

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; in *all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: Mark 1:14-15 “Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, ‘The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. **Repent, and believe in the gospel.**”

Acts 20:21 “Testifying to Jews and also to Greeks, **repentance** toward God and **faith** toward our Lord Jesus Christ.”

Although faith is distinct from repentance, “faith and repentance are interdependent. Faith is permeated with repentance and repentance with faith.”¹ Andrew Murray explains the dynamics of faith and repentance. “Without repentance no real faith.... Without faith also no true repentance. Repentance is not only a *turning away from sin*, which of itself would tend to self-righteousness, but a *turning back to God*, and this can take place *only through faith*.... Nor is it only at the beginning of the way, but *on to the very end that these two must accompany one another*.”² Christ Himself joined faith and repentance together when He said, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. **Repent, and believe in the gospel.**”³ Salvation *by faith alone* “is preserved when faith is held to be **repentant faith** that turns from sin, and repentance is understood to be **believing repentance** that turns to God for the mercy and salvation that are freely offered to sinners in the gospel.”⁴ The absence of genuine repentance fosters the counterfeit faith of “easy believism.” This brings us to the vital question, “What is repentance unto salvation?”

Like saving faith, repentance is multi-faceted. The following quotes merit very careful reading. “The repentance *that leads on to salvation is a gospel grace* by means of which a person who is caused by the Holy Spirit to feel the manifold evils of sin is also caused by faith in Christ to *humble himself* on account of sin.⁶ This humiliation is characterized by *godly sorrow*, a *detestation of the sin*, and *self-loathing*.”⁷ Writing about false teachers who had general knowledge about Christ, but who did not possess saving faith and

repentance, Peter wrote, “For if, after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Savior Jesus Christ, they are again entangled in them and overcome, *the latter end is worse for them than the beginning*. For it would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than having known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered to them. But it has happened to them according to the true proverb: ‘A dog returns to his own vomit,’ and, ‘a sow, having washed, to her wallowing in the mire.’”⁸ I have interacted with people who made similar professions of faith based upon what they were taught, but who gave no evidence of *embracing* the truth, no evidence of *enduring* and *exclusive* trust in Christ, no evidence that they viewed sin as a vile reproach to God’s holiness. The result of their self-deception was that they were drawn away by their own lusts.⁹ They became disinterested in and deadened to the things of God. Over time, relationships, opportunities and sometimes reputations were damaged or destroyed. Make no mistake. True repentance “is accompanied by *prayer for pardon* and *strength of grace*, and also by a purpose and endeavor, in the power supplied by the Spirit, to conduct oneself in the sight of God with the consistency of life that *pleases Him*.”⁷

The Necessity of Repentance

There is a godly sorrow and a worldly sorrow: The former brings life, the latter death.¹⁰ We must beware! Like faith, repentance has its man-centered, feel-better counterfeit that does nothing more than put a band aid on the conscience.¹¹ The true repentant believer is at war with his flesh, truly grieved over sin and quick to flee to the throne of grace for pardon.

I John 1:7-9 “But if we walk in the light as He is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus Christ His Son cleanses us from all sin. If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

1 J. Wegter 2 A. Murray; I John 1:4-10 3 Acts 19:4; 20:21; Mark 1:14-16 4 Sam Waldron 5 II Cor. 7:9-11 6 Acts 11:18 7 1689 *Bapt. Confess. of Faith in Modern English* 8 Prov.6:11 9 James 1:14-16 10 II Cor.7:1-11 11 *The Unrepentant Repenter*, by Jim Elliff, go to <http://www.bibleword.com/turr.htm>