



GOOD NEWS

for the unsaved WORLD!

(#84)

Good News – Repentance: a part of "believing."

1

WHAT WE MUST DO TO BE SAVED.

(OUR responsibility.)

Once we accept what the Bible says as true... **#1 Conviction**

OUR FOCUS IS HERE ... it will lead us down the path of change. **#2 Change**

Only then will we experience the results we call "salvation." **#3 Consequences**

[A focus on our responsibility does not deny God's role in salvation!]

2

SALVATION → A COMPLETE TURN-AROUND.

Not just: A change in eternal destiny in the **FUTURE**,
But also: A change in values and conduct **NOW**.

A complete turn-around in how we live now.

- From the path of **wickedness**,*
- To the path of **righteousness**.

This change is a mandatory part of salvation. Without it, salvation does not exist.

* According to the Bible, anyone – even a "good" person – who is not pursuing a godly life is considered wicked.

3

REPENTANCE IS **MANDATORY**? YES! BECAUSE GOD **COMMANDS IT!** (Acts 17:30)

EVEN IF WE DON'T USE THE WORD "REPENTANCE" ...

The change that characterizes repentance is still a necessary part of salvation!

There is no such thing as a "genuine believer" without it!

We can illustrate this change this way:

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Salvation begins with a turn-around in direction.

- This is the **initial step** that people must take, in order to follow Jesus. They must recognize their sinful ways and reject them.
- It involves a complete turn around in values and conduct.

OUR FLIGHT PLAN SAYS WE MUST GO **EAST**. BUT WE ARE HEADING **WEST**.



THEN WE MUST MAKE A COMPLETE TURN-AROUND!



WEST EAST

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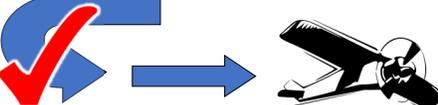
Once saved, we are headed in the right direction.

- Salvation (if genuine) involves a change in nature, guaranteed by God; so the initial turn-around is needed only once. (Fakes may make a temporary change in direction, but will eventually return to their old ways – 2 Peter 2:22.)

OUR FLIGHT PLAN SAYS WE MUST GO **EAST**. AND WE ARE HEADING **EAST**.



THEN WE ARE HEADED IN THE RIGHT DIRECTION!



WEST EAST

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A saved person will continue to make changes.

- Salvation is an **ongoing process**, in which we become more like Christ as we continue to deal with our sins and imperfections. (This change involves adjustments and corrections, to keep on the "straight and narrow" path.)

OUR FLIGHT PLAN SAYS WE MUST GO **EAST**. WE HAVE VEERED **NORTHEAST**.



WE MUST ADJUST OUR DIRECTION BACK TO **EAST!**



7

THE NEW TESTAMENT WORD GROUP TRANSLATED AS: *faith, trust, believe...*

- It occurs **much more often** than the word translated as "repent."
- But the "believing" that results in salvation presupposes the type of change that repentance describes.

>> THEREFORE: <<

- We can examine the concept of "repentance" to better understand this "change that is a part of faith"!

DO NOT FORGET GOD'S ROLE IN SALVATION!

God **guarantees** that salvation will occur the way **Scripture** says it will! People can't make changes to the nature of salvation and expect it to work!

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WHAT CAN WE LEARN FROM THE WORD GROUP TRANSLATED AS: *repent and repentance?*

⇒Quite a lot!

But of #1 importance is this fact: **GOD is involved!**

{ This is why people **cannot** ignore repentance and still get the same saving results. }

- FIRST, GOD COMMANDS THAT PEOPLE REPENT.**

WHY? Because the day of judgment is coming.

[God] commands all people everywhere to **repent**. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed [= Jesus].

Acts 17:30b-31a (CSB)

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- SECOND, GOD ALSO DESIRES THAT PEOPLE REPENT.**

WHY? Because it is not his desire for people to perish.

The Lord ... is patient with you, not wanting any to perish but all to come to **repentance**.

2 Peter 3:9 (CSB)

- FINALLY, GOD MAKES REPENTANCE POSSIBLE** – to both Jews and non-Jews.

God exalted [Jesus], to give **repentance** to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

Acts 5:31 (CSB)

God has given **repentance** resulting in life even to the Gentiles.

Acts 11:18b (CSB)

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WHY HASN'T JUDGMENT COME YET?

God has held back this judgment and showed kindness to us... in order to give us an opportunity to repent. **Don't throw away your opportunity!**

Or do you despise the riches of his kindness, restraint, and patience, not recognizing that God's kindness is intended to lead you to **repentance**?

Romans 2:4 (CSB)

- If we don't repent, **only one option** remains.

But because of your stubbornness and your **unrepentant** heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when his righteous judgment will be revealed.

God "will give to each person according to what he has done." ...

For God does not show favoritism.

Romans 2:5-6, 11 (NIV)

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A WARNING to those who **claim** to be "Christian," but who refuse to repent!

- Churches (groups of people who claim to be Christians) often have fakes in their midst.
- When addressing such a group, God may give them warnings about judgment, or even about eternal punishment.
 - These warnings separate **genuine** followers of Jesus from the **fakes**. The genuine followers repent (if they have sinned). >> HOWEVER <<
- When judgment does occur, we do not have to claim that **all** who experienced it are fakes – though in some cases, it may be obvious. (We can leave the matter in God's hands.)

Some examples of these warnings: ➔

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EXAMPLE #1: The church at Corinth. (a) Guilty of sin.

- **1 Corinthians** was written to "newborn" Christians, who needed a lot of growing. It is filled with instructions, corrections, rebukes.
- Because of their abuse of the Lord's Supper, many of the Corinthians fell under God's judgment. Some even died.

For anyone who eats and drinks without recognizing the body of the Lord* eats and drinks **judgment** on himself. That is why many among you are **weak and sick**, and a number of you have **fallen asleep** [= they died].

But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. When we are judged by the Lord, we are being **disciplined** so that we will not be condemned with the world.

1 Cor. 11:29-32 (NIV)

* (This probably refers to the poorer members of the church – the "body of Christ." Sinning against them is the same as sinning against Christ himself.)

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(b) Repentant.

- **2 Corinthians** shows us that they changed their ways. They paid attention to the instructions and rebukes of 1 Corinthians, and they repented.

Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while—yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to **repentance**.

For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.

Godly sorrow brings **repentance** that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

2 Cor. 7:8-10 (NIV)

The characteristic of a saved person *isn't* total perfection. (The Corinthians weren't totally perfect!)

Rather, it's **repentance** of sin, in the pursuit of perfection.

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EXAMPLE #2: Certain churches in Asia. They needed to repent.

- Each church (groups of people who claim to be Christians) is different. The rebukes of Revelation 2-3 (given to 5 of the 7 churches) apply to a wide range of situations:
 - ✓ Churches comprised of genuine Christians, who have become lax in some godly characteristic.
 - ✓ Churches that were a mixture of genuine Christians and fakes.
 - ✓ Churches that appeared to be mostly departed from the faith. (Their response to the rebuke would show whether or not they were genuine.)

THE CHURCH AT EPHEBUS HAD BECOME LAX IN EXPRESSING LOVE.

You have abandoned the love you had at first. Remember then how far you have fallen; **repent**, and do the works you did at first. Otherwise, I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place, unless you **repent**.

Revelation 2:4b-5 (CSB)

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THE CHURCH AT PERGAMUM TOLERATED SEXUAL SIN.

So **repent**! Otherwise, I will come to you quickly and fight against them with the sword of my mouth.

Revelation 2:16 (CSB)

(The **group** needed to repent of tolerating sin; or God would fight against the **individuals** who were guilty of the specific sins.)

THE CHURCH AT THYATIRA TOLERATED SEXUAL SIN AND IDOLATRY.

I have given her time to **repent** of her immorality, but she is unwilling. So I will cast her on a bed of suffering, and I will make those who commit adultery with her suffer intensely, unless they **repent** of her ways.

Rev. 2:21-22 (NIV)

THE CHURCH AT SARDIS HAD BECOME SPIRITUALLY DEAD.

Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; obey it, and **repent**. But if you do not wake up, I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.

Rev. 3:3 (NIV); deadness is mentioned in v. 1.

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THE CHURCH AT LAODICEA WAS FILLED WITH LUKEWARM PRETENSION.

- Things had gotten so bad that Jesus wasn't even in the church (see v. 20)!
- But even here, he offered hope to those who would be willing to repent.

As many as I love, I rebuke and discipline. So be zealous and **repent**.

See! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in to him and eat with him, and he with me.

Revelation 3:19-20 (CSB)

⇒ The people in each of these churches had to decide how they would respond.

☞ **The FAKES** would ignore what Jesus said... and reap the consequences.

☞ **The GENUINE** would pay attention and repent. In each of the passages, these commands are followed by a promise of blessing to those willing to "overcome."

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Scripture gives warnings to people who are exposed to the truth, and who later abandon it.

- For a while, such people might look "saved"... but then they leave.

For it is impossible to restore to **repentance** those who were once enlightened—those who have experienced the good things of heaven and shared in the Holy Spirit, who have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the power of the age to come—and who then turn away from God.

Hebrews 6:4-6a (NLT)

- The presence of a warning is not "proof" that they are all unsaved. It all depends on their response to the warning.

Dear friends, even though we are talking like this, we really don't believe that it applies to you. We are confident that you are meant for better things, things that come with salvation.

Hebrews 6:9 (NLT)

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So what should we conclude?

Don't treat repentance as a trivial matter that can be ignored!

⇨ **If we want to be the Bible's type of "believer,"**
 ⇩ **Then we need to be the Bible's type of "repenter"!**

THIS WEEK'S MISSION: Focus on this as our goal!

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