

Matthew 3:8

by Chuck Smith

True repentance is a change of mind and a feeling of contrition that leads to a complete ceasing of sin and a hatred towards it.

Scripture: Psalm 51:17, Isaiah 59:1-2, Jeremiah 14:12, Matthew 3:8, Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38, Romans 2:4, 2 Corinthians 7:10, James 4:8, 1 John 1:9

Topics: "Repentance", "Transformation"

Description

Chuck Smith emphasizes the critical nature of true repentance in the Christian faith, explaining that it involves a genuine change of mind and heart, leading to a complete forsaking of sin. He distinguishes between mere sorrow for actions and true repentance, which is evidenced by a transformed life and the bearing of good fruit. Smith highlights that repentance is the first step toward salvation and restoration, and he warns against the dangers of phony repentance that lacks real change. He also discusses the importance of understanding the consequences of sin and the necessity of God's love and forgiveness in the process of true repentance.

Transcript

Proof of Repentance

I. The first word of God to man after 400 years of silence. Repent.

A. Vs. 2 John came preaching in the wilderness saying, "Repent"

B. What does it mean to repent?

1. One definition is to have a change of mind.

2. Another is to have a feeling of contrition.

3. You can change your mind without repenting.

4. You can also have contrition or sorrow about your actions without repentance.

a. You can say that you are sorry for what you

have done, however if you keep doing it, it is not true repentance.

b. Real repentance is being so sorry that you never do it again.

5. If a person declares that he has repented for a certain action or sin, and if they continue in that same action, there is good reason to doubt the genuineness of the repentance.

C. Repentance is the first step in salvation.

1. When on the day of Pentecost, and the people were convicted at the preaching of Peter and inquired what they should do Peter answered, "Repent, and be baptized into the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you will receive gift of the Holy Spirit.

2. The first word of the gospel was repent.

3. This is the first sign that we look for as an indication that the Holy Spirit is truly working in a persons life.

4. It is only as there is true repentance, is there any hope of restoration.

D. The scripture declares that Godly sorrow worketh repentance but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

1. Note there are two kinds of sorrow, Godly sorrow, and worldly sorrow, the one works repentance, and the other works death.

2. Jimmy Swagart might be a good example of a man who professed repentance, and publicly declared great

sorrow for his actions. He apologized with tears asking the people for their forgiveness. If you were watching of T.V. you remember the people calling out, we forgive you Jimmy. Yet when he went out and repeated the same sin, it caused a real and legitimate question of the genuineness of the repentance.

E. It is interesting that when Jesus was writing to the seven churches in Asia, He called five of the seven to repent.

1. For God to work in my life, the first step is repentance.

2. The first work of the Spirit in my life is that of repentance.

E. With true repentance is the necessity of forgiveness. That is not an option, it is a command.

F. Phony repentance is such a hurtful thing. When a person has declared their repentance of a certain act, and then you find that they are continuing in that same action, it hurts deeply.

You had hoped that they had brought that sin to the cross, and through the Spirit mortified the deeds of the flesh, then you hear or see the evidences of the old nature still in control, you want to cry.

II. John is calling for the people to bring forth fruit, that demonstrated a true repentance.

A. This is exactly what the Lord wants to see, fruit that demonstrates that the sin has been not only renounced, but forsaken.

B. There are certain precautions that need to be taken, when one

has realized that they have a problem in a certain area of their lives.

1. If you are an alcoholic you do not go to a bar to buy a coke.

2. If you have had a problem with women, you do not speak to them in a provocative or suggestive way.

3. If you have a problem with gambling, Las Vegas is not the place for your vacation.

C. The fruit of repentance is the complete forsaking of the sin, or anything that is even close to or could be associated with the sin.

D. Another fruit is a broken and a contrite heart. David said, "You do not want sacrifice or offering. But a broken and a contrite spirit, you will not despise."

1. The sacrifice and offering without a true repentance is worthless.

2. Prayer without repentance is deceptive.

a. If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me when I pray.

b.

ISA 59:1 Behold, the LORD'S hand is not shortened, that it cannot save neither his ear heavy, that it cannot hear, but your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sins have hid [his] face from you, that he will not hear. For your hands are defiled with blood, and your fingers with iniquity; your lips have spoken lies, your tongue hath muttered perverseness. In other

words, there was no fruit of repentance.

c. Isa. 1:15 When you spread forth your hands, I will hide My eyes from you. When you make many prayers, I will not hear. What is the problem?

There hands are full of blood.

d. Jer. 14:12 When they fast, I will not hear their cry. and when they offer burnt offering and oblation, I will not accept them.

III. What brings true repentance?

A. Paul said that the goodness of God leads us to repentance.

1. I need to know that God loves me and will forgive me.

2. I need to know that God can work the changes in my life.

a. He can change my desires, or can give me power over the desire.

b. I know some people who when they came to Christ, lost all desire to ever drink alcoholic beverages again.

c. I know others for whom it was a struggle, but they were given the power to resist, which they had never had before.

B. An awareness of the horrible consequences of my sin.

1. The hurt pain and sorrow it has brought to others.

2. The anger and bitterness it has engendered against God in the minds of others.

a. The prophet when facing David concerning his sin, declared, "You have given great cause for

the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme."

- b. It discredits the gospel of Jesus Christ.
- c. When you seek to witness in Europe, they may know nothing about James Kennedy, or Lloyd Ogalvie. But they have all heard of Jimmy Baker, or Jimmy Swagart. And they bring them up to discredit your witness.

3. To realize that your sin may be responsible for giving people an excuse to not accept Jesus Christ.

- a. To think that my name is being used by the enemies of the gospel to prove that the gospel is not effective in changing lives.
- b. To realize that in a way, I have crucified the Son of God afresh, and put Him to open shame.

C. These are the things that if taken to heart will bring Godly sorrow.

- 1. And it is the Godly sorrow that worketh repentance.
- 2. It is much more than just saying I repent.
 - a. You can write that on the board one hundred times and still not have truly repented.
 - b. The true repentance will be manifested by the complete ceasing of the sin, the renouncing of it, and a hatred toward it.

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