

Repentance Pt. 1

Pastor James Foley – Shared Sunday, September 13, 2020

INTRODUCTION

Thank you for joining us today! Whether you are here IN PERSON or watching via the LIVESTREAM, you are most WELCOME. Please have a Bible at the ready and be prepared to take some notes. We have MUCH to cover in a relatively SHORT amount of time (i.e., as we SEGUE to a new series).

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 1

FYI 1 – We have noted the EMPHASIS that Scripture places upon REPENTANCE numerous times in recent weeks. As we have discussed, it was the OFT-REPEATED command of the Risen Christ to the ANCIENT churches (cf. Rev. 2–3). Consider the following...

Revelation 2:4b–5a (NIV) [To the Church at EPHESUS, Emphasis Mine]

4 . . . You have forsaken the love you had at first. 5 Consider how far you have fallen! **Repent** and do the things you did at first.

Revelation 2:14b–16a [To the Church at PERGAMUM, Emphasis Mine]

14 . . . I have a few things against you: There are some among you who hold to the teaching of Balaam, who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin so that they ate food sacrificed to idols and committed sexual immorality. 15 Likewise, you also have those who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans. 16 **Repent** therefore!

Revelation 2:20b–23 [To the Church at THYATIRA, Emphasis Mine]

20 . . . I have this against you: You tolerate that woman Jezebel, who calls herself a prophet. By her teaching she misleads my servants into sexual immorality and the eating of food sacrificed to idols. 21 I have given her time to **repent** of her immorality, but she is unwilling. 22 So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they **repent** of her ways. 23 I will strike her children dead. Then all the churches will know that I am he who searches hearts and minds, and I will repay each of you according to your deeds.

Revelation 3:1b–3 [To the Church at SARDIS, Emphasis Mine]

1 . . . I know your deeds; you have a reputation of being alive, but you are dead. 2 Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have found your deeds unfinished in the sight of my God. 3 Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; hold it fast, and **repent**.

Revelation 3:19–20 [To the Church at LAODICEA, Emphasis Mine]

19 Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and **repent**. 20 Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.

NOTE – If I may EXPAND upon this topic...

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 2

FYI 2 – Repentance was NOT just the core of the RISEN Christ’s message (i.e., many years after His Death, Resurrection and Ascension). Rather, it was ALSO the core of His message throughout the ENTIRETY of His earthly MINISTRY...

Matthew 4:17b [BEGINNING of His Earthly Ministry, Emphasis Mine]

17 “. . . Jesus began to preach, “**Repent**, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”

Mark 1:14b–15 [BEGINNING of His Earthly Ministry, Emphasis Mine]

Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. **Repent** and believe the good news!”

Luke 5:32 [MIDST of His Earthly Ministry, Emphasis Mine]

32 “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance**.”

Luke 13:3b [MIDST of His Earthly Ministry, Emphasis Mine]

3 “. . . Unless you **repent**, you . . . will all perish.

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 3

FYI 3 – Lastly (i.e., for the sake of brevity AND without delving into the OT), repentance was a KEY component of the message of the EARLY Church. Therefore, it REMAINS a vital component of the gospel that WE are to ongoingly PROCLAIM! Consider this brief sampling of texts as I work to establish a necessary FOUNDATION...

Luke 24:45–47 [The Risen Christ to the Disciples on the Road to Emmaus, Emphasis Mine]

45 Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures. 46 He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and **repentance** for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 2:37–38a [Peter to Jewish Onlookers on the Day of Pentecost, Emphasis Mine]

37 When the people heard this [i.e., the message of Peter], they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 Peter replied, “**Repent** and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.

Acts 3:19 [Peter to Jews Who Witnessed a Miraculous Work and Heard His Message, Emphasis Mine]

19 **Repent**, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.

Acts 17:30 [Paul to the Pagan Philosophers in Athens, Emphasis Mine]

30 In the past God overlooked such ignorance [i.e., the paganistic worship of idols], but now he commands all people everywhere to **repent**. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”

Acts 20:17–21 [Paul to the Elders of the Church at Ephesus, Emphasis Mine]

17 From Miletus, Paul sent to Ephesus for the elders of the church. 18 When they arrived, he said to them: “You know how I lived the whole time I was with you, from the first day I came into the province of Asia. 19 I served the Lord with great humility and with tears and in the midst of severe testing by the plots of my Jewish opponents. 20 You know that I have not hesitated to preach anything that would be helpful to you but have taught you publicly and from house to house. 21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in **repentance** and have faith in our Lord Jesus.”

2 Peter 3:9 [Peter to Christians Scattered throughout the Roman Empire, Emphasis Mine]

9 The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to **repentance**.

SETTING THE STAGE PT. 4

Q. Are we beginning to see the PRIORITY that Scripture places upon this element called repentance?

Q. Are we starting to see that this is NOT simply an obscure topic—but an ongoing theme and call?

FYI – In the estimation of this pastor, this should force us to **CONTEND** with a vital question...

Q. What IS “repentance”?

Q. i.e., What does it MEAN to repent?

KEY – These questions and the answers thereof will form the **BASIS** for a **NEW 2–3-part SERIES**. I want to spend some time **DEFINING** “repentance” (i.e., that we might come to understand its nature and function). I also want to spend some time analyzing biblical **EXAMPLES** of repentance (i.e., at both an individual and a corporate level).

KEY 2 – It is my **PRAYER** that this series (starting today) will lead you to a place of initial or ongoing repentance.

DEFINING TERMS PT. 1

NOTE – Let us **BEGIN** in the simplest way possible (i.e., the offering of necessary **DEFINITION**)...

Q. What is “REPENTANCE”? i.e., What does it mean to REPENT?

A. Nelson’s Bible Dictionary **DEFINES** repentance as a “turning **AWAY FROM** sin, disobedience and rebellion and a turning **TO** God [in faith]” (**REPEAT**). Thus, scriptural repentance is deeply connected with the concept of a “spiritual **CHANGE** of direction.” Consider the following illustration...

ILL – Imagine you come to realize while driving that you are headed the wrong way on a one-way highway. What is the wisest course of action in such an event? To immediately turn around and change direction! Similarly, the one who repents comes to realize that they are heading the wrong way in relation to God and His favor. Thus, the wisest thing to do is turn around and shift directionality towards Him!

FYI – **FAILURE** to repent (i.e., change direction) in **EITHER** case will lead to **CATASTROPHIC** result.

DEFINING TERMS PT. 2

KEY – Therefore...

- When CHRIST called men to repent during His earthly ministry
- When the RISEN Christ called an array of churches to repent in Rev. 2–3
- When APOSTOLIC leaders (e.g., Peter, Paul, etc.) called men to repent in the NT
- When WE—i.e., as modern-day witnesses and evangelists—CALL individuals to repent

...It is the CALL to CHANGE spiritual DIRECTIONALITY (i.e., to turn AWAY FROM sin, disobedience and rebellion and to TURN TO the Lord in faith) that the LOST/WAYWARD might find life ETERNAL and ABUNDANT (cf. John 3:16; 10:10).

NOTE – Please recognize the ETERNAL STAKES in these principles! Consider the words of Christ...

Matthew 7:13 [Christ in His Sermon on the Mount]

13 “Enter through the narrow gate. For wide is the gate and broad is the road that leads to destruction, and many enter through it. 14 But small is the gate and narrow the road that leads to life, and only a few find it.

KEY 1 – Tragically, MOST will rush headlong in the WRONG direction. Only the FEW will see the need to REPENT! This is Not meant to dissuade us in the work of preaching repentance. It SHOULD add a degree of SOBRIETY/PERSPECTIVE to our labors! Thus said...

KEY 2 – Let us reach as MANY as we can with the time that we have...

QUOTE – “If sinners be damned, at least let them leap to Hell over our dead bodies. And if they perish, let them perish with our arms wrapped about their knees, imploring them to stay. If Hell must be filled, let it be filled in the teeth of our exertions, and let not one go unwarned and unprayed for.” –C. H. Spurgeon

DEFINING TERMS PT. 3 (SUMMATIONS)

FYI – Simple and Summary...

Q. What is “repentance”?

A1. Repentance is a SPIRITUAL CHANGE in directionality (i.e., in relation to God).

A2. It is a “turning AWAY FROM sin, disobedience and rebellion and a turning TO the Lord.”

NOTE – Now that we have IDENTIFIED a suitable DEFINITION, let us BUILD UPON the foundation we have laid...

RELATED CONCEPTS

FYI – Biblical repentance is generally ACCOMPANIED and/or CHARACTERIZED by an array of RELATED concepts. Thus, when we speak of repentance it is FITTING to note the PRESENCE and OPERATION of other scriptural ELEMENTS (i.e., including but NOT limited to the following)...

1) Humility

Humility (i.e., in relation to God) is a sense of LOWLINESS marked by penitence, submission and self-abasement. A repentant person will be poor of spirit before the Lord, fully aware of their spiritual BANKRUPTCY apart from His mercy (cf. Matt. 5:3). This is a deeply SPIRITUAL response.

2) Confession

Confession pertains to the open ADMITTANCE of one's waywardness before God. A repentant person will FREELY acknowledge to the wickedness of their sinful ways. This is an INTELLECTUAL response (i.e., having to do with a MENTAL awareness of one's condition before God).

3) Remorse

Remorse has to do with the feeling of GUILT for past crimes and criminality. A repentant individual will feel the BURDEN of their sin before the Lord (i.e., recognizing the degree to which they have GRIEVED the Lord and HARMED others in life and living). This is an EMOTIONAL response (i.e., having to do with what one FEELS at the core of their being).

4) Shame

Shame HAS a place in the human experience. Shame has to do with the feeling of DEFILEMENT for past crimes and criminality. A repentant individual will feel spiritually SOILED for their immorality (i.e., UNCLEAN before God). This, too, is an EMOTIONAL response (i.e., having to do with deeply seated FEELINGS).

5) Outflowing Change

The one who is TRULY repentant before God (i.e., turned away from sin by turning to the Lord) will produce fruit in KEEPING with that repentance (cf. Matt. 3:8). i.e., A repentant person will EVIDENCE a break from past sin by a renewed COMMITMENT to God and WORKS that glorify Him. Do NOT boast of a spiritual turnaround if NO evidence of that turnaround exists!

QUOTE – “The sure test of the quality of any supposed change of heart will be found in its permanent effects. 'By their fruits you shall know them' is as applicable to the right method of judging ourselves as of judging others. Whatever, therefore, may have been our inward experience, whatever joy or sorrow we may have felt, unless we bring forth fruits meet for repentance, our experience will profit us nothing. Repentance is incomplete unless it leads to confession and restitution in cases of injury; unless it causes us to forsake not merely outward sins, which others notice, but those which lie concealed in the heart; unless it makes us choose the service of God and live not for ourselves but for Him.” –Charles Hodge

FYI – Outflowing change is the PRACTICAL response to repentance.

TRANSITION – EXAMPLE(S)

NOTE – We have covered MUCH thus far. Much of our discussion has been CEREBRAL and/or INTELLECTUAL (i.e., the offering of textbook DEFINITION and analysis of related CONCEPTS). However, perhaps like me, you learn BEST by EXAMPLE. I would love to spend some time today and next week SATURATING ourselves in biblical examples of repentant people...

- I want to consider an array of figures who were repentant
- I want to consider their break from sin and dedication to the Lord
- I want to consider the presence and operation of aforementioned items...

i.e., the PRESENCE/OPERATION of humility, confession, remorse, shame and subsequent change.

KEY – With the time remaining, let us begin to delve into biblical ILLUSTRATIONS of true/genuine repentance...

EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE PT. 1

Luke 18:9–14

9 To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everyone else, Jesus told this parable: 10 “Two men went up to the temple to pray, one a Pharisee and the other a tax collector. 11 The Pharisee stood by himself and prayed: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like other people—robbers, evildoers, adulterers—or even like this tax collector. 12 I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all I get.’

13 “But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’

14 “I tell you that this man, rather than the other, went home justified before God. For all those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.”

Q. Do we see evidence of HUMILITY (lowliness)? (v. 13a–b)

Q. Do we see evidence of CONFESSION (admittance of sin)? (v. 13c)

Q. Do we see evidence of REMORSE and SHAME (guilt/defilement)? (v. 13b)

Q. Do we see SUBSEQUENT evidence of CHANGE (outflowing transformation)? (n/a)

EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE PT. 2

Luke 15:11–23

11 Jesus continued: “There was a man who had two sons. 12 The younger one said to his father, ‘Father, give me my share of the estate.’ So he divided his property between them.

13 “Not long after that, the younger son got together all he had, set off for a distant country and there squandered his wealth in wild living. 14 After he had spent everything, there was a severe famine in that whole country, and he began to be in need. 15 So he went and hired himself out to a citizen of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed pigs. 16 He longed to fill his stomach with the pods that the pigs were eating, but no one gave him anything.

17 “When he came to his senses, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have food to spare, and here I am starving to death! 18 I will set out and go back to my father and say to him: Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. 19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; make me like one of your hired servants.’ 20 So he got up and went to his father.

“But while he was still a long way off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion for him; he ran to his son, threw his arms around him and kissed him.

21 “The son said to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son.’

22 “But the father said to his servants, ‘Quick! Bring the best robe and put it on him. Put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. 23 Bring the fattened calf and kill it. Let’s have a feast and celebrate. 24 For this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.’ So they began to celebrate.

Q. Do we see evidence of HUMILITY (lowliness)? (v. 15–16, 18–19)

Q. Do we see evidence of CONFESSION (admittance of sin)? (v. 18–19, 21)

Q. Do we see evidence of REMORSE and SHAME (guilt/defilement)? (v. 19a, 21)

Q. Do we see SUBSEQUENT evidence of CHANGE (outflowing transformation)? (n/a)

EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE PT. 3

Luke 19:1–10

1 Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. 2 A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. 3 He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. 4 So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

5 When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” 6 So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

7 All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

8 But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

9 Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. 10 For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

Q. Do we see evidence of HUMILITY (lowliness)? (v. 8b – “Lord!”)

Q. Do we see evidence of CONFESSION (admittance of sin)? (8c – “Cheated”)

Q. Do we see evidence of REMORSE and SHAME (guilt/defilement)? (n/a Directly)

Q. Do we see SUBSEQUENT evidence of CHANGE (outflowing transformation)? (v. 8)

EXAMPLES OF REPENTANCE PT. 4

Luke 7:36–50

36 When one of the Pharisees invited Jesus to have dinner with him, he went to the Pharisee’s house and reclined at the table. 37 A woman in that town who lived a sinful life learned that Jesus was eating at the Pharisee’s house, so she came there with an alabaster jar of perfume. 38 As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them.

39 When the Pharisee who had invited him saw this, he said to himself, “If this man were a prophet, he would know who is touching him and what kind of woman she is—that she is a sinner.”

40 Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”

“Tell me, teacher,” he said.

41 “Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii, and the other fifty. 42 Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”

43 Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”

“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said.

44 Then he turned toward the woman and said to Simon, “Do you see this woman? I came into your house. You did not give me any water for my feet, but she wet my feet with her tears and wiped them with her hair. 45 You did not give me a kiss, but this woman, from the time I entered, has not stopped kissing my feet. 46 You did not put oil on my head, but she has poured perfume on my feet. 47 Therefore, I tell you, her many sins have been forgiven—as her great love has shown. But whoever has been forgiven little loves little.”

48 Then Jesus said to her, “Your sins are forgiven.”

49 The other guests began to say among themselves, “Who is this who even forgives sins?”

50 Jesus said to the woman, “Your faith has saved you; go in peace.”

Q. Do we see evidence of HUMILITY (lowliness)? (v. 38, 44–46)

Q. Do we see evidence of CONFESSION (admittance of sin)? (v. 38, 44–46)

Q. Do we see evidence of REMORSE and SHAME (guilt/defilement)? (v. 38, 44–46)

Q. Do we see SUBSEQUENT evidence of CHANGE (outflowing transformation)? (n/a Directly)

CONCLUSION

KEY – Thank you for taking the time to join us today. Should those of you who have joined us online wish to give, please do so through the giving portal of our church WEBSITE (www.NewLifeBarre.org). For those who are present, you may place your donation in the OFFERING BOXES in this Sanctuary.

Numbers 6:24–26

24 The Lord bless you
and keep you;

25 the Lord make his face shine on you
and be gracious to you;

26 the Lord turn his face toward you
and give you peace.