

SPIRITUAL ALIGNMENT: REPENTANCE

(2011 Congregational Theme: Daily Disciples: Repentance)

A. Do you remember when you learned to drive a car?

1. Didn't you think that to keep the car going straight - all you had to do was hold on to the steering wheel?
2. And didn't you think that to turn the car all you had to do was turn the steering wheel around a couple of times?
3. We all quickly learned that to keep a car on the road we have to constantly correct our direction. *We also have to take into account the size of car, the conditions on the road & even the weather.*
 - a. This process is called "alignment" – and often times while driving an automobile "realignment" is necessary—*In Scripture there is a similar process: "**Repentance!**"*

- To most people, the word "repentance" or "repent" like the word "sin" is just an *old fashioned* (archaic) expression.

- But as we're going to learn in this lesson, God has determined that this concept should never lose its significance in any generation.

B. We who are the Lord's disciples are aware of the fact that God's word teaches that for sinners to be saved they must repent.

1. They must turn their behavior around & align it with the teachings of Christ ([Matt. 9:13](#); [Luke 24:47](#); [Acts 2:38](#)).

C. And yet we sometimes forget the need for repentance in our daily lives.

1. It is the daily alignment we need to be in a proper position to God's will.

2. One of the reasons we drift of course from time to time is because we believe that we made the final alignment when we became Christians.

3. But, in fact, Christians need to do an alignment every day to keep from drifting off course: Daily repentance will help us realign our thoughts, time, & desires, in the direction of the will of God, so that we make sure we are walking with Him.

D. Remember what Jesus said, “If anyone desires to come after Me, let him deny himself, & take up his cross daily, & follow Me” (Luke 9:23).

1. We can’t follow Jesus without daily course corrections—and that is called repentance.

[Today we’re going to show, first of all, that God demands repentance from everyone. Then we’re going to give a brief definition of it. Finally we’re going to look at two examples of true repentance.]

I. THE DEMAND OF REPENTANCE

A. The word is found 969 times in the Bible, which should tell us that it is important to God.

1. Necessary to come out of ignorance (Acts 17:30).

2. Essential to blotting out sins (Acts 3:19).

3. The first word in Jesus’ public ministry (Matt 4:17).

4. The last thing Jesus said (Rev 3:19-21).

5. It is a matter of utmost urgency (Luke 13:1-5).

6. The result of “hearing” the Scripture (Luke 16:19-31).

[So we must heed what the Scriptures teach us about repentance, because it is demanded by God.]

II. THE DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

A. First, let’s discuss a few things that fall short of repentance.

1. It is more than being convicted of sin.
 - a. Governor Felix ([Acts 24:24-26](#)).
 - b. It's more than feeling bad after a sermon.
2. It is more than a confession of sin.
 - a. Judas Iscariot ([Matt 27:4](#)).
 - b. Pharaoh ([Exo 9:27](#); [10:16](#)).
 - c. Balaam ([Num 22:34](#)).
 - d. King Saul ([1 Sam 15:24, 30](#); [26:21](#)).
 - e. Confesses AND **forsakes** sin ([Prov 28:13](#)).
3. It is more than contrition for sin.
 - a. Godly sorrow leads to it ([2 Cor 7:8-10](#)).
 - b. Sorrow of the world: Judas & King Saul.

B. **Repentance IS** the correction & prevention of sin; literally, “to turn, or change,” the way you’re going.

1. “To think differently or afterwards; reconsider.”
(Strong’s) “To turn, or change one’s mind”.
(Thayer’s)
2. It’s more than an attitude; it is action ([Luke 3:7-14](#)); it is practical (actual use or purpose); it is visible.
 - a. Example: Jonah’s preaching ([Jonah 3:10](#)).
 - b. Example: Paul’s preaching ([Acts 26:19-20](#)).

[Now it’s time to get specific. It’s time for a graphic, vivid description of the action of repentance. What will it cost us on a daily basis?

The reason it is so important to DEPICT repentance is because there so are many who want Jesus Christ & what He offers, but who don’t want change.

Many times I’ve visited with people who either did or would be glad to confess their faith in Jesus Christ & be baptized – but who would not repent, because they were not ready to give up their sinful lifestyle, their love for the world.

They want Jesus without personal change. They want forgiveness & eternal salvation without repentance. They want someone to satisfy their delusions.]

III. THE DEPICTION OF REPENTANCE

A. Zacchaeus (Luke 19:1-10).

1. “There is no one so good that they don’t need to repent.”

B. Two Sons (Matt 21:28-32).

2. “There is no one so bad that they cannot repent.”
3. Consider also the repentance of Peter following this dramatic event in his life (Matt 26:75).

[Let’s wrap-up this lesson with two conclusions.]

CONCLUSIONS

A. Repentance is not just a decision; it is a direction.

1. It is not just a response to our sins; it is a roadmap around sin, which takes us in a totally different direction.
2. The Lord does not want a people who only know what to do when they sin (1 John 1:9; Acts 8:22); He wants a people that avoid sin altogether, THAT REQUIRES DAILY REPENTANCE.... (1 Cor 15:34; Eph 4:26; 1 John 2:1).

B. Repentance is not credible if it is not visible.

1. It is not something we can conceal; it is noticeable; it can be proven by our deeds.
2. Sometimes we need to take a very honest look at ourselves & then ask ourselves the question, “How do other people view me?”
 - a. If, in being honest with myself, I know that other people view me as someone who needs to change something in my behavior – then – repentance will bring about that change, & others will be able to see that change in me.

3. A Christian is a lamp that sheds light on Truth & Righteousness for all to see.

4. A light under a basket is one who has not made the necessary course corrections in life, & thus they are no better than darkness (**Matt 5:16**).

a. So Daily Discipleship is not credible if it is not visible.

[In a Bible class a lady was asked the meaning of “repent.” She responded, “Oh, that’s easy, that’s what people do in the aisle.” “In the aisle,” asked the teacher. “Yes, you believe in the pew, repent in the aisle, you confess at the front, & you’re baptized in the baptistry.”

May we not relegated repentance to an insignificant role – it is a foundation to our daily walk of faith?]

GOD’S PLAN FOR OUR SALVATION:

Hear the gospel of Jesus Christ: Mark 16:15-16; Acts 2: 3; 13; 17; Rom 10:17

Believe Jesus to be Lord, Christ, Son of God and Savior: Acts 2:36; John 3:16; 8:24; 20:30-31; Acts 4:12; Heb 11:6

Repent and turn from sin: Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 1 John 3:4

Confess faith in Jesus Christ: Matt 10:32-33; Acts 8:37; Rom 10:9-10

Be baptized for the forgiveness of sin and salvation: Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38; Rom 6:3-4; Gal 3:27; 1 Pet 3:21

Obey the word of Christ, He will be your Judge: Titus 2:11-12; Heb 5:9; 2 John 9; Rev 2:10; John 12:48