

FIRST PRINCIPLES: DOCTRINE of CHRIST

CHRISTIAN INTERNATIONAL
SCHOOL OF THEOLOGY

Member: Asia Pacific Theological Association (APTA)

www.cistonline.org

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INTRODUCTION

"Repentance from Dead Works" is the first of the seven, FIRST PRINCIPLES OF THE DOCTRINE OF CHRIST, Hebrews 6:1,2.

The purpose of this lesson is to bring us, and keep us in that refreshing presence of God, our Father, which only true repentance can bring; understanding that true repentance is a gift of God to be desired, sought after, and cultivated.

REPENTANCE DEFINED

A. False repentance

1. There is a worldly repentance which results from "being caught with your hand in the cookie jar". What does this sorrow accomplish according to 2 Corinthians 7:10
2. Worldly or false repentance is also being sorry for something which we have done, which can not be changed or undone. We see an example of this with Judas in Matthew 27:3,4. "Repented" in verse 3 means having regret. What resulted from Judas' repenting? Was God glorified?
3. Worldly repentance is often an emotional, tearful experience. Did Esau's shedding of tears bring repentance, according to Hebrews 12:16-17?
4. Neither is true repentance to be associated with carrying out some special religious rite or ordinance, "Doing Penance". What does Acts 11:18 say about repentance?
5. Saul, the first king of Israel, is a good example of false repentance. God sent Saul to destroy the Amalekites. But, he did not obey God. When confronted by Samuel, he admitted his sin, but what did he ask of Samuel according to I Samuel 15:30?

Conclusions: False/worldly repentance can be summarized as (1) being sorry for being caught; (2) regretting have done something because of the results; (3) being emotionally distraught over the consequences of your actions; (2) doing something to make up for your wrong; (5) saying I was wrong but let's carry on like nothing happened.

B. True repentance

There are five elements of true repentance, Luke 15:11-21.

1. Seeing the reality of the situation, Luke 15:17.

2. **Making an inward decision** to return to the Father, Luke 15:18a. The Greek word translated "to repent" has one clear, definite meaning, "to change one's mind.

3. **Godly sorrow**, Luke 15:18b

4. **Accepting consequences** of sin, Luke 15:19

5. **Acting on decision** to return to the Father, Luke 15:20. The Hebrew word most commonly translated "to repent" means to turn back. The emphasis is the outward action which is the expression of the inward change of mind. We might note also the Greek word translated "be converted", (Acts 3:19) has same meaning.

Conclusions: The five elements of true repentance are:

1. Seeing reality of situation;
2. Making inward decision to return to the Father;
3. Godly sorrow;
4. Accepting consequences; and
5. Acting on decision to return to the Father.

ANSWER THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS

Why is repentance important? Proverbs 28:13.

Importance shown by results:

The results of not repenting of sin,

Of Repenting.

What does true repentance accomplish? Acts 3:19

What is the source of true repentance? Acts 11:18,?

What is needful to receive this gift of God? Luke 11:9-13?

What does James 4:2 have to say about receiving from God?

REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

Hebrews 6:1 describes our repentance as being from "dead works". In Acts 20:21, repentance is called "repentance toward God". Combining these two Scriptures we see that repentance is to turn away from dead works and turn toward God.

What are "dead works", Romans 14:23?

Even "our righteousness"? Why? (Isaiah 64:6)

Conclusions: We would note from the above Scriptures that "dead works" includes everything which we do that is not done in "faith towards God", even our righteous acts. In the next lesson, lesson 12, we will discuss "Faith Towards God."

RESPONSE TO THE TRUTH

Knowing that repentance is a gift of God's grace should move one to ask, seek and knock at the door of God's grace this precious gift which their heavenly Father has for them.

_____ Do you have a difficult time admitting that you have sinned?

_____ Do you have a difficult time confessing your sins?

_____ Do you find it difficult to turn away from certain sins?

If you find it difficult to admit, confess, and turn away from your sins, you need to seek with all your heart this gift of God's grace, the gift of repentance that you may enter into that time of refreshing in the presence of your heavenly Father.

Psalm 51:3,10 - "For I acknowledge my transgressions and my sin is ever before *me*. Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me."

Psalm 139:23,24 - "Search me, O God, and know my heart: try me, and know my thoughts: And see if there be any wicked way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting."