Holy Spirit, provides the teaching of Bible Doctrine revealing to us the spiritual life he has provided for us, and he provides the Pastor-Teacher who teaches the doctrines our souls need. And when they oppose the PT, they are rejecting everything he supplies in his grace!

They have become opponents of the doctrinal ministry of the Pastor-Teacher because they are doing the will of Satan! Somewhere along the line they have become negative to doctrine, or a doctrine he is teaching, and/or they have gone negative to the concept of grace in general, and/or living by faith, and/or metabolizing doctrine by faith (*epignosis*), or have become lifted up in their pride, or acting out on one or more emotional reactor factors, and/or have failed to recover the filling of the Holy Spirit by confessing their sins to God, and/or have been drawn into circles of gossip, or siding with trouble makers, and/or failed to pass their own tests and now have become opponents of the grace Pastor and his teaching ministry. And it has become a way of life for them now. And in so doing they are just hurting themselves.

There are all kinds of “ministers” out there, but they are completely different than the Pastor-Teacher teaching Bible Doctrine on a grace basis in a local church. He and his ministry is God's grace provision for his people, for it is through his doctrinal ministry, (that is to be supplied on a grace basis), that the believer in Christ can learn the needed doctrines on, not only how he or she is to live their lives before God, but in receiving the doctrines they need, that they can metabolize by faith, and continue **living in the spiritual life dynamic** God has provided for them.

It is through the intake of Bible Doctrine that the believer's soul is renewed, strengthened, encouraged, made wise, given faith, given wisdom, receives hope, maintains the sphere of peace, is enabled to go through their trials victoriously, transforms their minds, is empowered to stand against the world system, the flesh nature and the attacks of Satan! So to oppose that means they are not only hurting themselves, but that Satan will take them captive, as prisoners of war, to do his will!

If God peradventure will give them repentance - *mepote doe autois ho theos metanoian*. The word for **grant**, “*In the hope that God will grant*”, is the aoist active optative of *didomi*. Now the optative mood is one of the four moods used with if that look at reality. The first class condition is, **if something is true and it is**. The second class is, **if something is true and it isn't**. The third class condition is, **if something is true and it has the potential of being true if certain conditions are met**. And the fourth class is the optative mood and it looks at it from the perspective of, **I wish it was true, or I hope it is true, but often the idea of being doubtful is in it because of the individual's pride, or entrenched negative volition**. It conveys the idea of hope, desire, or wish on the part of the speaker.

When Paul uses the optative mood of God granting them repentance, **he is expressing his heartfelt desire for them**, but it also becomes a **wish** because there is no guarantee on this matter. So the idea of **doubtfulness** comes into play because of the amount of arrogance involved on the part of the rebellious believer in Christ. How so? Because if they were so arrogant that they would get in the face of a Pastor-Teacher, whom God had provided for them in his grace, it's difficult to see them humbling themselves once again under his authority and teaching!

It's possible that they may have a change of mind, but it carries the aspect of doubt that they will, that is in their present arrogant state of mind that God will grant them repentance. You see, in the process of going against the Word of God, and the man who is teaching it, they have made themselves enemies of God and his grace! And it is not a good thing to make yourself an enemy of God! “*But he giveth more grace. Wherefore he saith, God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble.*” James 4:6 “*Likewise, ye younger, submit yourselves unto the elder. Yea, all of you be subject one to another, and be clothed with humility: for God resisteth the proud, and giveth grace to the humble.*” 1 Peter 5:5 This now becomes an issue where they must humble themselves before God and petition him to get them on the right track in their thinking and actions centered around his Word and the true Christian life.

We want to note that it is **God who grants repentance**. The active voice bears this out. One of the negative by-products of Arminianism is that they think that everything centers around them, and that somehow God is their on the sideline awaiting their beck and call and respond to them. It's total self-centeredness and pride.

They are not fully aware of what it means to be saved by grace and that everything God does for us is based upon his grace. He provided the sacrifice for our sins based upon grace; his forgiveness is based upon his grace; the faith to believe on Christ as our Savior is a gift of his grace; the spiritual life dynamic is from his grace; the new man he created in us is from his grace; the Word he gives to us is all of grace; the concept of Bible Doctrine, and the local church with the Pastor-Teacher is all of his grace.

So, whenever a believer neglects, or rejects, the *epignosis* phenomenon of metabolizing Bible Doctrine by faith and goes off pursuing after the things of the world system, the things of the flesh nature, and needs to have a change of mental attitude and get back to the living in the spiritual life, he then needs to petition God for God to grant him a change of attitude toward Doctrine and the Christian way of life. It's similar to the idea when we get caught up in one sin or another. We need God's forgiveness, we need to be cleansed from our sins, but we need to go to God and acknowledge our sins to him! It's not an automatic thing; we can't order him around in this matter. There is a protocol that must be followed and he outlines this protocol in 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.*"

*If we **acknowledge** our sins*, (to him), now maybe we will and maybe we won't! But if we do, **then** he will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness, or wrongdoing. But if we don't, then he won't! It's a **grace function** that is based upon a condition that we must follow, if we want to be forgiven and cleansed.

There is a concept of **repentance** found in Hebrews 6:6, "*If they shall fall away, (drift off course from the grace life), to renew them again unto **repentance**; seeing, (while, or, as long as), they crucify to themselves the Son of God afresh, and put him to an open shame.*". These believers could not get back to this place of repentance because they were caught up in something, in this case, it was going back to the temple system, that they had to stop doing so they could be brought to a place of repentance. "*For it is impossible for those who were once enlightened, and have tasted of the heavenly gift, and were made partakers of the Holy Ghost,*" Hebrews 6:4

What we need to see is, though, is the true meaning of the concept of **repentance**, which is how the translators translated the Greek *metanoia*, and how it is also tied in with the ideas of **conversion** and **faith**. 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) *strepheo*, *epistrepheo* and *apostrepheo* of the *strepheo* word group, **2) *metanoieo***, and **3) *metamelomai***.**

Conversion comes from the *strepheo* word group: *strepheo*, *epistrepheo*, *apostrepheo* and *anastrepheo*, 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 *strepheo* 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 were 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

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 was 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 towards God and his Word!** *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 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 Christian's 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.

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.

But, as we have seen, God has to grant repentance to the believer in Christ. Paul could only put this in the optative mood to reflect his desire for these believers, because he couldn't say that they would for sure, or that they wouldn't, nor could he lay out a certain condition to be fulfilled by them that would result in repentance. We see God operating in this matter many times in the OT. “***Turn thou us unto thee, O LORD, and we shall be turned; renew our days as of old.***” Lamentations 5:21 It is God who first initiates in grace toward man, even in the area of repentance, but man can resist and reject this gracious act of kindness toward him. Man still does have free will. Pastor Mike

Escaping The Snare Of The Devil Continued

“And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his will.” 2 Timothy 2:26

Y. Opposition to the Pastor-Teacher. v.25 Continued

“In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;” - 2 Timothy 2:25 - εν πραοτητι παιδευοντα τους αντιδιατιθεμενους μηποτε δω αυτοις ‘ο θεος μετανοιαν εις επιγνωσιν αληθειας

“To the acknowledgement of the truth” - *eis epignosin aletheias* The preposition *eis* gives us the result of what **repentance** will accomplish in the believer’s soul. It will bring the believer around to the place of *epignosis* doctrine. *Eis* has the idea of going from one place and ending up in another. It has the ideas of direction, motion, goal, arrival and actual penetration into the concept.

It tells us that the believer has not been taking in the Word of God, that they have been living out in the world system, living in the flesh nature, being involved in religiosity or lasciviousness, and living outside the spiritual life dynamic of doctrine, faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit. But with this change of mind, they actually get back to the place of *epignosis* doctrine.

Now truth is truth, but when it is used in conjunction with another word, then that word gives us information on the nature of truth in relation to the believer's soul. For example, the knowledge of truth, when used with *gnosis*, is just factual academic knowledge that one would get from reading the Bible, or listening to a sermon. But when the word *epignosis* is used with truth, then we get something different. It tells us that the believer has not only been receiving factual doctrine, but that they have combined their faith with it! *Ginosko* would look at the ongoing process over a period of time of taking in the truth, or Bible Doctrine. *Oida* would look at the concept of having a full and complete knowledge on a given category of Biblical truth. And *sophia*, wisdom, looks at the truth that one has received, believed, understood and then applied to one's life experiences.

So *epignosis* truth is the teachings of the Bible that one has metabolized by faith! And this concept of metabolization converts the spiritual energy that is found in the Word of God into spiritual phenomena. It's the same concept found when eating physical food and converting it into physical energy. The person chews the food, by which he breaks it down into smaller pieces, swallows it, and then the body, through the process of digestion and metabolization, converts the food into physical energy, whereby it strengthens, nourishes, heals and helps the body in its various ways.

The concept of *epignosis* is more than just the idea of adding our faith to the teachings and promises of God's Word, for it encompasses the entire concept of the spiritual life dynamic. It entails the ideas that the believer must be sitting under the doctrinal, teaching ministry of some man, who has the spiritual gift of Pastor-Teacher, that they accept his authority over them in the Word, they believe the teaching, they are filled with the Holy Spirit, they live in their new natures, they live by faith, they confess their sins when necessary. And it all centers around their attitude toward Bible Doctrine.

But what we have in view here are believers, who for one reason or another, have gotten away from that. Now they have been living in the lusts and pleasures of the flesh, or have been out in the world system pursuing after the things the unsaved pursue after, or they have got wrapped up in the false

teachings of the cults, or they have immersed themselves in some sort of religious practice, or something else! The issue is they have walked away from the concept of taking in Bible Doctrine by faith each day and they need to get back to that. And the first thing they need to have is a change of attitude toward doctrine and the true spiritual life dynamic, which is what repentance is.

“*Resulting in an epignosis knowledge of the truth*”. When faith is added to Bible Doctrine, it converts the doctrine into spiritual phenomena, which strengthens, renews and causes growth in the inner man. It becomes the psychic tension, the spiritual glue, if you will, that holds the soul together. When the believer in Christ rejects Bible Doctrine, faith and the filling of the Holy Spirit, they are rejecting the thing that is keeping their souls from fragmenting! From there it’s all downhill for them into various forms of mental illness.

The Pastor-Teacher is to keep on teaching the Word of God in the hope that God will grant them a change of mental attitude resulting in an *epignosis* knowledge of Bible Doctrine. And not only Bible Doctrine, but the Christian life of living in the filling of the Holy Spirit, doing the will of God, etc.. For **repentance** is one thing, but it always has two other concepts connected to it and they are **conversion** and **faith**. So repentance brings with it a turning of the soul to God, and faith in him and his Word.

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 were 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

The action of **turning** looks at what takes place in the soul. From there we have the ideas of **turning to**, **turning from** and **to return**, as in the case of believers, who have wandered away from walking with God by living in the spiritual life and need to return to him. When we talk about conversion, all three concepts will come into play. There is the action of the soul **turning**, when he or she has had a change of mental attitude. There will be **the soul turning to God and his Word**. And there will also be **the soul turning from the things of the world, the flesh and the devil**.

It is God who gives the impulse to conversion, that is, it is God who first moves man toward repentance and conversion. But he can be so permeated by the evil he is involved in that he resists such turning to God. And he can become so arrogant and bitter that he will not turn to the Lord, or return to the Lord.

“*In the **hope** that God will grant them repentance*” uses the optative mood. Now the moods in the Greek language were used to denote the concepts of reality and non-reality. Or, another way of looking at it is, **how close are we to reality, versus how far away from it we are!**

The **indicative mood**, with the word **if**, tells us that we have obtained reality. If **no** is used with it, then it tells us that we have not obtained reality. The **subjunctive mood** tells us that we have not obtained reality, but that we are close to it, or closer to it, but we still have not arrived at the place of reality yet. It has the idea of **potentiality**. Reality is close, it's potential, but it's not guaranteed for some condition must be fulfilled for us to arrive at the place of reality. The **optative mood** is further away from reality than the subjunctive mood. It's not guaranteed; it's not even potential, but it still is **a possibility!**

There are two phases in this; the **possibility** phase and the **potential** phase. The **possibility** phase deals with everything up to having a change of mental attitude toward the Word of God, living in the spiritual life dynamic, etc.. Assuming that God has granted the believer a change of mental attitude toward these things, then the next phase is the **potentiality** phase of them coming to their senses and escaping the snare of the devil is now in operation. This phase now is dependent on them getting back under the intake of Bible Doctrine under the teaching ministry of some Pastor-Teacher, living by faith, living in the filling of the Holy Spirit and basically applying the teaching of God's Word to their lives. And in so doing they will escape the tempter's snare.

This change of mental attitude in the believer's soul will also bring about a change of attitude toward many other things, all of which, will benefit him or her. Paul's stinging letter of rebuke to the Corinthians resulted in them having a change of attitude. *“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. 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. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.”* 2 Corinthians 7:8-10

The Corinthians, like so many other believers, were caught up in the things of the world, the flesh, lack of proper conduct, lack of priorities, not putting the Lord and his Word first, even getting to the place where some of them were doing things that even the unsaved Gentiles didn't do! So he rebuked them. But after he did, he felt that he had really hurt them, so he was regretting it. Not because he spoke the words of truth to them, but having a communicator's heart he felt that he had really hurt their souls.

The word for **made you sorry** is the aorist active indicative of *lupe*, which has been translated as made you sorry, or caused you sorrow. Although *lupe* is used to denote the feelings of grief, it really spoke of having pain in the soul and should not be restricted to just grief across the board. So we could say, “although my letter caused you pain”, or today, “although my letter hurt you”.

Now when he said, *“I do not repent, though I did repent:”*, he did not use the word *metanoeo*, the word for having a change of mind. Instead he used the present passive indicative of *metamelomai* in the first instance and the imperfect passive indicative of *metamelomai* in the second instance. Now the present tense denotes an action that is currently ongoing, while the imperfect tense denoted an action that was going on in the past, but stopped. So what does that mean? First of all, the word Paul used here for repent really should not have been used, but to feel sorry, or **regret** one's actions! What Paul was saying is that I am not presently regretting what I wrote you, although I was regretting it for a while because I thought that my words really hurt you.

He then says, *“Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance, for ye were made sorry after a godly manner:”*. Now I am rejoicing, not because you were pained in your souls, but that you were pained in a way, (in such a way that God intended), that resulted in you having

a change of mental attitude! For you were grieved, or pained, according to the standard of God.

After a godly manner is *kata theon*, which means according to God, that is, in conformity to what God's purpose is for grief, and the word grief being a type of pain experienced in the soul. This type of grief results in or, accomplishes, the believer having a change of attitude toward Bible Doctrine and the Christian way of life, not feeling sorry about what he has done.

"For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation" - γαρ κατα θεον λυπη μετανοιαν εις σωτηριαν ...κατεργαζεται, *gar kata theon lupe metanoian eis soterian...katergazetai*. So **grief**, that is, grief according to **God's standard of grief**, *kata theon lupe*, brings about a change of mental attitude, *metanoian*, toward the spiritual life dynamic, which change of mental attitude results in deliverance from reversionism, *eis soterian*.

The word for **salvation** here, *soterios*, meant to be saved or delivered from something. It is used in the idea of being saved from Hell and eternal destruction, but is also used to be delivered from any and all bad, or destructive situations. The context here is the snare of the devil, so it refers to believers being delivered from reversionism, or as some refer to it as backsliding.

Repentance, or a change of mental attitude toward the Word, faith living and grace, not only **will enable the reversionistic believer to escape the snare of the devil**, but it also has many other benefits with it. *"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 *"See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter."* 2 Corinthians 7:11 NIV

Carefulness is *spouden* and it had the idea of diligence, to hasten to do a thing, to exert oneself, to put oneself out for something or someone. Instead of following after your own lusts and doing your own will in life, you now put yourself out for the things of Christ. Most Christians put themselves out to do what they want to do in life, to do the things that benefit them, to acquire those things in life they want. Most do not put the Word of God first in their lives and will rarely put themselves out for the things of God. But **repentance** changes all that where they now exert themselves to do the Father's will on earth.

Clearing of yourselves is *apologian* and it referred to a verbal defense of something. In 1 Peter 3:15 it is used of a Christian **giving an answer** for the confidence he has of eternal life. *"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:"*

When believers depart from living in the spiritual life dynamic of faith, Bible Doctrine, the filling of the Holy Spirit, attending a doctrinal church under the teaching ministry of a Pastor-Teacher to go out in the world system and live their lives like they pagans do, they go with the flow of things adopting their thinking and beliefs. But with **repentance** they no longer go with the flow, but **now stand up for truth, doctrine and for what's right!**

Indignation is *aganaktesin*, which has the idea of being irritated at something and spoke of indignation, which has the idea of a strong displeasure at something considered unjust, offensive, insulting, or base; indignation is a righteous anger. It is an anger that proceeds from the believer's

personal integrity, because of Doctrine in their soul, and it is aroused over that which is wrong, evil, distasteful, base; it is anger aroused because of lies, deception, untruth, apostasy, self-righteousness, human good, religiosity and the rest.

Believers, who have repented, will get back to the place of **hating what is evil and loving what is good**. “*Let love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.*” Romans 12:9 Instead of hating what is good and loving evil! “*Who hate the good, and love the evil; who pluck off their skin from off them, and their flesh from off their bones;*” Micah 3:2

Fear is *phobos*, which has both a good sense and a bad sense. The **bad sense** deals with the fear complex of the emotions, which covers ideas such as anxiety, fear, dread, worry, consternation, apprehension, dread, terror, etc.. All of which are destructive to the well being of the believer’s soul. But the fear mentioned here is **having a healthy respect for the righteousness and justice of God!**

Having a **healthy fear of God** proceeds from understanding his attributes. You know that God is gracious, patient, gentle, merciful, compassionate, loving, kind, tender, etc., but you also know that he is righteous, just, holy and will deal with sin and rebellious attitudes! You know that God is a loving Father, but he also said, be holy for he is holy! You know that, when we are doing things we shouldn't be doing, or living our in the world like the rest of the unsaved do, that he will give us time to straighten our acts out before him, but you also know that if we don't straighten our acts out, eventually he will deal with us, not in punishment, but in discipline to correct the situation. We call this corrective discipline, or a good old paddling. Fear understands the justice of God and lives accordingly. Either we will adjust our lives to the justice of God, or it will adjust to us!

Vehement desire is *epipthesin*, which is often used of desire in the good sense meaning a longing for something or someone, and with the prefix *epi* it denotes an intense longing. And in a general overall context it denotes a longing for the things of Christ. Longing would be the word we use to denote the soul of the wife or girlfriend who longs for her husband or boyfriend to come back home from the war.

It was used of the Corinthians longing to see Paul. “*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 Corinthians 7:7 The Christian's longing for the new body. “*For in this we groan, earnestly desiring to be clothed upon with our house which is from heaven.*” 2 Corinthians 5:2 Of Paul's longing for the Romans. “*For I long to see you, that I may impart unto you some spiritual gift, to the end ye may be established;*” Romans 1:11 Paul's longing for the Philippians. “*For God is my record, how greatly I long after you all in the bowels of Jesus Christ.*” Philippians 1:8 The Christian's longing for Bible Doctrine. “*As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby.*” 1 Peter 2:2

Zeal is *zelon* and it meant to be very interested in something, to be concerned, to pour yourself into something so you can bring about a desired objective, to be zealous for something. And in context what it is referring to is having a renewed interest in the things of the Lord. Studying the Word of God, going to church, witnessing to people, being involved in the church regardless of the task, living in the new nature, etc., all denote the idea of zeal, which **zeal for the things of Christ now spring forth from the believer having a change of mental attitude, or repentance!**

Revenge is *ekdikesis*, (out of justice, or, out of that which is right), which is also translated as revenge, or to avenge someone, to punish, but the word meant that which proceeds out of justice and means **having a desire to see justice done!**

When we talk about **justice**, there must be first and foremost of all, the concept of that which is right and that which is fair! **If there is no rightness or fairness involved, then there can be no justice.** (The courts in America need to go back to this concept). And what defines what is right and fair is God and his Word. Just because someone passes a law doesn't mean that the law is right or fair. Therefore, any punishment of the individual is not justice being done.

Having a change of mental attitude toward Bible Doctrine and the true spiritual life produces a change in the believer's thinking resulting in them wanting to see **what's right** being done in every walk of life; in the church, in the government and in their homes. And a love for justice does not turn a believer into a little legalist trying to enact all sorts of laws based upon subjectivity, but to see real and true justice being done in society. And once again, justice, what's right, must be based upon Bible Doctrine.

These are the results of the believer having a change of mental attitude toward Bible Doctrine and the spiritual life, but there first of all has to be that change of attitude! And this gets back to the optative mood used with God granting repentance. The problem lies with the believer in this matter, not God. There isn't a blanket condition laid out, that if one fulfilled, they would have repentance. It sort of gets back to the believer and what's going on in his life. Is he so wrapped up in legalism, self-importance, self-righteousness, pride, etc., that his arrogance is holding him back? Is he so caught up in the thing that he is involved in that is holding him back?

One of the things the scriptures observe is has he had enough and is now calling out to God? We see this with David and what was going on with Abimelech. *"I sought the LORD, [desire to change], and he heard me, and delivered me from all my fears. They looked unto him, [conversion], and were lightened: and their faces were not ashamed. This poor man cried, and the LORD heard him, and saved him out of all his troubles. The angel of the LORD, [Jesus Christ], encampeth round about them that fear him, and delivereth them."* Psalms 34:4-7

We see Jonah's change of mental attitude expressed in crying out to the Lord after spending three days and three nights in the fish's belly. *"Then Jonah prayed unto the LORD his God out of the fish's belly, And said, I cried by reason of mine affliction unto the LORD, and he heard me; out of the belly of hell cried I, and thou heardest my voice."* Jonah 2:1,2

There is no NT formula listed that one can follow, except in the matter of Hebrews 6:6 dealing with going back into the temple, where the believer needs to stop doing that, that one can point to, such as, in the matter of confessing sins to be forgiven and cleansed from our sins. So what we have is a very personal matter between God and the believer in reversionism. That believer is going to have to be very real and honest with the Lord, from the heart, in getting their life straightened out, as we would say.

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 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 has free will.

Z. Captured by the devil. v.26

"And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil, who are taken captive by him at his

will.” 2 Timothy 2:26 - και ανανηψωσιν εκ της του διαβολου παγιδος εξωγρημενοι ‘υπ’ αυτου εις το εκεινου θελημα

“*And that they may recover themselves*” - *kai ananepsosin*. Or, “*And that they will come to their senses*” NIV. **Recover themselves** is the aorist active subjunctive of *ananepho*. There are four moods in the Greek language. One expresses **reality**, the indicative mood, while the other three, the optative, subjunctive, and imperative moods, express **potentiality**.

The **imperative mood** will become reality, if and when the believer obeys a command from God. The **indicative mood** is already reality. The **subjunctive mood** will become reality, if the believer fulfills a stipulated condition. The **optative mood** can become reality, it's still possible for it to become a reality, but a lot of other factors are involved that need to be dealt with, things between the believer and God that need to be straightened out. So it usually is there to denote the hope and desire on the part of the writer, and some doubt because it is further away from reality, but not impossible.

So we have the subjunctive mood used here to denote **the potential of the believer coming to their senses**. God granting them repentance toward Bible Doctrine and living in the true spiritual life now **puts them in the position of the potentiality of coming to their senses and escaping the snare of the devil**, which will become reality by their continuous decisions to choose for the Word, to live in the new nature and turning their back on the things of the world system.

By going from the optative mood to the subjunctive mood we are **one step closer to reality**. In the optative mood we have **possibility, or perhaps better yet, it's not impossible**. But by going to the subjunctive mood, we have moved one step closer to reality saying that **it's very definitely possible, because it's now based upon the decisions they make for the Word and the spiritual life**.

The indicative mood denotes that **we have obtained reality**. The subjunctive mood denotes that we are **closer to it, but still not there, nor is it guaranteed because we still have to make the right decisions**. The optative mood denotes that we are **quite a ways from it, but that it's still a possibility. It's not an impossibility**. Even Samson recovered at the end of his life.

The believer that needs to repent is the one, who is not living in the new nature and is continually living in the flesh nature following after their lusts, wrapped up in human good and their own sense of self righteousness and legalism, not living the faith rest life, not living in the true filling of the true Holy Spirit, negative to Bible Doctrine, etc..

They need to get back to the faith rest life, claiming the promises, living in the Word of God, etc.. They need repentance. But all of that is still in the **possibility phase** in the **hope** that God will grant them repentance. Once repentance is granted, they now move from the **possibility phase** to the **potentiality phase** dependent on their decisions, so they can come to their senses and escape the snare of the devil.

Now *ananepho* meant to be free from mental fuzziness, free from mental attitude sins, free from the control of our emotions, free from emotional thinking, free from lust dominated thinking, free from being caught up in the thinking of the world, the *spiritus mundi*, free from religious thinking and religious ecstatic's, so they can now **start thinking doctrinally!**

Ananepho, from *ana* – again, and *nepho* – to be sober, has been translated as to awaken, to recover, to be sober once again, meant to be free from mental intoxicants. Obviously it would include the literal sense of no booze, or drugs, but speaking figuratively it meant to be free from emotional thinking, or

thinking that is dominated by one's emotions.

It speaks of the idea that the believer's thinking, at one time, had doctrinal teaching circulating in the stream of consciousness; their thinking was based upon the divine viewpoint of the Word of God, not on the thinking of the world system. It tells us that they had got away from that due to their negative volition, living in the flesh nature and involvement in the world system, and now they have returned to that thinking - *ananepho*. They have come to their senses, or come back to right thinking. "*And be not conformed to this world: but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God.*" Romans 12:2

Most Christian's today are unable to think doctrinally, or even rationally any more! This due to the above mentioned problems. The scriptures denote three types of thinking that encompass this problem. The **first** category of thinking is *logizomai*, which is thinking based upon facts, upon reality. It was the thinking of the accountant, or analyst. This thinking is the one mentioned so often in the Bible for us to be involved in and it's to have thinking based upon biblical facts! The **second** type of thinking is *dokeo* and it referred to thinking that is based upon emotions! And sad to say, this is the thinking of most Christians and unbelievers as well. The **third** type of thinking is *nomizo* and it's thinking based upon assumption. And sad to say again, this is the thinking of most Christians as well.

When believers reject Bible Doctrine, they are also rejecting the thinking that doctrine gives and the inward strengthening of the soul, as well as, rejecting the filling of the Holy Spirit. When the soul has no inner strength, then the sin nature caves in on it and now the soul will become ravaged by the things of the world, the sinful flesh nature and demonism. Once this happens, then the believer will no longer be able to think doctrinally, or even rationally.

But it doesn't end there. It will continue into an ever-downward spiral to the place of mental illness and even **insanity!** This is not a game and the repercussions are serious. The pressures of life will continue to convert into stress in the soul, stress in the soul triggers the emotional complex of the soul, with the **fear** complex being the first emotion to be activated. Anxiety, worry, phobias of all sort, dread, fright, consternation, apprehension, and the rest will rule the believer's life from then on. Then the **anger** complex is activated followed by the other five emotions of the emotional complex. Scar tissue garbage of the soul now surfaces to rule over the believer, then getting into false doctrine, then the thinking and influence of demons now become a part of the believer's life to the end that they have now been taken captive by the devil and are now doing his will – not God's!

The believer has to be on guard, through a consistent intake of Bible Doctrine, for the attacks of the devil! We need the sound teaching of God's Word so we can have sober, stable, doctrinal thinking to protect us from his evil influence. But if the churches are not providing sound doctrine from the pulpits, but instead giving believers programs, goofiness and entertainment, anything but the truth, then what is the believer to do! This phenomenon is rampant throughout Christianity today because of the great apostasy of the Church! Without the strength of metabolized doctrine in the soul the believer's soul will become weakened and a prey for the devil resulting in a destruction of the cohesiveness of the soul! "**Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:**" 1 Peter 5:8 "*But the end of all things is at hand: be ye therefore sober, and watch unto prayer.*" 1 Peter 4:7 Pastor Mike