

28 October 2018

Repentance Pt 2 Who is to repent?

In our previous study we established a meaning of the word “repentance” from within the scriptures that included – (1) to turn, or change direction, (2) to be sorry, and (3) to feel pity or sorrow for another. In this study we establish from the scriptures who is to repent, and we learn that (1) Israel were commanded to repent (2) God granted repentance to the Gentiles (3) those in the body of Christ are to repent, and (4) therefore God commands all men every where to repent.

Scriptures upon which this teaching is founded.

1. The nation of Israel were commanded to repent.

“Therefore say unto the house of Israel, Thus saith the Lord God; Repent, and turn yourselves from your idols; and turn away your faces from all your abominations” (Ez.14: 6). See also Ez.18: 30.

Cities – the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonas – Matt.12: 41 & Lk.11: 32

Individuals – Job repented, which included him abhorring himself in dust and ashes – Job 42: 6.

2. God granted repentance to the Gentiles.

“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 11: 18).

Paul testified to the Jews and Greeks – repentance towards God and faith in Christ – Acts 20: 21.

3. Those in the body of Christ are to repent.

“And lest, when I come again, my God will humble me among you, and that I shall bewail many which have sinned already, and have not repented of the uncleanness and fornication and lasciviousness which they have committed” (2 Cor.12: 21).

4. Therefore, God commands all men every where to repent.

“And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent” (Acts 17:30). See also 2 Pet.3: 9.

An illustration to help apply the teaching to our life today.

The parable of the Pharisee and the publican that went to the temple to pray is a useful example – where the “Pharisee stood and prayed thus with himself, God I thank thee, that I am not as other men are, extortioners, unjust, adulterers, or even as this publican. I fast twice in the week, I give tithes of all that I possess. And the publican, standing a far off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner.” (Lk.18: 9–13).

Question to think about.

Why did the publican go “down to his house justified” (Lk.18: 13)?

Answer from the scriptures.

Because the publican had an attitude of humility and repentance towards God in admitting his sinfulness to God. Whereas the Pharisee came to God with an attitude of arrogance and self-righteousness. All men – Jew, Gentile and those in the body of Christ are commanded to repent, but the Lord Jesus Christ only called the sinner to repentance – those with an attitude of the publican. Christ did not call the righteous to repent, nevertheless He rebuked those cities that repented not (Matt.11: 20).

There are some however that speak words of repentance but God does not accept them – (Saul, Judas, Simon the Sorcerer). Why? Find out in our next teaching.

For now let us be clear – God commands both the lost, and the saved every where to repent.