



## Lesson 9

John preached repentance for the remission of sins, some big words with some important meanings.

Repentance means "a turn about, a deliberate change of mind resulting in a change of direction in thought and behavior." This "turn about" comes from a person realizing and admitting that he or she has been wrong to try to live apart from God and in rebellion to God's principles and revealed Word.

Repentance is required by God. It is an absolute "must." No one can ever be a child of God, if he /she has not repented of their sins. **Acts 26:20 Paul, an apostle of the church, said that God had told him in a vision what to proclaim: I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, 20"but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.**

There are several ways that we are brought to repentance. First, God wants us to repent of wrongdoing and wrong thinking, just because He has been so good to us and because we are grateful for His goodness. Romans 2:4 states:

Or do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance? Hasn't the Lord been very good to you, in all that He has provided for you? Think back over all the good things in your life. God sent you those. Have you thanked Him? A famous song called The Doxology states "Praise God from Whom all blessings flow."

Principle: God wants us to open our spiritual eyes to see His goodness to us every day. He gives us evidence of His grace all around us. Just think of the beauty of the sky, flowers, trees and scenery. He could have made it all gray and boring, but He didn't. He wanted to bless us with beauty 'cause He loves us.

Let's ask God to open our spiritual eyes so that we may see His goodness all around us and in the good things that happen to us every day. Then remember to thank Him for each blessing. Repent of any thing that God shows you that shouldn't be in your life, speech or actions.

Next time, we'll look at the other ways a person might come to repentance.

## Lesson 10

Last time we said that there were several ways a person could be brought to repentance. Repentance of sins is a requirement to be in family and fellowship of God because sin separates us from God Who is holy.

God would prefer that we come to Him and repent of our sinful ways, because we are grateful to Him for His wonderful goodness to us. However, some people ignore God's goodness or do not acknowledge God as the Giver of all good things. They aren't thankful to God for the blessings He has given them. So, God tries another way to bring them to repentance.

The Word of God can be used to bring us to repent. Sometimes God uses the method of preaching for this. **Mt 12:41 The men of Nineveh shall rise in judgment with this generation, and shall condemn it: because they repented at the preaching of Jonas; and, behold, a greater than Jonas is here.** John the Baptist preached the Word that God gave him and people repented as is seen in Mark 1:5. Jesus preached and called for the people who heard Him to repent. **Matthew 4:17 " From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."**

One of the reasons we need to learn the Word of God is that it acts like a mirror, in that it helps us see who we are and in what spiritual condition we are. If we recognize that we have sinned, then we are to follow God's steps in I John 1:9 to remove that sin, once we repent (come into agreement with God that it is sin), we are to turn from it completely- -180 degree turn. **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.** (Remember this verse because we'll come back to it in a later lesson.

Principle: God has provided everything we need to be in right relationship with Him. The Lord doesn't want anything to be between Him and you. He has done everything possible to show how He loves you and He wants you to know that. Ask Him to reveal to you what things in your daily life need repenting of, what attitudes and actions don't glorify Him or give a good testimony to others, what things need to be stopped in your life. Then start looking and listening for His answers. He will reveal them to you.

Next time, we'll look at a 3rd way that God uses to get us to repent of our sins, to repent of going away from Him, to repent of not honoring the One Who made us, and to repent of living our lives without consulting Him.

## **Lesson 11**

This lesson is about the third way God leads a person to repentance. Sin separates a person from God. God doesn't want us separated from Him. He loves us and wants us to be in His family. In order to be adopted into His family, we must first repent of our sins. We've already seen in previous lessons that the many blessings in our lives and the Word of God's instruction are reasons for us to repent of sin. When a person won't repent of his sin, even though he's experienced the goodness of God in his life and he has heard what the Word of God says about the need for repenting, then God has no choice but to allow judgment and correction into a person's life in order to bring them to sorrow about their sin, and to repent.

**2 Cor 7:10 I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that your sorrow led to repentance. For you were made sorry in a godly manner... 10For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted...** This sorrow is not meant to hurt the person, but to help him humble himself, so that he will repent of his wrongdoing and of his independence from God.

**Deut. 8:2, 3, 11-16**

**You shall remember that the Lord your God led you all the way these forty years in the wilderness, to humble you and test you, to know what was in your heart, whether you would keep His commandments or not. 3" So He humbled you, allowed you to hunger, and fed you with manna which you did not know nor did your fathers know, that He might make you know that man shall not live by bread alone; but man lives by every word that proceeds from the mouth of the Lord.**

**11" Beware that you do not forget the Lord your God by not keeping His commandments, His judgments, and His statutes which I command you today, 12" lest when you have eaten and are full, and have built beautiful houses and dwell in them; 13" and when your herds and your flocks multiply, and your silver and your gold are multiplied, and all that you have is multiplied; 14" when your heart is lifted up, and you forget the Lord your God who brought you out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage; 15" who led you through that great and terrible wilderness, in which were fiery serpents and scorpions and thirsty land where there was no water; who brought water for you out of the flinty rock; 16" who fed you in the wilderness with manna, which your fathers did not know, that He might humble you and that He might test you, to do you good in the end-**

There's another example of this in the account of a king named Manasseh in 2Chronicles 33:11-13, who heard the warning and word of God (verse 10) but who wouldn't repent. Manasseh had ignored and forgotten the goodness of God, and he had also ignored the message of God. Therefore, God brought His judgment upon Manasseh, not to harm him, but to humble him and to bring him back to a place where God could bless him.

**10 And the Lord spoke to Manasseh and his people, but they would not listen. 11 Therefore the Lord brought upon them the captains of the army of the king of Assyria, who took Manasseh with hooks, bound him with bronze fetters, and carried him off to Babylon. 12 Now when he was in affliction, he implored the Lord his God, and humbled himself greatly before the God of his fathers, 13 and prayed to Him; and He received his entreaty, heard his supplication, and brought him back to Jerusalem into his kingdom. Then Manasseh knew that the Lord was God.**

Principle: It's a whole lot easier to just get straight with God now by repenting of any sin and keep it that way every day, rather than to have to go through tough times unnecessarily. (By the way, people do go through some tough times in their lives as just a part of living on this planet and not necessarily because they personally have sinned. Sometimes the innocent are hurt by association with other people who are the ones in sin.)

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