

## Soteriology—Doctrine of Salvation: Repentance and Faith

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*Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord (Acts 3:19).* In the great and mysterious work of salvation there clearly is a human as well as a divine side. We do err whenever we ignore one and emphasize the other, or when we fail to teach each side in proper balance with the other. To the human side we look in this message. Dr. A. H. Strong wrote, *Conversion is that voluntary change in the mind of the sinner, in which he turns, on the one hand, from sin, and on the other hand, to Christ. The former or negative element in conversion, namely the turning from sin, we denominate repentance. The latter or positive element in conversion, namely, the turning to Christ, we denominate faith..... Conversion is the human side or aspect of that fundamental spiritual change which, as viewed from the divine side, we call regeneration (Systematic Theology, p. 829).*

### I. Repentance.

#### A. Definition of repentance.

1. *Metanoeo* is the Greek word translated *to change one's mind, feel remorse, repent, be converted (Arndt and Gingrich Lexicon).*
2. *Metamelomai* is the Greek word translated *regret, repent, can also mean to change one's mind (Arndt and Gingrich Lexicon).*
3. *Metanoeo* is regarded as the stronger term and expressive not merely of sorrow but of moral action in a new direction. Hence we may define repentance (*metanoeo*) as a change of mind toward sin and God's will leading to a change of feeling concerning them and a change of purpose in relation to them. What Judas felt (*metamelomai*) lacked the moral action of a new direction.

#### B. The nature of repentance.

1. As touching the intellect—*conviction*: a change of mind about one's obligation to the will of God.
2. As touching the emotions—*contrition*:

- a. A hatred of one's sin—*Ye that love the LORD, hate evil: he preserveth the souls of his saints; he delivereth them out of the hand of the wicked (Psalm 97:10).*
  - b. Sorrow for sin—*9 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. 10 For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death (II Corinthians 7:9-10).*
  3. As touching the will—*conversion*: the formation of a new purpose with reference to sin and God's will—*I will arise and go to my father... (Luke 15:18).*
- C. The manifestations of repentance.
1. Sin confessed.
    - a. To God—*3 When I kept silence, my bones waxed old through my roaring all the day long. 4 For day and night thy hand was heavy upon me: my moisture is turned into the drought of summer. Selah. 5 I acknowledged my sin unto thee, and mine iniquity have I not hid. I said, I will confess my transgressions unto the LORD; and thou forgavest the iniquity of my sin. Selah (Psalm 32:3-5).*
    - b. To man when man has been wronged by our sin—*Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much (James 5:16).*
  2. Sin forsaken—*He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy (Proverbs 28:13).*
- D. Repentance from the human and divine sides.
1. Men are called and commanded to repent—*3:19 Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.....17:30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent (Acts 3:19, 17:30); I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish (Luke 13:3).*
  2. Repentance is a gift from God—*5:31 Him hath God exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to give repentance to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.....11:18 When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life (Acts 5:31, 11:18); 24 And the servant of the Lord must not strive; but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient, 25 In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth (II Timothy 2:24-25).*
  3. Repentance is synchronous or simultaneous with regeneration which enables the sinner to repent.

## II. Faith.

### A. Definition of faith.

1. *Saving faith is trust in and reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ as one's personal Saviour and sin-bearer (T. P. Simmons).*
2. *Hebrews 11:1 describes faith as ...the substance of things hoped for, the evidence of things not seen. Faith is trust; it is our confidence concerning*

things we do not see but of which we are fully persuaded. Hope is the anticipation of a yet fuller enjoyment of those things.

3. Saving faith is more than historical faith which merely accepts as fact the things God has revealed about Himself.
4. Faith also goes beyond intellectual assent. Satan knows that Jesus is the divine Son of God, yet Satan has not saving faith.

**B. The object of faith.**

1. Many people today have accepted the idea of *faith in faith* or the power of positive thinking.
2. Saving faith is in God—*And Jesus answering saith unto them, Have faith in God (Mark 11:22).*
3. Saving faith is trusting and believing in God through Christ Jesus His Son. It is personal commitment.

**C. Faith, like repentance, is a gift from God. Since grace and repentance unto salvation are gifts from God and are through faith, we must see faith also as a gift from God—8 *For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast (Ephesians 2:8-9).***

**III. Repentance and faith considered together.**

**A. Repentance is inward, therefore John called those who came for his baptism to demonstrate repentance by evidencing its fruit—1 *In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, 2 And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. 3 For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight. 4 And the same John had his raiment of camel's hair, and a leathern girdle about his loins; and his meat was locusts and wild honey. 5 Then went out to him Jerusalem, and all Judaea, and all the region round about Jordan, 6 And were baptized of him in Jordan, confessing their sins. 7 But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? 8 Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance: 9 And think not to say within yourselves, We have Abraham to our father: for I say unto you, that God is able of these stones to raise up children unto Abraham (Matthew 3:1-9).***

**B. Faith likewise expresses its presence by works—*Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone (James 2:17).***

**IV. Conclusion: in repentance and faith, the Holy Spirit produces in the soul of man a change of mind about sin, a sorrow of heart over sin, and the formation of a new purpose with reference to sin and God's will, namely faith in God's Son as a personal Saviour who by the shedding of His blood paid the sin debt of all who will believe and commitment of our life to live in obedience to Him.**

## *Notes*