

WHAT IT MEANS TO REPENT : PART 1

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Recently, a very good friend of mine asked me two important questions. First, he wanted to know if we need to repent of our sins in order to be saved. And second, he wanted to know exactly what we need to repent of, and why. What about you? Do you think you know the answer to these two questions? If not, then perhaps the following series will enlighten you as well.

If you were to ask any number of Christians what the word "repent" means, the vast majority of them would probably tell you that it generally means to be sorry for your sins, and to turn away from your wickedness. This is in fact the meaning which has been drilled into Christians for literally centuries. However, it may interest you to know that this modern definition of the word "repent" does not exactly fit the Biblical, or archaic, definition of the word. Yes, they are definitely related, as I will be explaining later on in this same series. However, they are not quite the same. This fact becomes evident when we examine the very first place in the Scriptures where the word "repent" is used. Consider the following two verses which are found in the Book of Genesis:

"And GOD saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth, and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart."

Genesis 6:5-6, KJV

Those verses have absolutely nothing to do with Salvation. So, I am sure that it is obvious to you that they cannot be implying that God was sorry for His sins, or that He had to turn away from His wickedness. Such a thought is ludicrous to say the least. After all, God is perfect, and without sin of any kind. As the Apostle John tells us, God is light, and there is no darkness in Him at all. Likewise, we are told by the Apostle Paul that Jesus knew no sin; as we can determine by the following two verses:

"This then is the message which we have heard of him, and declare unto you, that God is light, and in him is no darkness at all."

1 John 1:5, KJV

"For he hath made him to be sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in him."

2 Corinthians 5:21, KJV

So if the Biblical definition of the word "repent" in those verses from Genesis is not to be sorry for one's sins, and to turn away from those same sins, then exactly what is it? As it turns out, in Genesis 6:6 above, the word "repented" is derived from the Hebrew word "nacham". Pronounced naw-kham', this Hebrew word has a variety of meanings, including to be sorry, console oneself, repent, rue, regret, comfort or be comforted. Consider how it is defined in the Brown, Driver, Briggs, Gesenius Hebrew Aramaic English Lexicon:

----- Begin Quote -----

05162 נחם nacham nawkham'

AV comfort 57, repent 41, comforter 9, ease 1; 108

1) to be sorry, console oneself, repent, regret, comfort,
be comforted

1a) (Niphal)

1a1) to be sorry, be moved to pity, have compassion

- 1a2) to be sorry, rue, suffer grief, repent
- 1a3) to comfort oneself, be comforted
- 1a4) to comfort oneself, ease oneself
- 1b) (Piel) to comfort, console
- 1c) (Pual) to be comforted, be consoled
- 1d) (Hithpael)
 - 1d1) to be sorry, have compassion
 - 1d2) to rue, repent of
 - 1d3) to comfort oneself, be comforted
 - 1d4) to ease oneself

----- End Quote -----

Hebrew is a bit of a tricky language, and how a particular word is translated into English depends a lot on the context of the surrounding words. In this case, the KJV translators chose to use the word "repent". However, as I said earlier, how we understand the word today is not exactly the same as how it was understood four hundred years ago. Based on the fact that we are also told that the LORD was grieved when He beheld the wicked state of man, I believe that the intended understanding here is that He was sorry that He had created man, and that He regretted and rued His decision to make man. Taken altogether, we can say that the LORD had a change of mind regarding the subject. In other words, initially, He thought it was a good idea to make man. However, once He saw how wicked man had become, He changed His mind and regretted His decision.

The fact that the LORD changed His mind is made even more evident when we read the very next verse where we are told that He was so grieved by the wickedness of man, and so regretted His decision of having made man, that He decided that He was going to destroy man, as we see here:

"And the LORD said, I will destroy man whom I have created from the face of the earth; both man, and beast, and the creeping thing, and the fowls of the air; for it repenteth me that I have made them."

Genesis 6:7, KJV

So when it says "it repenteth me", it means that the LORD regretted creating man. God had a change of mind. He went from thinking that it was good to create man, to thinking it would be better off to destroy them all, save for Noah and his immediate family. No doubt, this one example of how the word "repent" is meant to be understood in the Scriptures

will not be enough to convince some of my readers. However, I am confident that after I've presented a few more examples for your consideration, you will begin to see how really clear this is. Turning to the Book of Exodus, we find Moses pleading with God after the people have fashioned the golden calf. In the thirty-second chapter of the Book we read the following:

"And the LORD said unto Moses, Go, get thee down; for thy people, which thou broughtest out of the land of Egypt, have corrupted themselves: They have turned aside quickly out of the way which I commanded them: they have made them a molten calf, and have worshipped it, and have sacrificed thereunto, and said, These be thy gods, O Israel, which have brought thee up out of the land of Egypt. And the LORD said unto Moses, I have seen this people, and, behold, it is a stiffnecked people: Now therefore let me alone, that my wrath may wax hot against them, and that I may consume them: and I will make of thee a great nation. And Moses besought the LORD his God, and said, LORD, why doth thy wrath wax hot against thy people, which thou hast brought forth out of the land of Egypt with great power, and with a mighty hand? Wherefore should the Egyptians speak, and say, For mischief did he bring them out, to slay them in the mountains, and to consume them from the face of the earth? Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people. Remember Abraham, Isaac, and Israel, thy servants, to whom thou swarest by thine own self, and saidst unto them, I will multiply your seed as the stars of heaven, and all this land that I have spoken of will I give unto your seed, and they shall inherit it for ever. And the LORD repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people."

Exodus 32:7-14, KJV

So as you can see, God was really ready to let them have it due to their blatant idolatry. He was going to let His wrath be felt. But notice what Moses says to Him, and then how the Lord responds. Moses says "Turn from thy fierce wrath, and repent of this evil against thy people." In other words, Moses is pleading with God to change His mind; and the last verse tells us that this is exactly what the LORD did. We're told that he "repented of the evil which he thought to do unto his people." In other words, God changed His mind about it, and decided to not do it.

Moving up to the Book of Judges, we find yet another example

where the word "repent" is directly related to changing one's mind. As I point out in a number of articles, such as "The Fruits of Disobedience", if there is one thing we learn from studying the Old Testament, it is that the Israelites were in a constant state of flux between obedience to the Lord, and blatant disobedience and outright apostasy. As a result, and exactly as He had warned through Moses in the various Books of the Pentateuch, the Lord found it necessary to chastise the Israelites again and again. This chastisement came in the form of crop failure, drought, disease -- a.k.a. pestilence -- invasion, subjugation and death. This is precisely the situation we find in the following verses that are found in Judges chapter two:

"Nevertheless the LORD raised up judges, which delivered them out of the hand of those that spoiled them. And yet they would not hearken unto their judges, but they went a whoring after other gods, and bowed themselves unto them: they turned quickly out of the way which their fathers walked in, obeying the commandments of the LORD; but they did not so. And when the LORD raised them up judges, then the LORD was with the judge, and delivered them out of the hand of their enemies all the days of the judge: for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them.

Judges 2:16-18, KJV

As you can see, we are plainly told why the Lord lifted the chastisement in the words "for it repented the LORD because of their groanings by reason of them that oppressed them and vexed them." So once again, it is evident that the phrase "it repented the LORD" means that He changed His mind, and halted the affliction once they had learned their lesson. In each of the Scriptural examples I have presented to you, the same Hebrew word "nacham" is used; and in each case, the end result is that the Lord changes His mind regarding a certain matter. The only thing that is different, is the motivating factor regarding why the Lord changed His mind. In some of these examples, it is due to personal regret regarding one of His previous actions. In others, it is due to His mercy, pity and compassion for the Israelites.

But again, the main point to consider here is that the verb "repent" is directly related to a change of mental state, or changing one's mind regarding a particular matter. For those of you who are not yet fully convinced of this point, allow me to share a few more Scriptural examples with you. The

first one is a verse with which many of my readers will be very familiar. It is found in the Book of Numbers:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"
Numbers 23:19, KJV

From the get go, it is rather obvious that this verse has absolutely nothing to do with Salvation, being sorry for our sins, or turning away from our wickedness. In just reading the verse in plain English, I think it is rather clear what the word "repent" means here. Quite simply, the verse states that God the Father does not lie, and that Jesus, His Son, does not regret His decisions or change His mind. If He says something, if He gives His word, He will do it. He does not flip-flop or go back on His word. Period. The Prophet Samuel said the very same thing to King Saul after informing him that God had rent the kingdom from him due to his rebellion and disobedience. In this case, the word "repent" is used as well, as we can determine by the following verses:

"And Samuel said unto him, The LORD hath rent the kingdom of Israel from thee this day, and hath given it to a neighbour of thine, that is better than thou. And also the Strength of Israel will not lie nor repent: for he is not a man, that he should repent."
1 Samuel 15:28-29, KJV

King David uses the word "nacham" in the very same way in the prophetic Psalm 110 where we are told that God will not change His mind -- or repent -- once He has given His word, as we see here:

"The LORD hath sworn, and will not repent, Thou art a priest for ever after the order of Melchizedek."
Psalm 110:4, KJV

Let me share one more clear example with you that is found in the Book of Jeremiah, where once again we see that the word "nacham" -- or "repent" in English -- means to change one's mind, or to go back on a previous decision:

"For thus hath the LORD said, The whole land shall be desolate; yet will I not make a full end. For this shall the earth mourn, and the heavens above be black: because I have spoken it, I have purposed it, and will not repent,

neither will I turn back from it."

Jeremiah 4:27-28, KJV

It should be clear then that here is no double mindedness when it comes to God the Father and Jesus Christ. Their word is as solid as a rock. We can count on it. We can be sure of it. That is also why we find verses such as the following in both the Old and the New Testaments:

"Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, WITH WHOM IS NO VARIABleness, NEITHER SHADOW OF TURNING."

James 1:17, KJV

"Jesus Christ the same yesterday, and to day, and for ever."

Hebrews 13:8, KJV

". . . For ever, O LORD, thy word is settled in heaven."

Psalms 119:89, KJV

"The counsel of the LORD standeth for ever, the thoughts of his heart to all generations."

Psalms 33:11, KJV

"Remember the former things of old: for I am God, and there is none else; I am God, and there is none like me, Declaring the end from the beginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure:"

Isaiah 46:9-10, KJV

"We have also A MORE SURE WORD OF PROPHECY; whereunto ye do well that ye take heed, as unto a light that shineth in a dark place, until the day dawn, and the day star arise in your hearts."

2 Peter 1:19, KJV

While all of the previous Scriptural examples demonstrate how the word "repent" is related to the Lord changing -- or not changing -- His mind due to various reasons or factors, before leaving the Old Testament behind, allow me to share with you one more verse where the Hebrew word "nacham" is used in regards to the Israelites:

"And it came to pass, when Pharaoh had let the people go, that God led them not through the way of the land of the Philistines, although that was near; for God said, Lest

peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return to Egypt:"

Exodus 13:17, KJV

Obviously, the usage of the word "repent" in the previous verse has nothing to do with feeling sorry for one's sins or turning away from one's wickedness. On the other hand, it has everything to do with regretting one's decision, and changing one's mind about something. In this case, as is evident, it's about the Lord's concern that the Israelites may change their minds, and decide to return to Egypt, upon encountering the warlike nature of the Philistines.

If you take some time to conduct some Biblical research of your own, you will discover that there are a number of other verses in the Old Testament where this very same Hebrew word is used, and where it means the exact same thing, as I have already explained to you. As I mentioned previously, in the strictest sense of the word, "repent" is not specifically referring to the topic of Salvation, or being sorry for one's sins, or turning away from one's wickedness. The word simply means a change in one's mental state. That is, changing one's mind, or not changing one's mind, due to different reasons.

At this point in our discussion, we will now turn to the New Testament. Many of my longtime readers will already know that my approach to teaching the Scriptures, and explaining why I believe the things that I do, is to slowly build my case one step at a time, or one verse at a time, if you prefer. So if everything I have told you thus far is accurate and correct, then it should be easily confirmed by verses that we find in the Books of the New Testament as well, right? Well, you are not going to be disappointed. The very first verse we find where the word "repent" is used is found in Matthew chapter three. It concerns the preaching of John the Baptist, as we see here:

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 3:1-2, KJV

So, if that word "repent" means the same thing as what we discovered in the Old Testament, then by simply examining the original Koine Greek word that is used in the previous verse, we should have our confirmation. The Koine Greek word that is used in Matthew 3:2 is "metanoeo". Pronounced metanoeh'o,

Thayer's Greek English Lexicon defines it as follows:

----- Begin Quote -----

3340 μετανοέω metanoëo metanoëh'o

AV repent 34; 34

- 1) to change one's mind, i.e. to repent
- 2) to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins

----- End Quote -----

Well, will you look at that! It means "to change one's mind". So when John tells the crowds to repent, he literally means for them to change their minds, just as we saw in the pages of the Old Testament. When Jesus comes along in the very next chapter of Matthew, He preaches the exact same message, and means the very same thing as well, as we can determine by the following verse:

"From that time Jesus began to preach, and to say, Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

Matthew 4:17, KJV

In the previous verse, the very same Koine Greek word is translated as "repent". Furthermore, "metanoëo" is likewise used in the following group of verses as well:

"And they [the Twelve] went out, and preached that men should repent."

Mark 6:12, KJV

"And it came to pass, as Jesus sat at meat in the house, behold, many publicans and sinners came and sat down with him and his disciples. And when the Pharisees saw it, they said unto his disciples, Why eateth your Master with publicans and sinners? But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. But go ye and learn what that meaneth, I will have mercy, and not sacrifice: for I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

Matthew 9:10-13, KJV

"And Jesus answering said unto them, Suppose ye that these Galilaeans were sinners above all the Galilaeans, because

they suffered such things? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Or those eighteen, upon whom the tower in Siloam fell, and slew them, think ye that they were sinners above all men that dwelt in Jerusalem? I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish."

Luke 13:2-5, KJV

"And he spake this parable unto them, saying, What man of you, having an hundred sheep, if he lose one of them, doth not leave the ninety and nine in the wilderness, and go after that which is lost, until he find it? And when he hath found it, he layeth it on his shoulders, rejoicing. And when he cometh home, he calleth together his friends and neighbours, saying unto them, Rejoice with me; for I have found my sheep which was lost. I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth, more than over ninety and nine just persons, which need no repentance."

Luke 15:3-7, KJV

"And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent."

Luke 16:30, KJV

"And said unto them, Thus it is written, and thus it behoved Christ to suffer, and to rise from the dead the third day: And that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."

Luke 24:46-47, KJV

"Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, Men and brethren, what shall we do? Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:37-38, KJV

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"

Acts 3:19, KJV

"And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:"

Acts 17:30, KJV

"Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance."

Acts 26:19-20, KJV

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Romans 2:4, KJV

"The Lord is not slack concerning his promise, as some men count slackness; but is longsuffering to us-ward, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance."

2 Peter 3:9, KJV

"Remember therefore from whence thou art fallen, and repent, and do the first works; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will remove thy candlestick out of his place, except thou repent."

Revelation 2:5, KJV

"Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth."

Revelation 2:16, KJV

"Remember therefore how thou hast received and heard, and hold fast, and repent. If therefore thou shalt not watch, I will come on thee as a thief, and thou shalt not know what hour I will come upon thee"

Revelation 3:3, KJV

"As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten: be zealous therefore, and repent."

Revelation 3:19, KJV

Please note that in the previous group of verses, where the word "repentance" is used, it is derived from the Koine Greek word "metanoia", which itself is a variation of "metaneo". Thus, it means the exact same thing. That is, to change one's mind about something. Of course, the obvious big question is, change one's mind about what? Furthermore, how exactly does this change come about? Once again, by simply turning to the Scriptures, we can find a very clear answer to both of these

intriguing questions. Let's address the first question. It turns out that Jesus very directly told His listeners what kind of change of mental state was required -- that is, what they had to change their minds about -- in the following two verses:

"Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel."

Mark 1:14-15, KJV

Wow! Do you see that? Jesus says "repent ye, and believe the gospel." In that one verse alone, the Lord is very clearly telling us what the result of their repentance is supposed to be. In no uncertain terms, He tells the people to change their minds -- or repent -- and to believe. It is as simple as that. They need to change their minds from their current mental state of unbelief, to a state of belief. In other words, looking at it in reverse, if repenting leads to a state of belief, then not repenting means remaining in a state of unbelief.

Please go to part two for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

WHAT IT MEANS TO REPENT : PART 2

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Repent Ye And Believe The Gospel, Evolution Of The Meaning Of The Word "Repentance", The Political And Religious Leadership Of Israel Rejected Jesus, The Jews Attempt To Cover Up Jesus' Resurrection From The Dead, Miracles Confirmed Who Jesus Is, I Am He, First Century Spiritual Blindness, Antichrist Spirit And Deceivers, Spiritual State Of Our Modern Skeptical World, Beware Of The False Gospel Of "Easy Believism", The Result Of

Repenting Is Believing In Jesus Christ, "Repent Of Your Sins" Isn't Found In The Bible, Being Sorry For Sins Is Not Enough

As we concluded in part one, when John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles and other Disciples warned their listeners to repent, what they actually meant was that their listeners needed to change their minds. Why? Because that is exactly what the Koine Greek words "metanoeo" and "metanoia" mean, just as that is what the word "repent" also means in the Old Testament as well. They needed a total change in their mental attitude. They needed to stop all of their doubting and their disbelief, and they needed to start believing. Believing in what exactly? Believing in the Gospel. Believing in the Good News. Believing in the fact that Jesus was and is the long awaited Messiah. Is that not the very essence of the Gospel message?

As we saw in part one, Jesus said "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." To paraphrase it, we can now understand that He was basically saying "Change your minds! Believe the Gospel! Believe in me!" Once you come to understand this, it opens up a number of other verses which are found in the pages of the New Testament, and it helps you to see even more clearly what the Apostles were really saying and writing, as I will be explaining later on in this series.

Everything we have examined up to this point confirms this fact. That is how these original Hebrew and Koine Greek words went from just meaning to change one's mind about something, to specifically meaning to change one's mind from a state of disbelief, to a mental state of belief in Jesus Christ. That is how the meaning of repentance evolved in the Christian context. That is how these words became associated with the message of Salvation. As I point out in other articles, the Gospels and other Books of the New Testament make it very clear that most of the political and religious leadership of ancient Israel did not accept Jesus for who He said He was, and is. They rejected Him, exactly as had been prophesied. Consider the following group of verses:

"He is despised and rejected of men; a man of sorrows, and acquainted with grief: and we hid as it were our faces from him; he was despised, and we esteemed him not."

Isaiah 53:3, KJV

"He came unto his own, and his own received him not."

John 1:11, KJV

"The stone which the builders refused is become the head stone of the corner. This is the LORD'S doing; it is marvellous in our eyes."

Psalms 118:22-23, KJV

"Jesus saith unto them, Did ye never read in the scriptures, The stone which the builders rejected, the same is become the head of the corner: this is the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Matthew 21:42, KJV

"And he began to teach them, that the Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders, and of the chief priests, and scribes, and be killed, and after three days rise again."

Mark 8:31, KJV

"And have ye not read this scripture; The stone which the builders rejected is become the head of the corner: This was the Lord's doing, and it is marvellous in our eyes?"

Mark 12:10-11, KJV

"Saying, The Son of man must suffer many things, and be rejected of the elders and chief priests and scribes, and be slain, and be raised the third day."

Luke 9:22, KJV

"But first must he suffer many things, and be rejected of this generation."

Luke 17:25, KJV

"This is the stone which was set at nought of you builders, which is become the head of the corner."

Acts 4:11, KJV

"To whom coming, as unto a living stone, disallowed [that is disapproved, rejected, repudiated] indeed of men, but chosen of God, and precious, Ye also, as lively stones, are built up a spiritual house, an holy priesthood, to offer up spiritual sacrifices, acceptable to God by Jesus Christ. Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded. Unto you therefore which believe he is precious: but unto them which

be disobedient, the stone which the builders disallowed, the same is made the head of the corner, And a stone of stumbling, and a rock of offence, even to them which stumble at the word, being disobedient: whereunto also they were appointed."

1 Peter 2:4-8, KJV

As a result, because the people were so hardened of mind and heart, so callous and skeptical, and so spiritually blind, it was necessary for Jesus to prove Himself to them, by way of the many miracles which He performed. Of course, the most convincing miracle of all, was when to their great shock and astonishment, He gloriously rose from the dead. Tragically, even that wonderful event they tried to cover up, as we see by the following set of verses:

"Now when they were going, behold, some of the watch came into the city, and shewed unto the chief priests all the things that were done. And when they were assembled with the elders, and had taken counsel, they gave large money unto the soldiers, Saying, Say ye, His disciples came by night, and stole him away while we slept. And if this come to the governor's ears, we will persuade him, and secure you. So they took the money, and did as they were taught: and this saying is commonly reported among the Jews until this day."

Matthew 28:11-15, KJV

So as I said, Jesus had to resort to miracles in order to convince the people that He was, and is, who He claimed to be. Just saying "Repent ye, and believe the Gospel" was not enough. He had to back up His claims with real proof which the people could see with their own eyes. As the Lord said on various occasions "I am he." That was the central issue with many people of that era. Was Jesus just another wannabe prophet and a charlatan, or was He for real? They had to be convinced. Consider the following group of verses where He states this:

"The woman saith unto him, I know that Messiah cometh, which is called Christ: when he is come, he will tell us all things. Jesus saith unto her, I that speak unto thee am he."
John 4:25-26, KJV

"I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins . . . Then said Jesus unto them, When ye have lifted up

the Son of man, then shall ye know that I am he, and that I do nothing of myself; but as my Father hath taught me, I speak these things."

John 8:24, 28, KJV

"Now I tell you before it come, that, when it is come to pass, ye may believe that I am he."

John 13:19, KJV

"They answered him, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus saith unto them, I am he. And Judas also, which betrayed him, stood with them. As soon then as he had said unto them, I am he, they went backward, and fell to the ground. Then asked he them again, Whom seek ye? And they said, Jesus of Nazareth. Jesus answered, I have told you that I am he: if therefore ye seek me, let these go their way:"

John 18:5-8, KJV

"I am he that liveth, and was dead; and, behold, I am alive for evermore, Amen; and have the keys of hell and of death."

Revelation 1:18, KJV

"And I will kill her children with death; and all the churches shall know that I am he which searcheth the reins and hearts: and I will give unto every one of you according to your works."

Revelation 2:23, KJV

For many of us today, it is difficult to understand how the people of that bygone era could have been so blind to the Son of God walking amongst them. We read the Scriptures and wonder to ourselves "Wow! How could they not have known? How could they not have seen it?" Yet the Scriptures do make it plain that they were the blind leading the blind. Consider the following group of verses which confirm this point:

"Also I heard the voice of the Lord, saying, Whom shall I send, and who will go for us? Then said I, Here am I; send me. And he said, Go, and tell this people, Hear ye indeed, but understand not; and see ye indeed, but perceive not.

Make the heart of this people fat, and make their ears heavy, and shut their eyes; lest they see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and convert, and be healed."

Isaiah 6:8-10, KJV

"For, behold, the darkness shall cover the earth, and gross

darkness the people: but the LORD shall arise upon thee, and his glory shall be seen upon thee."

Isaiah 60:2, KJV

"And the disciples came, and said unto him, Why speakest thou unto them in parables? He answered and said unto them, Because it is given unto you to know the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven, but to them it is not given. For whosoever hath, to him shall be given, and he shall have more abundance: but whosoever hath not, from him shall be taken away even that he hath. Therefore speak I to them in parables: because they seeing see not; and hearing they hear not, neither do they understand. And in them is fulfilled the prophecy of Esaias, which saith, By hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and shall not perceive: For this people's heart is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes they have closed; lest at any time they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and should understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them. But blessed are your eyes, for they see: and your ears, for they hear."

Matthew 13:10-16, KJV

"Let them alone: they be blind leaders of the blind. And if the blind lead the blind, both shall fall into the ditch."

Matthew 15:14, KJV

"Woe unto you, ye blind guides, which say, Whosoever shall swear by the temple, it is nothing; but whosoever shall swear by the gold of the temple, he is a debtor! . . . Ye blind guides, which strain at a gnat, and swallow a camel."

Matthew 23:16, 24, KJV

"And when he had looked round about on them with anger, being grieved for the hardness of their hearts, he saith unto the man, Stretch forth thine hand. And he stretched it out: and his hand was restored whole as the other."

Mark 3:5, KJV

"And Jesus said, For judgment I am come into this world, that they which see not might see; and that they which see might be made blind. And some of the Pharisees which were with him heard these words, and said unto him, Are we blind also? Jesus said unto them, If ye were blind, ye should have no sin: but now ye say, We see; therefore your sin remaineth."

John 9:39-41, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him."

John 12:37-41, KJV

"And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Acts 28:25-27, KJV

"(According as it is written, God hath given them the spirit of slumber, eyes that they should not see, and ears that they should not hear;) unto this day . . . For I would not, brethren, that ye should be ignorant of this mystery, lest ye should be wise in your own conceits; that blindness in part is happened to Israel, until the fulness of the Gentiles be come in."

Romans 11:8, 25, KJV

"But the natural man receiveth not the things of the Spirit of God: for they are foolishness unto him: neither can he know them, because they are spiritually discerned."

1 Corinthians 2:14, KJV

"But their minds were blinded: for until this day remaineth the same vail untaken away in the reading of the old testament; which vail is done away in Christ. But even unto this day, when Moses is read, the vail is upon their heart."

2 Corinthians 3:14-15, KJV

"But if our gospel be hid, it is hid to them that are lost:

In whom the god of this world hath blinded the minds of them which believe not, lest the light of the glorious gospel of Christ, who is the image of God, should shine unto them."

2 Corinthians 4:3-4, KJV

"Having the understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God through the ignorance that is in them, because of the blindness of their heart:"

Ephesians 4:18, KJV

I think the Apostles Peter and John accurately summed up the overall skeptical attitude of the nonbelievers of that time when they wrote the following in their various Epistles:

"Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, And saying, Where is the promise of his coming? for since the fathers fell asleep, all things continue as they were from the beginning of the creation."

2 Peter 3:3-4, KJV

"Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son."

1 John 2:22, KJV

"And every spirit that confesseth not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh is not of God: and this is that spirit of antichrist, whereof ye have heard that it should come; and even now already is it in the world."

1 John 4:3, KJV

"For many deceivers are entered into the world, who confess not that Jesus Christ is come in the flesh. This is a deceiver and an antichrist."

2 John 1:7, KJV

Yet, honestly speaking, is the world really any different in our current time? So many people today are just as hardened of heart and spiritually blind, as back then. The very same antichrist spirit of rebellion and unbelief exists now, just as it existed two thousand years ago. Who knows. Perhaps it is even worse today. It is sad to see how many people's minds have become closed to the Gospel message. Either that, or if they do believe, oft times it is in fact a false, politically correct, socially acceptable gospel which is far removed from the Gospel of repentance of the First Century, where sin was exposed for what it is, and people were required to change.

Sadly, with this new gospel which has become so popular, and which is now preached everywhere, there is really no price to be paid, if one chooses to believe in it, and it changes few minds and hearts. It is all just outward show, and not much more. It is noise with very little real substance. It is a gospel of convenience and comfort. It is a false gospel of "easy believism". In fact, it is so easy, that one can even remain a homosexual, and God is okay with it. If this is the gospel you have embraced, beware! Consider the following set of verses:

"I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed."

Galatians 1:6-9, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ. For if he that cometh preacheth another Jesus, whom we have not preached, or if ye receive another spirit, which ye have not received, or another gospel, which ye have not accepted, ye might well bear with him . . . For such are false apostles, deceitful workers, transforming themselves into the apostles of Christ. And no marvel; for Satan himself is transformed into an angel of light. Therefore it is no great thing if his ministers also be transformed as the ministers of righteousness; whose end shall be according to their works."

2 Corinthians 11:3-4, 13-15, KJV

"Be not carried about with divers and strange doctrines. For it is a good thing that the heart be established with grace; not with meats, which have not profited them that have been occupied therein."

Hebrews 13:9, KJV

"Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood. For I know this, that after my departing shall

grievous wolves enter in among you, not sparing the flock. Also of your own selves shall men arise, speaking perverse things, to draw away disciples after them."

Acts 20:28-30, KJV

"Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them."

Romans 16:17, KJV

"Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron;"

1 Timothy 4:1-2, KJV

"If any man teach otherwise, and consent not to wholesome words, even the words of our Lord Jesus Christ, and to the doctrine which is according to godliness; He is proud, knowing nothing, but doting about questions and strifes of words, whereof cometh envy, strife, railings, evil surmisings, Perverse disputings of men of corrupt minds, and destitute of the truth, supposing that gain is godliness: from such withdraw thyself."

1 Timothy 6:3-5, KJV

"For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine; but after their own lusts shall they heap to themselves teachers, having itching ears;"

2 Timothy 4:3, KJV

So to reiterate our earlier point, when John the Baptist, Jesus, the Apostles and other Disciples told the people to repent, they were actually saying "Change your minds! Stop being in a mental state of denial and unbelief! Believe that Jesus is the Son of God and Savior of the world!" One of the big problems we see with this modern false gospel of "easy believism", is simply that this is as far as it goes. Yes, people may change their minds to where they do accept Christ as their Savior. But as I mentioned a moment ago, nothing else, or at least very little else, really changes in their lives. They just keep on living their same lives of sin and worldliness, and their spiritual growth becomes stunted. So again, that is not the real Gospel, or the real Jesus. It is another gospel, and another Jesus, exactly as the Apostles wrote.

The real Gospel says "Change your mind regarding who you believe Jesus is, and change your life as well. Because if you don't repent, if you don't change your minds about this, if you don't believe in and accept Jesus as the Messiah, you will surely perish!" This very same message is repeated over and over again throughout the pages of the New Testament, as is clearly evident by the following group of sample verses:

"Jesus answered and said unto them, This is the work of God, that ye believe on him whom he hath sent . . . And this is the will of him that sent me, that every one which seeth the Son, and believeth on him, may have everlasting life: and I will raise him up at the last day."

John 6:29, 40, KJV

"And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house."

Acts 16:31, KJV

"That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

Romans 10:9-10, KJV

"He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved; but he that believeth not shall be damned."

Mark 16:16, KJV

"But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name:"

John 1:12, KJV

"He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God . . . He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

John 3:18, 36, KJV

"And Jesus said unto them, I am the bread of life: he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst . . . Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me hath everlasting life."

John 6:35, 47, KJV

"He that believeth on me, as the scripture hath said, out of his belly shall flow rivers of living water."

John 7:38, KJV

"Jesus said unto her, I am the resurrection, and the life: he that believeth in me, though he were dead, yet shall he live:"

John 11:25, KJV

"Jesus cried and said, He that believeth on me, believeth not on me, but on him that sent me."

John 12:44, KJV

"Verily, verily, I say unto you, He that believeth on me, the works that I do shall he do also; and greater works than these shall he do; because I go unto my Father."

John 14:12, KJV

"Wherefore also it is contained in the scripture, Behold, I lay in Sion a chief corner stone, elect, precious: and he that believeth on him shall not be confounded."

1 Peter 2:6, KJV

"Who is he that overcometh the world, but he that believeth that Jesus is the Son of God? . . . He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

1 John 5:5, 10, KJV

As Jesus plainly stated in the previous set of verses "the work of God [is to] believe on him whom he hath sent." Just believe, believe, believe! Stop being in a state of denial. Change your stubborn mind, and accept and believe that Jesus is who He says He is. Repent and believe! Change your mind and believe! That, my friends, is the key essence of what Biblical repentance is all about when it concerns the topic of Salvation and Eternal Life. Repentance is a mental change of attitude. It is going from a state of unbelief, to a state of belief in Jesus Christ. As we learned earlier, Jesus said "Repent ye, and believe the gospel." That gospel -- or "glad tidings", from the Koine Greek word "euaggelion" -- is summed up in a verse which we all know and love:

"For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten

Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

John 3:16, KJV

Now, believe it or not, but the phrase "repent of your sins" is nowhere to be found in the KJV Bible. It is nonexistent. In fact, now that we have come to understand what the word "repent" really means, the phrase "repent of your sins" does not even make much sense. Yes, we can change our minds about our sins, but that is not going to result in our Salvation. Just being sorry for our sins is not enough. Let's face it. People are sorry about things all the time, right? However, that does not mean that they are saved, does it? As we have already established, it is changing from a reprobate mind which rejects Christ, to a mind which embraces Christ, that is going to save us. Not only that, but as we have already briefly discussed, this change of mind -- or repentance -- will manifest itself in the way in which we act and live. That is true, full repentance, and only God the Father can bring it about through the indwelling of the Holy Spirit. We will further discuss this topic later on in this series.

Please go to part three for the continuation of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

WHAT IT MEANS TO REPENT : PART 3

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"Repent Of Your Sins" Is Not Found In The Bible, Being Sorry For Our Sins Is Not Enough, Repentance Equates To Belief In Jesus Christ, Blasphemy Against The Holy Ghost, God Does Not Lie, It's God The Father Alone Who Draws Us To Christ And Who Remits All Of Our Sins, Due To His Own Goodness And Grace God Leads Us To Repentance, Salvation Isn't The Result Of Our Own Good Works, We Have No Righteousness Of Our Own, Process Of Conversion: Changed Mental State, Become As Little Children,

The Faith Of A Little Child, Koine Greek Words "Strepho" And "Epistrepho", The Apostle Peter's Denial And Conversion, True Repentance Is An Ongoing Process, We Need Transformed Minds, New Creatures In Jesus Christ, Regenerated By The Holy Ghost

As we concluded in part two, the phrase "repent of your sins" is nowhere to be found in the KJV Bible. Not only that, but just being sorry for our sins isn't enough to save us anyway. As we have already established, true Salvation results when we change from a reprobate mind which rejects Christ, to a receptive mind which embraces Christ as our Savior. It is a mental change from unbelief to belief. So in answer to my friend's question regarding what we need to repent of, my answer would be that we need to repent of -- or better said, change our minds about -- our unbelief. Is that not what the Lord said to do in Mark 1:14-15? Did He not say "Repent ye, and believe the gospel"?

Make no mistake. Unbelief is indeed a sin. Because as I explain in other articles, it is my understanding that it is akin to blasphemy against the Holy Ghost; which I believe is to call God a liar, and His Word a lie. It is in fact to deny the record which God has given of His son. However, as we saw in part one of this series "God is not a man, that he should lie." His every word is true. Following are some additional verses which confirm this very same point:

"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent: hath he said, and shall he not do it? or hath he spoken, and shall he not make it good?"
Numbers 23:19, KJV

"God forbid: yea, let God be true, but every man a liar; as it is written, That thou mightest be justified in thy sayings, and mightest overcome when thou art judged."
Romans 3:4, KJV

"In hope of eternal life, which God, that cannot lie, promised before the world began;"
Titus 1:2, KJV

"He that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness in himself: he that believeth not God hath made him a liar; because he believeth not the record that God gave of his Son."

1 John 5:10, KJV

"If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:10, KJV

"He is the Rock, his work is perfect: for all his ways are judgment: a GOD OF TRUTH and without iniquity, just and right is he."

Deuteronomy 32:4, KJV

"Into thine hand I commit my spirit: thou hast redeemed me, O LORD GOD OF TRUTH."

Psalms 31:5, KJV

"That he who blesseth himself in the earth shall bless himself in the GOD OF TRUTH; and he that sweareth in the earth shall swear by the GOD OF TRUTH; because the former troubles are forgotten, and because they are hid from mine eyes."

Isaiah 65:16, KJV

"And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not."

John 8:45, KJV

"Jesus saith unto him, I am the way, the truth, and the life: no man cometh unto the Father, but by me."

John 14:6, KJV

But concerning the popular phrase "repent of your sins", it may interest you to know that there are only two verses in the entire New Testament where the words "repent" and "sins" are found in the same sentence, and those verses do not even mean what some Christians think they mean. Those two verses -- which I shared with you in part one -- are the following:

"Then Peter said unto them, Repent, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall receive the gift of the Holy Ghost."

Acts 2:38, KJV

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord;"

Acts 3:19, KJV

Please notice very carefully what the previous two verses are

saying. They do not say that we need to repent of our sins. Rather, they say that as a result of changing our minds and believing in Christ, our sins are remitted, or blotted out. In other words, the remission of sins is not something that we do, but something that God does, once we are symbolically washed in the Blood of the Lamb of God. Do you see that? In fact, as I explain in a number of other articles, even the process of repentance itself is a work of God's Spirit, and is not something for which we can take credit. The Scriptures inform us that God is the one who draws us to Christ, and God is the one who works in our hearts to perform His Will. This is made plainly evident by verses such as the following:

"ALL THAT THE FATHER GIVETH ME shall come to me, and him that cometh to me I will in no wise cast out . . . No man can come to me, EXCEPT THE FATHER WHICH HATH SENT ME DRAW HIM: and I will raise him up at the last day . . . And he said, Therefore said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father."

John 6:37, 44, 65, KJV

"And I give unto them eternal life; and they shall never perish, neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. MY FATHER, WHICH GAVE THEM ME, is greater than all; and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand."

John 10:28-29, KJV

"I pray for them: I pray not for the world, but for THEM WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME; for they are thine . . . And now I am no more in the world, but these are in the world, and I come to thee. Holy Father, keep through thine own name THOSE WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, that they may be one, as we are . . . Father, I will that they also, WHOM THOU HAST GIVEN ME, be with me where I am; that they may behold my glory, WHICH THOU HAST GIVEN ME: for thou lovedst me before the foundation of the world."

John 17:9, 11, 24, KJV

"Nevertheless the foundation of God standeth sure, having this seal, THE LORD KNOWETH THEM THAT ARE HIS. And, Let every one that nameth the name of Christ depart from iniquity."

2 Timothy 2:19, KJV

"And I, if I be lifted up from the earth, will draw all men unto me."

John 12:32, KJV

"For it is God which worketh in you both to will and to do of his good pleasure."

Philippians 2:13, KJV

"Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?"

Romans 2:4, KJV

In particular, notice what the Apostle Paul writes in that very last verse. He says "the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance". God led you to repent. It was nothing that you did personally. It was His Spirit which worked on and in your mind and heart to bring about the change in your attitude so that you would accept Christ. Yes, we still have to make the personal choice to accept Christ. We have to do the believing and the receiving; but it is God the Father who leads us to the point of decision. Thus we see that from start to finish, it is really all God alone. Despite what some self-righteous Christians like to think, we just cannot take credit for our own Salvation. As the Scriptures make very clear, we are all unclean, sinful, and have no righteousness of our own. Thus, we must depend solely upon God's Grace through Christ to save us. Here again is proof:

"For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast."

Ephesians 2:8-9, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of regeneration, and renewing of the Holy Ghost;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

"But we are all as an unclean thing, and all our righteousnesses are as filthy rags; and we all do fade as a leaf; and our iniquities, like the wind, have taken us away."

Isaiah 64:6, KJV

"They are all gone aside, they are all together become filthy: there is none that doeth good, no, not one."

Psalms 14:3, KJV

"If thou, LORD, shouldst mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?"

Psalms 130:3, KJV

"Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me."

Psalms 51:5, KJV

"For there is not a just man upon earth, that doeth good, and sinneth not."

Ecclesiastes 7:20, KJV

"As it is written, There is none righteous, no, not one . . . For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God;"

Romans 3:10, 23, KJV

"But God commendeth his love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us . . . Wherefore, as by one man sin entered into the world, and death by sin; and so death passed upon all men, for that all have sinned:"

Romans 5:8, 12, KJV

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness. If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us."

1 John 1:8-10, KJV

"And he spake this parable unto certain which trusted in themselves that they were righteous, and despised others: Two men went up into the temple to pray; the one a Pharisee, and the other a publican. 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 afar off, would not lift up so much as his eyes unto heaven, but smote upon his breast, saying, God be merciful to me a sinner. I tell you, this man went down to his house justified rather than the other: for every one that exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted."

Luke 18:9-14, KJV

Thus far, we have come to understand what the word "repent" actually means in both the Old and the New Testaments. We've also come to understand that this changing our minds refers to switching from a state of unbelief, to a state of belief in Christ. It is switching from a state of denial, to one of

acceptance. We have likewise seen that this entire process is a work of God's Spirit. What I have described for you is in effect a process of conversion. You may recall that in a verse I shared with you previously from Acts chapter three, the Apostle Peter in fact tells his audience that they must be converted. What is Peter talking about? As it turns out, this conversion process is mentioned in both the Old and the New Testaments. For example, in King David's famous Psalm of repentance, he writes the following:

"Then will I teach transgressors thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto thee."

Psalm 51:13, KJV

In the previous verse, the word converted is derived from the Hebrew word "shuwb". Pronounced shoob, this word means to return, turn back to, go back to, or come back to. Now, because David is talking about transgressors and sinners, the verse is obviously referring to returning to God, to faith in God, and to obedience to His holy Laws. After all, as the Apostle John writes in his first Epistle, "sin is the transgression of the law", as we see by this verse:

"Whosoever committeth sin transgresseth also the law: for sin is the transgression of the law."

1 John 3:4, KJV

So what we see then is that this conversion process is directly related to our discussion regarding repentance, or changing our minds and accepting Christ for who He is. In both cases, we are talking about a changed mental state. We are talking about changing from disobedience to obedience to God's Laws, and changing from a state of unbelief to a state of belief in Christ. In fact, Jesus discusses this very same conversion process in the eighteenth chapter of the Gospel of Matthew, as we see by the following verses:

"At the same time came the disciples unto Jesus, saying, Who is the greatest in the kingdom of heaven? And Jesus called a little child unto him, and set him in the midst of them, And said, Verily I say unto you, Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven. Whosoever therefore shall humble himself as this little child, the same is greatest in the kingdom of heaven. And whoso shall receive one such little child in my name receiveth me. But whoso shall offend one of these little ones which believe in me, it were better for him that

a millstone were hanged about his neck, and that he were drowned in the depth of the sea."

Matthew 18:1-6, KJV

What does the Lord mean when He says "Except ye be converted, and become as little children, ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven"? This is a topic which I likewise discuss in the article entitled "The Faith of a Little Child". Stop and think what young children are like. While children have changed a lot since I was a young boy, generally speaking, most young children will accept and believe whatever their parents tell them without question. Stated another way, they have faith in their parents' words, and it would never cross their minds that their parents might possibly be stretching the truth, or perhaps even being outright dishonest with them.

If we closely examine the previous group of verses again, we can see that Jesus is likewise talking about faith. In fact, it is evident that He is talking about faith in Himself as the Savior of humanity, because He specifically says "these little ones which believe in me". In short, my impression is that His words are meant to be understood as a light rebuke to His adult listeners. Why? Because unlike the unbelieving Jews who constantly demanded signs and miracles before they would believe in and accept Jesus as their Messiah, those young children just took Jesus at His word. They didn't need any further proof. That is why He told those Disciples "ye shall not enter into the kingdom of heaven" unless they were converted and became as little children. While they were referred to as the Lord's Disciples, apparently, some of them still had doubts about Him.

In this case, according to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, the word "converted" is derived from the Koine Greek word "strefho". Pronounced stref'-o, this word means to turn, turn around, to turn one's self -- in other words, to turn the back to one -- or to turn one's self from one's course of conduct. That is, to change one's mind. Consider the following:

----- Begin Quote -----

4762 στρέφω strefho stref'-o

AV turn 11, turn (one's) self 2, turn (one) 1, turn again 1, turn back again 1, turn (one) about 1, be

converted 1, vr turn 1; 19

- 1) to turn, turn around
- 2) to turn one's self (i.e. to turn the back to one
 - 2a) of one who no longer cares for another)
 - 2b) metaph. to turn one's self from one's course of conduct, i.e. to change one's mind

----- End Quote -----

Well, there it is again -- "to change one's mind". In short, Jesus is telling his adult audience that if they expect to partake of God's Kingdom, they need to change their minds about Him, forsake their doubts and disbelief, abandon their denial, and accept Him as their Messiah by faith, just like those little children around Him. It is the same thing we have been discussing all along. There are a number of other verses found in the New Testament where the word "converted" is used as well; and in each case, it refers to basically the same thing. In some cases, the Koine Greek word "strepheo" is used, while in others, a related word -- "epistrepho" -- is used. This latter word signifies to turn to, to cause to return, to bring back or to come back. Again, it is talking about restoring one's faith and obedience to God. Consider again what Thayer's Greek English Lexicon has to say:

----- Begin Quote -----

1994 ἐπιστρέφω epistrepho ep-ee-stref'-o

AV turn 16, be converted 6, return 6, turn about 4, turn again 3, misc 4; 39

- 1) transitively
 - 1a) to turn to
 - 1a1) to the worship of the true God
 - 1b) to cause to return, to bring back
 - 1b1) to the love and obedience of God
 - 1b2) to the love for the children
 - 1b3) to love wisdom and righteousness
- 2) intransitively
 - 2a) to turn to one's self
 - 2b) to turn one's self about, turn back
 - 2c) to return, turn back, come back

----- End Quote -----

Following are five groups of verses where "epistrepho" is used, and translated as "converted":

"And when he was alone, they that were about him with the twelve asked of him the parable. And he said unto them, Unto you it is given to know the mystery of the kingdom of God: but unto them that are without, all these things are done in parables: That seeing they may see, and not perceive; and hearing they may hear, and not understand; lest at any time they should be converted, and their sins should be forgiven them."

Mark 4:10-12, KJV

"But though he had done so many miracles before them, yet they believed not on him: That the saying of Esaias the prophet might be fulfilled, which he spake, Lord, who hath believed our report? and to whom hath the arm of the Lord been revealed? Therefore they could not believe, because that Esaias said again, He hath blinded their eyes, and hardened their heart; that they should not see with their eyes, nor understand with their heart, and be converted, and I should heal them. These things said Esaias, when he saw his glory, and spake of him. Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue:"

John 12:37-42, KJV

"Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord; And he shall send Jesus Christ, which before was preached unto you: Whom the heaven must receive until the times of restitution of all things, which God hath spoken by the mouth of all his holy prophets since the world began."

Acts 3:19-21, KJV

"And when they had appointed him a day, there came many to him into his lodging; to whom he expounded and testified the kingdom of God, persuading them concerning Jesus, both out of the law of Moses, and out of the prophets, from morning till evening. And some believed the things which were spoken, and some believed not. And when they agreed not among themselves, they departed, after that Paul had spoken one word, Well spake the Holy Ghost by Esaias the prophet unto our fathers, Saying, Go unto this people, and say, Hearing ye shall hear, and shall not understand; and

seeing ye shall see, and not perceive: For the heart of this people is waxed gross, and their ears are dull of hearing, and their eyes have they closed; lest they should see with their eyes, and hear with their ears, and understand with their heart, and should be converted, and I should heal them."

Acts 28:23-27, KJV

"And the Lord said, Simon, Simon, behold, Satan hath desired to have you, that he may sift you as wheat: But I have prayed for thee, that thy faith fail not: and when thou art converted, strengthen thy brethren."

Luke 22:31-32, KJV

I find those last verses from the Gospel of Luke particularly interesting, because they clearly demonstrate that Jesus knew beforehand that in a moment of mental weakness, the Apostle Peter was going to deny even knowing Him. However, at the same time, Jesus also knew that once Peter had been broken, he would return to the Lord. That is why He said "when thou art converted." In other words, "once you have come back to me"; which is exactly what the Greek word "epistrepho" means.

We can extract a very important lesson from this incident. You may recall that in part two of this series, I mentioned that once we come to understand that the word "repent" means to change one's mind about something, it opens up a number of other verses which are found throughout the pages of the New Testament. You see, repenting -- or changing our minds and accepting Christ -- is actually just the very beginning of our spiritual journey and walk of faith. Furthermore, in the truest sense of the word, repentance is a continual process which must be maintained. It is not just a one-time thing that we do. In fact, the writers of the New Testament make it very clear that changing our minds and accepting Christ is not enough. God expects much more of us after we have been converted.

What we all need is a totally new, transformed mind; or what the Apostle Paul refers to as "the mind of Christ". Just as our biological body periodically replaces different parts of itself, such as our blood, our skin, our hair, etc., so too, our mind must be constantly renewed and transformed as well. Otherwise, just like the Apostle Peter, who denied the Lord, and then later said "I go a fishing", we too will fall back into our old ways, and our old way of thinking. Notice how when Peter went back, they all went back, because they all

looked up to him. And they caught absolutely nothing that night, because they were obviously in a backslidden state:

"Simon Peter saith unto them, I go a fishing. They say unto him, We also go with thee. They went forth, and entered into a ship immediately; and that night they caught nothing."
John 21:3, KJV

The fact that our minds must be totally transformed, so that we in effect become new creatures in Jesus Christ, is made abundantly clear by such Bible verses as the following:

"And be not conformed to this world: but be ye TRANSFORMED by the RENEWING OF YOUR MIND, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect, will of God."
Romans 12:2, KJV

"For who hath known the mind of the Lord, that he may instruct him? But WE HAVE THE MIND OF CHRIST."
1 Corinthians 2:16, KJV

"For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is RENEWED DAY BY DAY."
2 Corinthians 4:16, KJV

"Therefore if any man be in Christ, he is a NEW CREATURE: old things are passed away; behold, all things are become new."
2 Corinthians 5:17, KJV

"That ye put off concerning the former conversation the old man, which is corrupt according to the deceitful lusts; And BE RENEWED IN THE SPIRIT OF YOUR MIND; And that ye put on the NEW MAN, which after God is created in righteousness and true holiness."
Ephesians 4:22-24, KJV

"Therefore we are buried with him by baptism into death: that like as Christ was raised up from the dead by the glory of the Father, even so we also should walk IN NEWNESS OF LIFE."
Romans 6:4, KJV

"But now ye also put off all these; anger, wrath, malice, blasphemy, filthy communication out of your mouth. Lie not one to another, seeing that ye have put off the old man with his deeds; And have put on the NEW MAN, which is

RENEWED in knowledge after the image of him that created him:"

Colossians 3:8-10, KJV

"Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us, by the washing of REGENERATION, and RENEWING OF THE HOLY GHOST;"

Titus 3:5, KJV

In the previous group of verses, the words "renewing" and "renewed" are translated from three Koine Greek words. These words are "anakainoo", "anakainosis" and "ananeo". According to Thayer's Greek English Lexicon, they have a variety of related meanings including the following:

- 1) to cause to grow up, new, to make new
- 2) a renewal, renovation, complete change for the better
- 3) to renew (in the mind)

The word "transformed" is derived from the Koine Greek word "metamorphoo". Pronounced met-am-or-fo'-o, no doubt you can see how our English word "metamorphosis" is derived from it. Thayer's Greek English Lexicon informs us that this ancient word means to change into another form, to transform, or to transfigure. Of course, in the Christian context, it refers to being transformed in a spiritual sense, and to maturing from a "baby Christian" to an adult Christian. This is also the same word that is used when the Lord was transfigured before Peter, James and John on the mount. Another Koine Greek word -- "allasso" -- is used in reference to our being transformed and changed into our new, glorified bodies.

Finally, we have the word "regeneration", as in the phrase "by the washing of regeneration", from Titus 3:5. This word is derived from the ancient Koine Greek word "paliggenesia". Pronounced pal-ing-ghen-es-ee'-ah, this word refers to new birth, reproduction, renewal, recreation or regeneration. Insofar as this current discussion is concerned, Thayer's Greek English Lexicon notes the following:

----- Begin Quote -----

"hence renovation, regeneration, the production of a new life consecrated to God, a radical change of mind for the better. The word often used to denote the restoration of a thing to its pristine state, its renovation, as a renewal or restoration of life after death."

----- End Quote -----

Please go to part four for the conclusion of this series.

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>

WHAT IT MEANS TO REPENT : PART 4

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The Challenges of Spiritual Growth, Spiritual Battle Is Waged In Our Minds, Don't Faint In Your Mind, Beware Of The Devil's Devices, Regenerated And Empowered By God's Holy Ghost, Stay Grounded In The Word, The Importance Of Christian Fellowship, Take Up Your Cross Daily, Run The Race Of Faith With Patience, Win Your Crown, Closing Remarks, Suggested Reading Resources

Continuing our discussion from part three, just as the growth of one's biological body can be difficult at times, the same holds true of our spiritual growth as well. There are so many fleshly distractions in our modern world, that it can be very difficult for us Christians to remain focused on the Lord, and our service to Him. And that does not even include those personal sins we all have, such as self-righteousness, pride, arrogance, lust, jealousy, etc. Sadly, it seems that all it takes is one unguarded moment of weakness -- as occurred with Peter -- and our walls come tumbling down, and we are back to living the old life of sin again.

The fact of the matter is that keeping our faith and serving the Lord is a real battle; and that battle begins the moment that we repent -- or change our minds -- and accept the Lord. If one thing should be clear to you by now, it is that this entire discussion and series has revolved around the state of our mind. As I explain in a number of other articles, it is

in our minds where the spiritual battle, and the fight for control of our lives, is waged. The Scriptures make it very clear that our mind is Satan's battleground. If he can gain control of our thoughts, then he has won. The writers of the New Testament -- particularly the Apostle Paul -- were very much aware of this fact. As a result, they were constantly warning the Disciples to be on guard against the wiles of the Devil, and to not faint in their minds. This becomes so evident in verses such as the following:

"Casting down imaginations, and every high thing that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ;"
2 Corinthians 10:5, KJV

"Therefore seeing we have this ministry, as we have received mercy, we faint not . . . For which cause we faint not; but though our outward man perish, yet the inward man is renewed day by day."
2 Corinthians 4:1, 16, KJV

"For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself, lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."
Hebrews 12:3, KJV

"Wherefore GIRD UP THE LOINS OF YOUR MIND, be sober, and hope to the end for the grace that is to be brought unto you at the revelation of Jesus Christ;"
1 Peter 1:13, KJV

"And let us not be weary in well doing: for in due season we shall reap, if we faint not."
Galatians 6:9, KJV

"But ye, brethren, be not weary in well doing."
2 Thessalonians 3:13, KJV

"But I fear, lest by any means, as the serpent beguiled Eve through his subtilty, so your minds should be corrupted from the simplicity that is in Christ."
2 Corinthians 11:3, KJV

Notice what the Apostle Paul writes in that very first verse above. He says "bringing into captivity every thought to the obedience of Christ". You see, that is exactly what you did when you changed your mind -- or repented -- and decided to

accept Christ as your Savior. You took control of your mind by the Grace of God. You decided that you were not going to continue to remain in a state of rebellion against Him. But as we have already discussed, now what you need to do is to continue in that same mode of thought. You need to keep resisting the Devil every single day of your life. You need to "gird up the loins of your mind", exactly as the Apostle Peter writes, lest you fall back into the old life of sin. You need to persevere in the faith, and endure hardness as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. Here again are some good verses which emphasize the spiritual nature of our warfare:

"Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses."

1 Timothy 6:12, KJV

"Thou therefore endure hardness, as a good soldier of Jesus Christ. No man that warreth entangleth himself with the affairs of this life; that he may please him who hath chosen him to be a soldier."

2 Timothy 2:3-4, KJV

"I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith:"

2 Timothy 4:7, KJV

"Ye have not yet resisted unto blood, striving against sin."

Hebrews 12:4, KJV

"For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war after the flesh: (For the weapons of our warfare are not carnal, but mighty through God to the pulling down of strong holds;)"

2 Corinthians 10:3-4, KJV

"Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour:"

1 Peter 5:8, KJV

"Finally, my brethren, be strong in the Lord, and in the power of his might. Put on the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to stand against the wiles of the devil. For we wrestle not against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this world, against spiritual wickedness in high places. Wherefore take unto you the whole armour of God, that ye may be able to withstand in the evil day, and having

done all, to stand. Stand therefore, having your loins girt about with truth, and having on the breastplate of righteousness; And your feet shod with the preparation of the gospel of peace; Above all, taking the shield of faith, wherewith ye shall be able to quench all the fiery darts of the wicked. And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God: Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints;"

Ephesians 6:10-18, KJV

"For the word of God is quick, and powerful, and sharper than any twoedged sword, piercing even to the dividing asunder of soul and spirit, and of the joints and marrow, and is a discerner of the thoughts and intents of the heart."

Hebrews 4:12, KJV

Thankfully, this is not a battle which any of us are required to fight alone. We do have a helper. You may recall that in Titus 3:5, the Apostle Paul used the phrase "renewing of the Holy Ghost". In short, God's Holy Spirit is there to help us, to inspire us, to strengthen us, to instruct us, to empower us, to correct us, and to prod us along in our daily battle of faith as we share the Gospel with the world. Consider the following group of verses:

"Then he answered and spake unto me, saying, This is the word of the LORD unto Zerubbabel, saying, Not by might, nor by power, but by my spirit, saith the LORD of hosts."

Zechariah 4:6, KJV

"But when they shall lead you, and deliver you up, take no thought beforehand what ye shall speak, neither do ye premeditate: but whatsoever shall be given you in that hour, that speak ye: for it is not ye that speak, but the Holy Ghost."

Mark 13:11, KJV

"And Jesus returned in the power of the Spirit into Galilee: and there went out a fame of him through all the region round about."

Luke 4:14, KJV

"But before all these, they shall lay their hands on you, and persecute you, delivering you up to the synagogues, and

into prisons, being brought before kings and rulers for my name's sake. And it shall turn to you for a testimony. Settle it therefore in your hearts, not to meditate before what ye shall answer: For I will give you a mouth and wisdom, which all your adversaries shall not be able to gainsay nor resist."

Luke 21:12-15, KJV

"And, behold, I send the promise of my Father upon you: but tarry ye in the city of Jerusalem, until ye be endued with power from on high."

Luke 24:49, KJV

"But the Comforter, which is the Holy Ghost, whom the Father will send in my name, he shall teach you all things, and bring all things to your remembrance, whatsoever I have said unto you."

John 14:26, KJV

"But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth."

Acts 1:8, KJV

"How God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Ghost and with power: who went about doing good, and healing all that were oppressed of the devil; for God was with him."

Acts 10:38, KJV

"Now the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that ye may abound in hope, through the power of the Holy Ghost . . . Through mighty signs and wonders, by the power of the Spirit of God; so that from Jerusalem, and round about unto Illyricum, I have fully preached the gospel of Christ."

Romans 15:13, 19, KJV

"And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God."

1 Corinthians 2:4-5, KJV

"But we have this treasure in earthen vessels, that the excellency of the power may be of God, and not of us."

2 Corinthians 4:7, KJV

"For our gospel came not unto you in word only, but also in power, and in the Holy Ghost, and in much assurance; as ye know what manner of men we were among you for your sake."

1 Thessalonians 1:5, KJV

In addition to the direct intervention of the Holy Spirit in our lives, most Christians also have access to the recorded Word in the form of printed matter, audio recordings, online Bible resources, computer apps, videos, live sermons, etc. We can no more do without spiritually ingesting God's Word, than we can do without eating physical food. After just a few days, we would grow tired and weak. So please make sure that you are dedicating some time each week to reading and studying God's Word. Following are a few verses for your personal encouragement:

"And he humbled thee, and suffered thee to hunger, and fed thee with manna, which thou knewest not, neither did thy fathers know; that he might make thee know that man doth not live by bread only, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of the LORD doth man live."

Deuteronomy 8:3, KJV

"Neither have I gone back from the commandment of his lips; I have esteemed the words of his mouth more than my necessary food."

Job 23:12, KJV

"O taste and see that the LORD is good: blessed is the man that trusteth in him."

Psalms 34:8, KJV

"But he answered and said, It is written, Man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceedeth out of the mouth of God."

Matthew 4:4, KJV

"More to be desired are they than gold, yea, than much fine gold: sweeter also than honey and the honeycomb."

Psalms 19:10, KJV

"I am the LORD thy God, which brought thee out of the land of Egypt: open thy mouth wide, and I will fill it."

Psalms 81:10, KJV

"For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but

righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Romans 14:17, KJV

"As newborn babes, desire the sincere milk of the word, that ye may grow thereby:"

1 Peter 2:2, KJV

Last of all, but equally important, in our daily struggles of faith, we also have our fellow Christian brethren who can encourage us, comfort us, pray for us, exhort us, and lift us up whenever there may be a need. In this modern age of computer technology, even people who happen to be homebound due to certain health issues, or due to other reasons, can still engage in online fellowship with their brethren across the Internet. Consider the following verses:

"Iron sharpeneth iron; so a man sharpeneth the countenance of his friend."

Proverbs 27:17, KJV

"Two are better than one; because they have a good reward for their labour. For if they fall, the one will lift up his fellow: but woe to him that is alone when he falleth; for he hath not another to help him up. Again, if two lie together, then they have heat: but how can one be warm alone? And if one prevail against him, two shall withstand him; and a threefold cord is not quickly broken."

Ecclesiastes 4:9-12, KJV

"Furthermore then we beseech you, brethren, and exhort you by the Lord Jesus, that as ye have received of us how ye ought to walk and to please God, so ye would abound more and more . . . Wherefore comfort [exhort] one another with these words."

1 Thessalonians 4:1, 18, KJV

"Wherefore comfort [exhort] yourselves together, and edify one another, even as also ye do. And we beseech you, brethren, to know them which labour among you, and are over you in the Lord, and admonish you; And to esteem them very highly in love for their work's sake. And be at peace among yourselves. Now we exhort you, brethren, warn them that are unruly, comfort the feebleminded, support the weak, be patient toward all men."

1 Thessalonians 5:11-14, KJV

"But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day;

lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin."

Hebrews 3:13, KJV

"Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much . . . Brethren, if any of you do err from the truth, and one convert him; Let him know, that he which converteth the sinner from the error of his way shall save a soul from death, and shall hide a multitude of sins."

James 5:16, 19-20, KJV

So while our trials and battles as Christians may be many, as you can see, God has provided us with the means to overcome them, if we are willing. We don't have to fight alone. If you feel that you are growing faint in your mind, then reach out. God will provide your needs, and will raise up someone to assist you.

Considering everything that we have discussed in this series, it is my hope that you can now see that true repentance is much more than just being sorry for our sins. It is also much more than just changing our minds and accepting Jesus Christ as our Savior. It is in reality a lifelong journey where we must continually discipline our minds every single day, and make the choice to believe in and serve the Lord. It is by no means a one-time battle that we win, and that is it. It is a daily fight, and a daily sacrifice, as we can determine by the following group of verses:

"And he said to them all, If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and TAKE UP HIS CROSS DAILY, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it."

Luke 9:23-24, KJV

"I protest by your rejoicing which I have in Christ Jesus our Lord, I DIE DAILY."

1 Corinthians 15:31, KJV

The path of repentance is in fact a race of faith; and as in every race, not everyone is going to be a winner. Only those folks who complete the course will win the prize; as becomes evident by verses such as the following:

"Know ye not that they which run in a race run all, but one

receiveth the prize? So run, that ye may obtain. And every man that striveth for the mastery is temperate in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown: but we an incorruptible: I therefore so run, not as uncertainly: so fight I, not as one that beateth the air: But I keep under my body and bring it into subjection: lest that by any means, when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway."

1 Corinthians 9:24-27, KJV

"Brethren, I count not myself to have apprehended: but this one thing I do, forgetting those things which are behind, and reaching forth unto those things which are before, I press toward the mark for the prize of the high calling of God in Christ Jesus."

Philippians 3:13-14, KJV

"Wherefore seeing we also are compassed about with so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which doth so easily beset us, and let us run with patience the race that is set before us. Looking unto Jesus the author and finisher of our faith: who for the joy that was set before him endured the cross, despising the shame, and is set down at the right hand of the throne of God. For consider him that endured such contradiction of sinners against himself lest ye be wearied and faint in your minds."

Hebrews 12:1-3, KJV

"Holding forth the word of life; that I may rejoice in the day of Christ, that I have not run in vain, neither laboured in vain."

Philippians 2:16, KJV

"For I am now ready to be offered, and the time of my departure is at hand. I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: Henceforth there is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them also that love his appearing."

2 Timothy 4:6-8, KJV

". . . be thou faithful unto death, and I will give thee a crown of life."

Revelation 2:10b, KJV

"And, behold, I come quickly: and my reward is with me, to give every man according as his work shall be."

Revelation 22:12, KJV

"Let thine eyes look right on, and let thine eyelids look straight before thee. Ponder the path of thy feet, and let all thy ways be established. Turn not to the right hand nor to the left: remove thy foot from evil."

Proverbs 4:25-27, KJV

"Ye did run well; who did hinder you that ye should not obey the truth?"

Galatians 5:7, KJV

So what about you? Have you cast off the deceptions of the world, disciplined your mind, and accepted Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior? Having done so, have you continued on in your walk of faith, fighting whatever battles come your way, and being a blessing to others? The choice is yours. I hope that you choose well.

With these thoughts I will bring this series to a close. It is my hope that you have found it to be both informative and enlightening, and I pray that it has been a blessing in your life as well. If you have an account with Facebook, Twitter, Tumblr or with any other social network, I would appreciate if you would take the time to click or tap on the appropriate link that is found on this page. Thanks so much, and may God bless you abundantly!

For additional information, you may want to refer to the list of reading resources below which were also mentioned in this series, or which are related to this series, and which are likewise located on the Bill's Bible Basics web server.

A Treasure in Earthen Vessels: God's Promise of the Spirit

Are You Just a Baby Huey?

Do You Want Love and Light, or Rod and Wrath?

Free Will and Personal Choice

Going Down the Highway of Life

Message to the World

The Battle is Not Yours Alone

The Faith of a Little Child

The Fruits of Disobedience

The Lord Will Lift You Up

The Parable of the Sower: Salvation and Service

They Gay and Lesbian Agenda: To the Point!

When Sin is No Longer a Sin

Written by the WordWeaver

wordweaver777@gmail.com

<https://www.billkochman.com>