

## REPENTANCE

1. *What is repentance?* According to Rom. 2:4, repentance is something to which the goodness of God leads. "Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

And according to 2 Cor. 7 : 10 and Ps. 38 ; 17, 18, repentance is something which is wrought by, and which comes after, sorrow for sin. "For godly sorrow worketh repentance unto salvation, a repentance which bring eth no regret: but the sorrow of the world worketh death."

"For I am ready to fall,  
And my sorrow is continually before me.  
For I will declare mine iniquity;  
I will be sorry for my sin."

And according to Acts 26: 19, 20, repentance is something which comes before turning to God. "Wherefore, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision: but declared both to them of Damascus first, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the country of Judaea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, doing works worthy, of repentance." These Scriptures lead us to conclude that repentance is something which comes between being sorry for and turning away from sin. We will find an instance in Luke 15:17-20, where the first sentence of verse 18 shows repentance to be the change of will or purpose, the making of a sincere resolve, which is the actual turning of the will. "But when he came to himself he said, How many hired servants of my father's have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! I will arise and go to my father, and will say unto him, Father, I have sinned against heaven, and in thy sight: I am no more worthy to be called thy son: make me as one of thy hired servants. And he arose, and came to his father. But while he was yet afar off, his father saw him, and was moved with compassion, and ran, and fell on his neck, and kissed him."

2. *Is repentance a matter of importance?* "I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all in like manner perish" (Luke 13 :3) .

"And Peter said unto them, Repent ye, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit" (Acts 2: 38).

"I say unto you, That even so there shall be joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine righteous persons, who need no repentance."

These passages settle forever the matter of the importance of repentance. They can not be read without making the obligatory nature of repentance perfectly apparent.

3. *On whom does the responsibility rest?* It is sometimes thought that, if men do

not repent, it is because God has not peculiarly visited them with "conviction." Repentance is thought by some to be a type of conviction which can only come immediately from God. You will find in the following Scriptures, and in others of like importance, that the responsibility of accepting the overtures which God has made through Jesus Christ rests upon the individual to whom the appeal is made.

"Then began he to upbraid the cities wherein most of his mighty works were done, because they repented not" (Matt. 11:20).

"The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent" (Acts 17:30).

4. *When is the time for repentance?* Both reason and revelation indicate that the present is the only time for repentance, because the present is the only time we have.

"Wherefore, even as the Holy Spirit saith, To-day if ye shall hear his voice, Harden not your hearts" (Heb. 3: 7, 8)

"Behold, now is the acceptable time; behold, now is the day of salvation" (2 Cor. 6: 2).

— Author unknown