

Repentance - Cont.

ing in its place. His sin returned and he became worse than he was before (Matt. 12:43-45). One must put God's ways in his life.

In the book of Luke, the 15th chapter, we see all three elements of repentance come together. We are told of a son who wasted his livelihood in wasteful living. The son became poor and wretched to the point that he wished he could eat what the swine ate. The Bible says, "he came to himself" and remembered how it used to be with his father. He was so sorry for his sins that he was willing to be made one of his father's servants, feeling unworthy to be his son. He forsook his ways and came to his father. He repented as the Bible teaches. The father, while seeing him in the distance, ran out to meet him. The father didn't wait there until he came all the way but ran out to meet him. That is the great love of our God. When we with a contrite and penitent heart turn from our sin and turn to God, He then reaches out to you to forgive you willingly and with great joy. "For this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found.' And they began to be merry" (Lk. 15:24). "Likewise, I say to you, there is joy in the presence of

Repentance - Cont.

the angels of God over one sinner who repents" (Lk. 15:10).

Repentance: what is it? It is godly sorrow for sin, the turning from sin, and turning to God; this is what saves you and pleases God. If you have not why don't you today, "repent... and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38)?

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

Guest Article: Repentance, What Is It? by Steve Monts

I am sure we have all known of people that were zealous to turn their life around, obey the plan of salvation, but then they quickly fell away. They understood the commands to believe, repent, confess and be baptized, or at least they thought they did. What I have often noticed is that repentance is the command they didn't understand. They didn't fully understand everything that goes into leading a repentant life.

Hebrews 6:1 tells us that repentance is a first principle so therefore it must be understood before other aspects of Christianity. The International Standard Bible Encyclopedia had this to say about repentance: *The term metamelomai (the Greek term for "repent", SJM), literally signifies to have a feeling or care, concern or regret. It implies a conscious, moral separation, and a personal decision to forsake sin and to enter into fellowship with God. It is employed extensively with reference to man's turning away from sin to righteousness.* There are three aspects included in repentance: godly sorrow, turning away from sin, and turning towards God. All three elements make up the necessary command to repent. Let us look to the Bible and see how it displays all three elements.

The sorrow involved in repentance must be a deep sorrow. For if you are not truly sorry you will not change. *"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. For observe this very thing, that you sorrowed in a godly manner: What diligence it produced in you, what clearing of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what vehement desire, what zeal, what vindication! In all things you proved yourselves to be clear in this matter"* (2 Cor 7:10-11). Paul clearly showed that their godly sorrow would be the first step of their repentance which led to salvation and a transformed life. The emotion has got to be there, for you can say you are sorry and not really be sorry. David in 2 Samuel 12 was so sorry for his sin with Bathsheba that he wrote a Psalm describing his broken and contrite heart (Ps 51). The repentance leading to salvation requires godly sorrow.

Repentance is not just emotion it involves action. The sinner must turn away from his sin. "Let the wicked forsake his way." (Isa. 5:7). A great example of repentance happened when many "magicians" heard and believed in Christ, and then they burned all their magic books (Acts 19:18-19). What a way to turn from sin! If we could all just burn the things that we formally practiced that were sinful!

That would certainly be a way in which we would not be tempted with them anymore. O, let the wicked forsake his way!

But if all repentance involved were sorrow for sin and forsaking sin, what a miserable life it would be. We need the third element of repentance; we need to turn towards God. Judas only had the first two elements. He was certainly sorry for his sin and turned from his sin by casting the money away from him and if he had to do it all over again I firmly believe he would choose not to betray Christ. His error was instead of turning to God he turned to despair and committed suicide. Without the third element in repentance we would all lose hope!

We must turn to God. The Gentiles were told, "that they should repent, turn to God and do works befitting repentance" (Acts 26:20). The Thessalonians had, "turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God" (1 Thess. 1:9). That is how we turn to God; we serve His ways! His ways are in the Bible (2 Tim. 3:16-17). And if we do not turn then it is just a matter of time until we fall away. Jesus taught a parable of a man who had rid himself of his sinful ways, but put noth-