

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

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CONTENTS

Introduction.	1
The Biblical Contextual Definition of Repentance.	4
Repentance Is A Gift Of God.	7
Arguments Against Repentance In Salvation.	8
What Comes First Repentance Or Faith.	12
Biblical Faith And Repentance Are The Parents Of Salvation.	13
False Professors.	17
Does The Devil Make Anyone Doubt Their Salvation?.	25
Is The Preaching Of Repentance In Salvation Heresy?.	25
What About The Salvation Of Children?.	28
God’s Repentance Brings Sorrow, Grief, And Regret To His Heart.	29
What Does The Bible Mean When It Says God Repents Of Evil?.	30
What Motivates God To Repent?.	31
Glory Seeking And Glory Stealing “Soul Winners”	32
Closing Statements.	35
Books We Recommend On The Subject Of Repentance.	37
Appendix 1: What Is the Gift Of God In Ephesians 2:8?.	38

INTRODUCTION

[\(back to top\)](#)

Soul winning is a work of the Holy Ghost. It is not some magic formula where we utter some magic words and abracadabra we are saved. It is also not something that is accomplished with the drums, lights, and smoke and mirrors of Contemporary “Christian” music. We need to get back to where we rely upon the Holy Ghost to do the work of drawing, convicting, converting, and regenerating lost sinners. Satan uses the arm of the flesh in his battle with the Holy Ghost for the souls of lost sinners. Many folks will rightly define the word repentance then wrongly apply it. That is why repentance has become a work in the minds of those who preach salvation without repentance. The doctrine of repentance identifies false professors and is used by the Holy Ghost as a tool to point us to those who have made false professions. Repentance is the salt that limits the leaven of false professions. We can and must win souls, but we must do it GOD’S WAY through the power of the Holy Ghost. To that end, we present this study on Biblical repentance.

Before we get underway with our study, some definitions are in order. We want to give dictionary definitions of the words, repent, repentance, convert, and evil. We will give the definition out of both the “Webster’s 1812 Dictionary” and the unabridged “Oxford English Dictionary”. We prefer the “Oxford English Dictionary” because it gives the written definitions of words followed by using them in the context of sentences throughout their historical development. Many times the “Oxford English Dictionary” also uses scripture quotations.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

REPENT: OXFORD: To affect (oneself) with contrition or regret for something done, etc.... To cause one to feel regret.... To feel contrition, compunction, sorrow or regret for something one has done or left undone; to change one's mind with regard to past action or conduct through dissatisfaction with it or its results....To view or think of (any action, etc.) with dissatisfaction and regret ; to be sorry for.... To feel regret, sorrow, or contrition for (something inherently wrong, some fault, misconduct, sin, or other offence). (Page 464 of Oxford English Dictionary)

GOD REPENTS CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION: OXFORD: God doth reserve a liberty to himself, either to repent of the evil or the good that was foretold concerning any people. (1662, Page 464 of Oxford English Dictionary)

REPENT: WEBSTER'S: v.i. [L. re and paeniteo, from paena, pain. Gr. See Paint.]
1. To feel pain, sorrow or regret for something done or spoken; as, to repent that we have lost much time in idleness or sensual pleasure; to repent that we have injured or wounded the feelings of a friend. A person repents only of what he himself has done or said. 2. To express sorrow for something past. Enobarbus did before thy face repent. 3. To change the mind in consequence of the inconvenience or injury done by past conduct. Lest peradventure the people repent when they see war, and they return. Exodus 13:4. Applied to the Supreme Being, to change the course of providential dealings. Genesis 6. Psalm 106. 5. In theology, to sorrow or be pained for sin, as a violation of God's holy law, a dishonor to his character and government, and the foulest ingratitude to a Being of infinite benevolence. Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. Luke 13. Acts 3.

REPENT: WEBSTER'S: v.t 1. To remember with sorrow; as, to repent rash words; to repent an injury done to a neighbor; to repent follies and vices. [See Repentance.]
2. With the reciprocal pronoun. No man repented him of his wickedness. Jer 8.

REPENTANCE: OXFORD: 1. The act of repenting or the state of being penitent; sorrow, regret, or contrition for past action or conduct ; an instance of this. (Page 465 of Oxford English Dictionary)

REPENTANCE: WEBSTER'S, n. 1. Sorrow for any thing done or said; the pain or grief which a person experiences in consequence of the injury or inconvenience produced by his own conduct. 2. In theology, the pain, regret or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, because it exposes him to punishment. This sorrow proceeding merely from the fear of punishment, is called legal repentance, as being excited by the terrors of legal penalties, and it may exist without an amendment of life. 3. Real penitence; sorrow or deep contrition for sin, as an

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

offense and dishonor to God, a violation of his holy law, and the basest ingratitude towards a Being of infinite benevolence. This is called evangelical repentance, and is accompanied and followed by amendment of life. **Repentance is a change of mind, or a conversion from sin to God.** Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation. 2 Cor 7. Mat 3. **Repentance is the relinquishment of any practice, from conviction that it has offended God.** (Emphasis added by Brother Mike Sutherland)

CONVERT: OXFORD: 9. Trans. To cause to turn to and embrace a (specified) religious faith, usually implying that the turning is to truth from error or ignorance. (Without qualification, usually = 'to convert to Christianity'.) 10. Theol. (trans.) To cause to turn from a sinful or irreligious life to one marked by love of God and pursuit of holiness; to turn to godliness.

CONVERT: WEBSTER'S:, v.t. 3. To change or turn from one religion to another, or from one party or sect to another; as, to convert pagans to Christianity; to convert royalists into republicans. 4. To turn from a bad life to a good one; to change the heart and moral character, from enmity to God and from vicious habits, to love of God and to a holy life. Repent ye therefore, and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out. Acts 3. He that converteth a sinner from the error of his way, shall save a soul from death. James 5.

EVIL: OXFORD: 1. Morally depraved, bad, wicked, vicious. CONTEXTUAL FROM 1611 King James Bible: Genesis 8:21 The imagination of man's heart is evil from his youth.

2. Doing or tending to do harm; hurtful, mischievous, prejudicial. Of advice, etc.: Misleading. Of an omen, etc.: Boding ill. CONTEXTUAL FROM 1611 King James Bible Genesis 37:20 Some evil beast hath devoured him,

4. Causing discomfort, pain, or trouble ; unpleasant, offensive, disagreeable; troublesome, painful. (pages 1104-1105 of Oxford English Dictionary)

2. Stool of repentance, repentance-stool, a stool formerly placed in a conspicuous position in Scottish churches for the use of offenders (esp. against chastity) making public repentance ; also called CUTTY-STOOL.

E'VIL: WEBSTER'S:, a. e'vl. [Heb. to be unjust or injurious, to defraud.]

1. Having bad qualities of a natural kind; mischievous; having qualities which tend to injury, or to produce mischief. Some evil beast hath devoured him. Gen 37. 2. Having bad qualities of a moral kind; wicked; corrupt; perverse; wrong; as evil thoughts; evil deeds; evil speaking; an evil generation. 3. Unfortunate; unhappy; producing sorrow, distress, injury or calamity; as evil tidings; evil arrows; evil days.

E'VIL: WEBSTER'S:, n. Evil is natural or moral. Natural evil is any thing which

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

produces pain, distress, loss or calamity, or which in any way disturbs the peace, impairs the happiness, or destroys the perfection of natural beings. Moral evil is any deviation of a moral agent from the rules of conduct prescribed to him by God, or by legitimate human authority; or it is any violation of the plain principles of justice and rectitude. There are also evils called civil, which affect injuriously the peace or prosperity of a city or state; and political evils, which injure a nation, in its public capacity. All wickedness, all crimes, all violations of law and right are moral evils. Diseases are natural evils, but they often proceed from moral evils.

Penance is man's vain and carnal attempt to make amends to God for some sin that he has committed against man and/or God. "Penance" and "penitent" are Protestant salutes to the Roman Catholic sacrament of penance. The Church of England held onto most of its Roman Catholic heresies when Henry VIII pulled them out of the Roman Catholic Church on February 11, 1531. The words "penance" and "penitent" are not found in the King James Bible.

In looking at the definitions of repent and repentance from both the "Oxford English Dictionary" and "Webster's 1812 Dictionary" we see that changing one's mind, sorrow, regret, grief, pain, contrition, and self affliction are all wrapped up in the definitions of repent and repentance. Saving Biblical repentance is the work of the Holy Ghost in the unbeliever that brings about an everlasting change of mind toward sin and toward God. It comes in response to the convicting work of the Holy Ghost. It drives an individual from the habit of sin, or, if you will, habitual sin. It changes your "want to" and gives you the power through the Holy Ghost to forsake your sin. Many times attempts at repentance in the unbeliever come in response to conviction from the Holy Ghost. Many years ago, I told Brother Sammy Allen of my attempts to turn over a new leaf before I got saved. His response was that I was already repenting before I got saved. While I agree with Brother Sammy, I also believe that my repentings were my unbelieving response to Holy Ghost conviction.

Many times Biblical repentance is described by the terms "turn" and "return". Hence the dictionary definitions of repentance use the phrase "change of mind" because the terms "turn" and "return" indicate a change of direction. There are a number of Bible passages that use the words "repent" and "turn" in the immediate context of the passages. The best way to get a Biblical definition of the word repent and its cognates is to read the word in the context of where it occurs.

THE BIBLICAL CONTEXTUAL DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE

[\(back to top\)](#)

Many times the Bible describes the word "repent" as a turning or returning in the context where it occurs. In these passages it is associated with the pain or suffering that has, or will, take(en) place as a result of the failure to respond to a call for repentance. I have seen many that mock the association of repentance with grief and sorrow. That is nor Scriptural. After reading all of the following passages you will get a Biblical definition of what repentance is. These passages include Exodus 32:12, Psalm 90.13, Jeremiah 18:8-10, Jeremiah 26:3, Jeremiah 31:18-19, Ezekiel 18:21-23, Ezekiel 18:30-32 with Ezekiel 33:11, Joel 2:12-14, Jonah 3:8-10, Luke 17:3-4, Acts 26:16-20. They

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

are quoted below:

Exodus 32:12

¹² 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.

Psalm 90:13

¹³ **Return**, O LORD, how long? and let it **repent thee** concerning thy servants.

Jeremiah 18:8-10

⁸ If that nation, against whom I have pronounced, **turn** from their evil, I will **repent** of the evil that I thought to do unto them. ⁹ And at what instant I shall speak concerning a nation, and concerning a kingdom, to build and to plant it; ¹⁰ If it do evil in my sight, that it obey not my voice, then I will **repent** of the good, wherewith I said I would benefit them.

Jeremiah 26:3

³ If so be they will hearken, and **turn** every man from his evil way, that I may **repent** me of the evil, which I purpose to do unto them because of the evil of their doings.

Jeremiah 31:18-19

¹⁸ I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; Thou hast chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: **turn thou me**, and I shall be **turned**; for thou art the LORD my God. ¹⁹ Surely after that I was **turned**, I **repented**; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth.

Ezekiel 18:21-23

²¹ But if the wicked will **turn** from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. ²² All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. ²³ Have I any pleasure at all that the wicked should die? saith the Lord GOD: and not that he should **return** from his ways, and live?

Ezekiel 18:30-32

³⁰ Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. **Repent**, and **turn yourselves** from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin. ³¹ Cast away from you all your transgressions, whereby ye have transgressed; and make you a new heart and a new spirit: for why will ye die, O house of Israel? ³² For I have no pleasure in the death of him that dieth, saith the Lord

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

GOD: wherefore **turn yourselves**, and live ye.

Ezekiel 33:11

¹¹ Say unto them, As I live, saith the Lord GOD, I have no pleasure in the death of the wicked; but that the wicked **turn from** his way and live: **turn ye, turn ye** from your evil ways; for why will ye die, O house of Israel?

Joel 2:12-14

¹² Therefore also now, saith the LORD, **turn ye** even to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: ¹³ And **rend your heart**, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and **repenteth** him of the evil. ¹⁴ Who knoweth if he will **return** and **repent**, and leave a blessing behind him; even a meat offering and a drink offering unto the LORD your God?

Jonah 3:8-10

⁸ But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and **cry mightily unto God**: yea, let them **turn** every one from his evil way, and from the violence that is in their hands. ⁹ Who can tell if God will **turn** and **repent**, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? ¹⁰ And God saw their works, that they **turned** from their evil way; and God **repented** of the evil, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did it not.

Luke 17:3-4

³ Take heed to yourselves: If thy brother trespass against thee, rebuke him; and if he **repent**, forgive him. ⁴ And if he trespass against thee seven times in a day, and seven times in a day **turn again** to thee, saying, I **repent**; thou shalt forgive him.

Acts 26:16-20

¹⁶ But rise, and stand upon thy feet: for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness both of these things which thou hast seen, and of those things in the which I will appear unto thee; ¹⁷ Delivering thee from the people, and from the Gentiles, unto whom now I send thee, ¹⁸ To open their eyes, and to **turn them** from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, **that they may receive forgiveness of sins**, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. ¹⁹ Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: ²⁰ 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.

That should settle the Biblical definition of the word “repent” and its cognates. Repent means to turn

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

or return from some previous action or some future planned action. Saving repentance is a change of mind (heart) wrought by the Holy Ghost that results in a change of actions and a change in thought processes. In other words, it makes you think differently and act differently because you have been rescued from the power of sin by the Holy Ghost. Outside of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, any attempts to turn from your sins, or turn over a new leaf, are but exercises in vanity.

REPENTANCE IS A GIFT OF GOD

[\(back to top\)](#)

For at least 80 years now, there has been a huge controversy in Independent Baptist churches and other fundamentalist churches over whether repentance is required for salvation. Harry Ironside in his book “Except Ye Repent” made the following statement in 1937:

Fully convinced in my own mind that the doctrine of repentance is the missing note in many otherwise orthodox and fundamentally sound circles today, I have penned this volume out of a full heart. I hope and pray that God will be pleased to use it to awaken many of His servants to the importance of seeking so to present His truth as to bring men to the only place where He can meet them in blessing.

Imagine if it was an issue in Brother Ironside’s day, how much more so it is an issue in today’s apostate and heretical church in 2018. American churches are in almost total apostasy. Why? What has happened to the churches since the late 1800s? What has changed?

God has not changed! Unless you have some book other than the 1611 King James Bible, the word of God has not changed. What has changed is that Biblical repentance is not being preached, the law as the schoolmaster to bring people to repentance is not being preached, holiness and separation is not being preached to and demanded of professing Christians, and reverends and doctors are using corrupted books that they brazenly call Bibles in lieu of using the King James Bible. If we are winning all the souls that we claim to be winning, why is it that apostasy and heresy have spread like wildfire in our churches? If we are winning all the souls that we claim to be winning, why is it that every doctrine of the Bible is being denied by those who profess to be Christians? If we are winning all the souls that we claim to be winning, why is it that we have a nation that spits in the face of God? These are not the actions of saved folks. These are the actions of false professors who have not repented. These are the actions of devils. Most of our churches are full of reprobate, professing Christians who have been made twofold more the children of hell. Hence, what we are seeing is the fruits of NO repentance.

Most of the arguments against Biblical repentance are rooted in a misunderstanding of what repentance is and who is doing the work of repentance. Now, to the point of this section.

There will be some who will disagree with us on this point, but **repentance is a gift just as salvation is** (Ephesians 2:8-9). Let us read Acts 5:31, Acts 11:18 and 2 Timothy 2:25 very carefully:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Acts 5:31

³¹ Him **hath God** exalted with his right hand to be a Prince and a Saviour, for to **give repentance** to Israel, and forgiveness of sins.

Acts 11:18

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then **hath God** also to the Gentiles **granted repentance** unto life.

2 Timothy 2:25

²⁵ In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if **God** peradventure will **give them repentance** to the acknowledging of the truth;

Note that Acts 5:31 says that repentance is given to Israel (the Jews). Acts 11:18 says that repentance is a grant to the Gentiles. It is not a question. It is a point blank statement that “God **ALSO** hath granted repentance to the Gentiles”. From the context of 2 Timothy 2:5 we can discern that “those that oppose themselves” are lost. Repentance is the only thing that can help those that oppose themselves. Second Timothy 2:5 acknowledges that it is God that gives repentance. Things that are given or granted without cost or obligation to the recipient are said to be gifts. Therefore, repentance is a gift of God which is proof that it is not of human works. Repentance is God working in you to produce works meet for repentance. The Holy Ghost calls it the fruit of **THE SPIRIT**. That means that it is not the fruit of the believer; not of human works lest any man should boast. Even after salvation, repentance in the believer’s life is both the fruit and the work of the Holy Ghost. “For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing: for to will is present with me; but how to perform that which is good I find not” (Romans 7:18). The Holy Ghost is the gift that keeps on giving the gift of repentance and the gifts of service in the lives of believers.

ARGUMENTS AGAINST REPENTANCE IN SALVATION

[\(back to top\)](#)

All of the arguments against repentance in salvation turn on making repentance a work. Those who are against requiring repentance as a condition of salvation accuse those who advocate the necessity of repentance in salvation of advocating a works based salvation. There is even a group out there that claims that those who believe in repentance for salvation believe that you have to repent of ALL your sins before you can get saved. There is also a group that claims you must make the Lord the Lord of your life before you can get saved; hence, the term “Lordship Salvation”. None of those are true. They are all gross misinterpretations of what the Bible teaches about repentance (and faith) that leads to salvation.

Repentance is not in any way based upon human works. Repentance is not a work of the human will. Repentance is the work of the indwelling Holy Ghost. After a person puts their faith in the Lord Jesus Christ, God grants repentance to the believer through the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost will manifest himself through the works of repentance that are wrought in and through the believer.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

In a sense, repentance is a fruit of the indwelling Holy Ghost. As Brother Sammy Allen says; no fruit no root. If there is no fruit meet for repentance, there is no root in the tree of life. If the salvation you claim to have does not change your attitude and your actions toward God and toward people, then you have not repented. Repentance is also an evidence of saving faith. Pastor Charles Lawson of Temple Baptist Church in Knoxville, Tennessee had this to say about repentance:

Repentance is an evident sign of Bible believing faith. If you don't have repentance, you don't have Bible believing faith. Repentance does not precede faith. Repentance is a product of true faith. If the faith that you say you have in the Lord Jesus Christ does not produce repentance you have got intellectual assent to a bunch of facts, but you don't have saving faith.

If you have not repented, that is proof that the Holy Ghost is not working in you. If you have not repented, that is proof to you and those about you that you do not have saving faith. Porter Barrington, author of the "Christian Life Study Outlines", had this to say about repentance:

Repentance qualifies a man for salvation, but it takes a faith in Christ to acquire it. True repentance is always coupled with faith. It is impossible to have saving faith and not repent.

Amen! Repentance is the life blood of both salvation and sanctification for the Christian. Repentance is pumped through the heart of faith in the individual who has been regenerated by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost must be present so that he can form God's work of salvation in you. It is the indwelling Holy Ghost that works repentance in you. God's work of salvation in you changes your outward conduct. The fruit of the Spirit of repentance is love, joy, peace, longsuffering, gentleness, goodness, faith, meekness, and temperance.

What those who say repentance is nothing more than a change from unbelief to belief are doing is changing the Biblical definition of conversion to that of repentance or the definition of faith to that of repentance. Take your choice. What they are doing is confounding Biblical repentance with Biblical faith. They are not the same. The definitions of the words "unbelief" and "belief" should settle the issue. Unbelief is having no faith. Belief is having faith. Note the following statements concerning this issue from Michael T. Wolski's book "Rightly Defining The Words Of Truth":

When a sinner demonstrates repentance toward God, he turns with the intent to trust in Jesus Christ alone for salvation. What he turns from is not his individual sins. He is turning from whatever it was that he was previously trusting in (or, in some cases, not trusting in). (page 93)

He had already been preaching the gospel to those people, but what was keeping them from receiving it? What did they need to turn from in order to trust in Jesus Christ? It was the same thing that the Thessalonians repented of – exercising their faith in incapable idols. (page 94)

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

As God's pattern for unbelievers to follow, Paul displayed a clear picture of repentance for this age. It was not his sins that Paul repented of for salvation. It was what he was trusting in or what he hoped was gaining him favor with God. (page 96)

Talk about turning! Paul did not turn from his sins, but rather from "what things were gain" to him. In other words, he let go of those things that he hoped were getting him somewhere with God. This is the type of turning that is a prerequisite for salvation. (page 97)

All of these statements from Brother Wolski are based upon his belief that repentance is turning from unbelief to belief. That is the same position that many take who deny that repentance is an integral part of salvation. Brother Wolski denies that salvation involves repenting of sin(s). That is strange because the Holy Ghost refers to the unbelief of the lost as sin. John 16:7-9 says:

John 16:7-9

⁷ Nevertheless I tell you the truth; It is expedient for you that I go away: for if I go not away, the Comforter will not come unto you; but if I depart, I will send him unto you.

⁸ And when he is come, he will reprove the world of sin, and of righteousness, and of judgment: ⁹ **Of sin, because they believe not on me;**

For those of you who believe that repentance is not an integral part of salvation, I want to run around in a circle with you for awhile. We have somewhat of a conundrum here. If you believe that salvation does not require repentance from sin, then how can you turn from unbelief to belief and have it counted for salvation when the Holy Ghost defines unbelief as sin? Put another way, according to your system of belief you would have to turn from the SIN OF UNBELIEF to belief to be saved, but since you do not have to repent of sin to get saved, then you do not have to change from unbelief to belief to get saved since unbelief is sin. Are you confused yet? I am confused. If the repentance involved in salvation involves merely turning from unbelief to belief, then where are the fruits (plural) and works(plural) that are meet for repentance? Here is what Paul had to say about this issue in Acts 26:20:

Acts 26:20

But showed 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 t u r n t o God, a n d **DO WORKS MEET FOR REPENTANCE.**

The Lord Jesus Christ, John the Baptist, Peter, and Paul all preached repentance.

If faith and repentance are the same, then why does the Bible make such a clear distinction between? There are at least three verses in the New Testament that distinguish between faith and repentance in salvation. They are Mark 1:15, Acts 20:21 and Hebrews 6:1. These verses read:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Mark 1:14-15

¹⁴ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent** ye, and **believe** the gospel.

Acts 20:21

²¹ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to the Greeks, **repentance toward God**, and **faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**.

Hebrews 6:1

¹ Therefore leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on unto perfection; not laying again the foundation of **repentance from dead works**, and of **faith toward God**,

Mark 1:15 says that repenting and believing ARE included in the gospel. For those of you who try to make repentance a dispensational issue or an issue of Israel versus the Gentiles, we would remind you that the gospel preached in Mark is the gospel of the kingdom of God and not the gospel of the kingdom of heaven preached in Matthew. The kingdom of heaven is an earthly physical kingdom ruled over by the Lord Jesus Christ while the kingdom of God is non-earthly spiritual kingdom. The preaching of both required repentance.

Brother Wolski also makes the following statement: “If [he means in] fact, early in the book of Acts, we see the message of repentance preached exclusively to Israel”[page 83]. To which we would say, so, what is the point? Repentance is also preached to the Gentiles in the book of Acts. Read Acts 11:18, Acts 17:30, Acts 20:21, and Acts 26:20 below:

Acts 11:18 (This one is Peter.)

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to **the Gentiles** granted **repentance** unto life.

Acts 17:30

³⁰ And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth **all men** every where to **repent**:

Acts 20:21

²¹ Testifying both to the Jews, and also to **the Greeks**, **repentance** toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 26:20

²⁰ 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**.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Brother Wolski also says, “When studying the ministry of the Apostle Paul, it becomes evident that he commands only Christians to repent of their sins.”[page 88]. Acts 17:30, Acts 20:21, and Acts 26:20, and 2 Corinthians 7:9-10 refute this statement. It is strange that Brother Wolski dedicates 34 pages (almost 20%, or 2 chapters) of his book to the doctrine of repentance and never refers to 2 Corinthians 7:8-11 which states:

2 Corinthians 7:8-11

⁸ For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.

⁹ Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. ¹¹ For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

This passage of scripture was penned by Paul and is one of the most important passages of scripture in the New Testament dealing with the doctrine of repentance in salvation. On page 75 of his book, when speaking of the definition of repentance, Brother Wolski states, “My study indicated that the word could not be defined as “being sorry for sin” (as I had heard and assumed), because God repented in many places in the Bible”. While words such as sorrow, regret, and grief are not included in the dictionary definition of repentance, scripture makes it plain that many times those emotions are associated with repentance just as it is here in 2 Corinthians 7. Genesis 6:6-7 which speaks of God’s repentance makes it plain that it grieved God that he had created man.

WHAT COMES FIRST REPENTANCE OR FAITH?

[\(back to top\)](#)

Over the years we have heard many debates as to what comes first, repentance or faith. The Bible does not make a direct statement as to whether faith or repentance comes first. For the Christian, there is the practical answer to that question and there is the theological answer to that question. The practical answer to that question says that it does not make a difference. The practical answer to that question says that faith and repentance occur at the same time. Salvation can be likened to a coin that has repentance on one side and faith on the other side. We will call that coin the half shekel (See Exodus 30:11-16.). When that half shekel coin is picked up, you will pick up faith and repentance at the SAME time. That half shekel coin is the only coin that the Lord will accept for your fare into heaven whether ye be rich or poor. The rich cannot add unto it and the poor cannot take away from it. If I take faith off of one side of the coin, then it is a counterfeit. If I take repentance off of one side of the coin, then it is also a counterfeit. If I add works to one side of the

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

coin, then it is also a counterfeit. If I take faith and repentance off of the coin, then it is also a counterfeit.

The theological answer to the question of whether faith or repentance comes first in salvation is that faith in the individual must come first since the Bible teaches that saving repentance is a work of the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost does not dwell in an unsaved individual. Put another way, the Holy Ghost will not work the work of Biblical repentance in someone who has not exercised saving faith. If you have not exercised saving faith, any works of repentance that **YOU** accomplish will be as the repentance of Esau and Judas. They both exercised worldly repentance, but it was all for naught. Esau's tears were wrought by worldly sorrow (Hebrews 12:16-17). Judas kissed the door to heaven and went to hell even though he "repented himself" of betraying the innocent blood (Matthew 27:3-6).

As an aside, the Gospel of John uses neither the word "faith" nor the word "repentance". Yet, the Gospel of John is the only Gospel that mentions the new birth. Ye must be born again! However, the Gospel of John uses the word "believe" and its cognates 81 times. That is almost 2½ times more than the combined totals of the other three gospels.

The term "repentance" is used but one time in the Old Testament and it is used of the repentance of God in Hosea 13:14 whereas it is used 25 times in the New Testament. The word "faith" is only used two times in the Old Testament whereas it is used 245 times in the New Testament. Why the difference? Could it be that the reason is given in Galatians 22-24:

Galatians 3:22-24

²² But the scripture hath concluded all under sin, that the promise by faith of Jesus Christ might be given to them that believe. ²³ But before faith came, we were kept under the law, shut up unto the faith which should afterwards be revealed. ²⁴ Wherefore the law was our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith.

BIBLICAL FAITH AND REPENTANCE ARE THE PARENTS OF SALVATION ([back to top](#))

What follows is a discussion of Biblical repentance. It is an oft attacked, and for the most part, misunderstood doctrine. The Bible uses the word "repent" and its cognates 110 times. The word "repent" occurs 46 times in our Bibles; 22 times in the Old Testament and 24 times in the New Testament. The word "repented" occurs 32 times in our Bibles; 17 times in the Old Testament and 15 times in the New Testament. The word "repentings" occurs once in our Bibles and that is in the Old Testament. The word "repenteth" occurs 5 times in our Bibles; 3 times in the Old Testament and 2 times in the New Testament. The word "repentance" occurs 26 times in our Bibles; 1 time in the Old Testament and 25 times in the New Testament.

Repentance is not a dispensational doctrine. Repentance is not a doctrine that applies strictly to the Jew or strictly to the Gentile. God requires repentance of ALL individuals in all dispensations. The Bible teaches that repentance is required by God for salvation. I am going to do something here to make a point. We are going to read Matthew 9:12-13, Mark 1:4, Mark 1:14-15, Mark 2:17, Mark

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

6:12, Luke 3:3, Luke 5:31-32, Luke 15:7-10, Luke 16:30-31, Luke 24:47, Acts 3:19, Acts 11:18, Acts 26:19-20, Romans 2:4-7, and 2 Corinthians 7:8-10 which state:

Matthew 9:12-13

¹² But when Jesus heard that, he said unto them, They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. ¹³ 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**.

Mark 1:4

⁴ John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of **repentance** for the remission of sins.

Mark 1:14-15

¹⁴ Now after that John was put in prison, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, ¹⁵ And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: **repent ye, and believe the gospel**.

Mark 2:17

¹⁷ When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance**.

Mark 6:12

¹² And they went out, and preached that men should **repent**.

Luke 3:3

³ And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of **repentance** for the remission of sins;

Luke 5:31-32

³¹ And Jesus answering said unto them, They that are whole need not a physician; but they that are sick. ³² I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to **repentance**.

Luke 15:7-10

⁷ 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**. ⁸ Either what woman having ten pieces of silver, if she lose one piece, doth not light a candle, and sweep the house, and seek diligently till she find it? ⁹ And when she hath found it, she calleth her friends and her neighbours together, saying, Rejoice with me; for I have found the piece which I had lost. ¹⁰ Likewise, I say unto you, there is joy in the

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

presence of the angels of God over one sinner that **repenteth**.

Luke 16:30-31

³⁰ And he said, Nay, father Abraham: but if one went unto them from the dead, they will **repent**. ³¹ And he said unto him, If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead.

Luke 24:47

⁴⁷ And that **repentance** and remission of sins should be preached in his name among all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

Acts 3:19

¹⁹ **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 11:18

¹⁸ When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, Then hath God also to the Gentiles granted **repentance** unto life.

Acts 26:19-20

¹⁹ Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: ²⁰ 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**.

Romans 2:4-7

⁴ Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to **repentance**? ⁵ But after thy hardness and impenitent heart treasurest up unto thyself wrath against the day of wrath and revelation of the righteous judgment of God; ⁶ Who will render to every man according to his deeds: ⁷ To them who by patient continuance in well doing seek for glory and honour and immortality, **eternal life**:

2 Corinthians 7:8-10

⁸ For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not **repent**, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season. ⁹ Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to **repentance**: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. ¹⁰ For godly sorrow worketh **repentance** to salvation not to be **repented** of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Here is my point. After having read all those passages I could just sit down and say that since the word “faith” is not mentioned in any of those passages, then faith is not required for salvation. Well, you say that is ludicrous and rightfully so folks! Yet, that is exactly what those who say repentance is not required for salvation do! It is the same type of shenanigan that the psychological marketers pull to get some lost sinner to pray a “sinner’s prayer” by telling them “that whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved”. That is but part of the truth and it is deception if the one who is calling upon the Lord has NOT believed (Romans 10:13 **AND** 14). Here are some of the passages that are typically quoted by those who oppose the idea of repentance being required for salvation. They include Luke 7:47-50, Luke 18:42, Romans 3:28, Romans 4:5, Romans 5:1-2, Romans 10:13, Galatians 2:16, 2 Timothy 3:15:

Luke 7:47-50

⁴⁷ Wherefore I say unto thee, Her sins, which are many, are forgiven; for she loved much: but to whom little is forgiven, the same loveth little. ⁴⁸ And he said unto her, Thy sins are forgiven. ⁴⁹ And they that sat at meat with him began to say within themselves, Who is this that forgiveth sins also? ⁵⁰ And he said to the woman, Thy **faith** hath saved thee; go in peace.

Luke 18:42

⁴² And Jesus said unto him, Receive thy sight: thy **faith** hath saved thee.

Romans 3:28

²⁸ Therefore we conclude that a man is justified by **faith** without the deeds of the law.

Romans 4:5

⁵ But to him that worketh not, but believeth on him that justifieth the ungodly, his **faith** is counted for righteousness.

Romans 5:1-2

¹ Therefore being justified by **faith**, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: ² By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

Romans 10:13

¹³ For whosoever shall **call upon** the name of the Lord shall be saved.

Galatians 2:16

¹⁶ Knowing that a man is not justified by the works of the law, but by the **faith** of Jesus Christ, even we have believed in Jesus Christ, that we might be justified by the **faith** of Christ, and not by the works of the law: for by the works of the law shall no flesh be justified.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Ephesians 2:8-9

⁸ For by grace are ye saved through **faith**; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: ⁹ Not of works, lest any man should boast.

2 Timothy 3:15

¹⁵ And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through **faith** which is in Christ Jesus.

The same caveat applies here for faith as it did for repentance. After having read all those passages I could just sit down and say that since the word “repentance” is not mentioned in any of those passages, then repentance is not required for salvation. Well, again you say that is ludicrous and rightfully so folks! Yet, that is exactly what those who say repentance is not required for salvation do! The way most folks try to get around the idea that the Bible requires repentance and faith for salvation is that they make repentance a meritorious work of the human will. In every place where the deeds of the law are mentioned they substitute the idea of repentance (See Romans 3:8, Romans 4:5, Galatians 2:16, and Ephesians 2:9 that was just quoted above.). The Bible teaches that repentance is the holy work of the Holy Ghost; not a carnal work of man. Ephesians 2:8-9 has its own special set of problems because even most of those who say they are opposed to Calvinism fall into the Calvinist trap of stating that the faith of Ephesians 2:8 is the gift of God. SALVATION is the gift. For a discussion of this issue see [Appendix 1](#).

Faith is the father of salvation and repentance is the mother of salvation. They come together in holy matrimony to produce a born again child of God. There are so many illegitimate children out there because they have not come to repentance in their hearts. There are so many illegitimate children out there because they have a feigned faith. The New Testament has several examples of those who professed to have faith, but in the end proved to be false professors. They believed, but.....

FALSE PROFESSORS

[\(back to top\)](#)

Let us take a look at John 2:23-24, John 6:64-66, John 8:31-46, Acts 8:13-23, 1 Corinthians 15:2, Hebrews 10:38-39, James 2:19, and Jude 3-19:

John 2:23-24

²³ Now when he was in Jerusalem at the passover, in the feast day, many believed in his name, when they saw the miracles which he did. ²⁴ But Jesus did not commit himself unto them, because he knew all men,

John 6:64-66

⁶⁴ But there are some of you that believe not. For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were that believed not, and who should betray him. ⁶⁵ And he said, Therefore

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

said I unto you, that no man can come unto me, except it were given unto him of my Father. ⁶⁶ From that time many of his disciples went back, and walked no more with him.

John 8:31-46

³¹ Then said Jesus to those Jews which believed on him, If ye continue in my word, then are ye my disciples indeed; ³² And ye shall know the truth, and the truth shall make you free. ³³ They answered him, We be Abraham's seed, and were never in bondage to any man: how sayest thou, Ye shall be made free? ³⁴ Jesus answered them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Whosoever committeth sin is the servant of sin. ³⁵ And the servant abideth not in the house for ever: but the Son abideth ever. ³⁶ If the Son therefore shall make you free, ye shall be free indeed. ³⁷ I know that ye are Abraham's seed; but ye seek to kill me, because my word hath no place in you. ³⁸ I speak that which I have seen with my Father: and ye do that which ye have seen with your father. ³⁹ They answered and said unto him, Abraham is our father. Jesus saith unto them, If ye were Abraham's children, ye would do the works of Abraham. ⁴⁰ But now ye seek to kill me, a man that hath told you the truth, which I have heard of God: this did not Abraham. ⁴¹ Ye do the deeds of your father. Then said they to him, We be not born of fornication; we have one Father, even God. ⁴² Jesus said unto them, If God were your Father, ye would love me: for I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I of myself, but he sent me. ⁴³ Why do ye not understand my speech? even because ye cannot hear my word. ⁴⁴ Ye are of your father the devil, and the lusts of your father ye will do. He was a murderer from the beginning, and abode not in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he speaketh a lie, he speaketh of his own: for he is a liar, and the father of it. ⁴⁵ And because I tell you the truth, ye believe me not. ⁴⁶ Which of you convinceth me of sin? And if I say the truth, why do ye not believe me?

Acts 8:13-23

¹³ Then Simon himself believed also: and when he was baptized, he continued with Philip, and wondered, beholding the miracles and signs which were done. ¹⁴ Now when the apostles which were at Jerusalem heard that Samaria had received the word of God, they sent unto them Peter and John: ¹⁵ Who, when they were come down, prayed for them, that they might receive the Holy Ghost: ¹⁶ (For as yet he was fallen upon none of them: only they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.) ¹⁷ Then laid they their hands on them, and they received the Holy Ghost. ¹⁸ And when Simon saw that through laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Ghost was given, he offered them money, ¹⁹ Saying, Give me also this power, that on whomsoever I lay hands, he may receive the Holy Ghost. ²⁰ But Peter said unto him, Thy money perish with thee, because thou hast thought that the gift of God may be purchased with money. ²¹ Thou hast neither part nor lot in this matter: for thy heart is not right in the sight of God. ²² Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee. ²³ For I perceive that thou art in the gall of bitterness, and in the bond of iniquity.

1 Corinthians 15:2

² By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.

Hebrews 10:38-39

³⁸ Now the just shall live by faith: but if any man draw back, my soul shall have no pleasure in him. ³⁹ But we are not of them who draw back unto perdition; but of them that believe to the saving of the soul.

James 2:19

¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble.

Jude 3-19

³ Beloved, when I gave all diligence to write unto you of the common salvation, it was needful for me to write unto you, and exhort you that ye should earnestly contend for the faith which was once delivered unto the saints. ⁴ For there are certain men crept in unawares, who were before of old ordained to this condemnation, ungodly men, turning the grace of our God into lasciviousness, and denying the only Lord God, and our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁵ I will therefore put you in remembrance, though ye once knew this, how that the Lord, having saved the people out of the land of Egypt, afterward destroyed them that believed not. ⁶ And the angels which kept not their first estate, but left their own habitation, he hath reserved in everlasting chains under darkness unto the judgment of the great day. ⁷ Even as Sodom and Gomorrha, and the cities about them in like manner, giving themselves over to fornication, and going after strange flesh, are set forth for an example, suffering the vengeance of eternal fire. ⁸ Likewise also these filthy dreamers defile the flesh, despise dominion, and speak evil of dignities. ⁹ Yet Michael the archangel, when contending with the devil he disputed about the body of Moses, durst not bring against him a railing accusation, but said, The Lord rebuke thee. ¹⁰ But these speak evil of those things which they know not: but what they know naturally, as brute beasts, in those things they corrupt themselves. ¹¹ Woe unto them! for they have gone in the way of Cain, and ran greedily after the error of Balaam for reward, and perished in the gainsaying of Core. ¹² These are spots in your feasts of charity, when they feast with you, feeding themselves without fear: clouds they are without water, carried about of winds; trees whose fruit withereth, without fruit, twice dead, plucked up by the roots; ¹³ Raging waves of the sea, foaming out their own shame; wandering stars, to whom is reserved the blackness of darkness for ever. ¹⁴ And Enoch also, the seventh from Adam, prophesied of these, saying, Behold, the Lord cometh with ten thousands of his

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

saints,¹⁵ To execute judgment upon all, and to convince all that are ungodly among them of all their ungodly deeds which they have ungodly committed, and of all their hard speeches which ungodly sinners have spoken against him.¹⁶ These are murmurers, complainers, walking after their own lusts; and their mouth speaketh great swelling words, having men's persons in admiration because of advantage.¹⁷ But, beloved, remember ye the words which were spoken before of the apostles of our Lord Jesus Christ;¹⁸ How that they told you there should be mockers in the last time, who should walk after their own ungodly lusts.¹⁹ These be they who separate themselves, sensual, having not the Spirit.

Every one of those identified in these passages believed, but it was not a saving belief. In many of these passages, it was obvious that those who "believed" had not repented. In John 2, there were those that "believed", but Jesus knew they were false professors. The same was the case for those in John 6. First Corinthians 15:2 infers that there will be those who will exercise a vain faith. Hebrews 10:38-39 indicates that there will be false professors that draw back into perdition. James 2:19 says there is a Satanic form of belief. It is obvious that the Jews in John 8 had not repented. Take note of their ungodly, prideful attitude toward the Lord Jesus Christ in John 8. They said they believed, but at the end of it all the Lord Jesus Christ asked them, "why do ye not believe me"?. It was obvious that Simon in Acts 8 had not repented because Peter told him to repent because he was in the gall of bitterness and in the **bond of iniquity**. That does not sound like a saved man to me. A man that is saved has been MADE FREE. In Jude these unbelievers are described as men (church members) who have crept in unawares living life without any evidence of repentance, teaching false doctrines, having no fruit (again, no repentance), verbally attacking established Biblical authority, promoting sodomy, promoting fornication, proudly boasting, opportunists promoting men (men pleasers), hirelings, and so forth. That sounds like most of the churches in America today. God finishes up his description of them by saying that they have NOT the Spirit. That means that they are unsaved professors. Jude is a perfect picture of a church full of professing "believers" that have not come to repentance **in their hearts**. They have an outward form of godliness, but deny the power thereof because they have not the Spirit. Holy Ghost described these same type of individuals with the following words from Titus 1:15-16:

Titus 1:15-16

¹⁵ Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. ¹⁶ They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate.

These false professors are so defiled that that nothing is pure unto them. It is not just an outward defilement. They are corrupt through and through with a defilement that has totally corrupted their mind and conscience. They are so corrupt that they are incapable of doing anything good. Yet, they claim to know God, but all their works are abominable. They are reprobates. What they have is a graveyard dead faith that is devoid of repentance.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Faith without repentance is a dead faith. Note what James had to say in James 2:14-26:

James 2:14-26

¹⁴ What doth it profit, my brethren, though a man say he hath faith, and have not works? can faith save him? ¹⁵ If a brother or sister be naked, and destitute of daily food, ¹⁶ And one of you say unto them, Depart in peace, be ye warmed and filled; notwithstanding ye give them not those things which are needful to the body; what doth it profit? ¹⁷ Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone. ¹⁸ Yea, a man may say, Thou hast faith, and I have works: shew me thy faith without thy works, and I will shew thee my faith by my works. ¹⁹ Thou believest that there is one God; thou doest well: the devils also believe, and tremble. ²⁰ But wilt thou know, O vain man, that faith without works is dead? ²¹ Was not Abraham our father justified by works, when he had offered Isaac his son upon the altar? ²² Seest thou how faith wrought with his works, and by works was faith made perfect? ²³ And the scripture was fulfilled which saith, Abraham believed God, and it was imputed unto him for righteousness: and he was called the Friend of God. ²⁴ Ye see then how that by works a man is justified, and not by faith only. ²⁵ Likewise also was not Rahab the harlot justified by works, when she had received the messengers, and had sent them out another way? ²⁶ For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also.

The whole point of James in this passage is that saving faith will produce works that are “meet for repentance”. The emphasis here is on the works produced by saving faith. That is also the point of Paul when he preached “to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do **works meet for repentance**” (Acts 26:20).

The Holy Ghost said in 2 Corinthians 13:5: “Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?”. There are some very stark warnings in the word of God for those who preach, teach, or believe a false gospel. Take note of what Matthew 7:15-27 and 2 Peter 2:18-22 have to say:

Matthew 7:15-27

¹⁵ Beware of false prophets, which come to you in sheep’s clothing, but inwardly they are ravening wolves. ¹⁶ Ye shall know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes of thorns, or figs of thistles? ¹⁷ Even so every good tree bringeth forth good fruit; but a corrupt tree bringeth forth evil fruit. ¹⁸ A good tree cannot bring forth evil fruit, neither can a corrupt tree bring forth good fruit. ¹⁹ Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire. ²⁰ Wherefore by their fruits ye shall know them. ²¹ Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven. ²² Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? and in thy name have cast out devils? and in thy name done many wonderful works? ²³ And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

iniquity.²⁴ Therefore whosoever heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them, I will liken him unto a wise man, which built his house upon a rock:²⁵ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell not: for it was founded upon a rock.²⁶ And every one that heareth these sayings of mine, and doeth them not, shall be likened unto a foolish man, which built his house upon the sand:²⁷ And the rain descended, and the floods came, and the winds blew, and beat upon that house; and it fell: and great was the fall of it.

2 Peter 2:1-3, 18-22

¹ But there were false prophets also among the people, even as there shall be false teachers among you, who privily shall bring in damnable heresies, even denying the Lord that bought them, and bring upon themselves swift destruction.² And many shall follow their pernicious ways; by reason of whom the way of truth shall be evil spoken of.³ And through covetousness shall they with feigned words make merchandise of you: whose judgment now of a long time lingereth not, and their damnation slumbereth not....

¹⁸ For when they speak great swelling words of vanity, they allure through the lusts of the flesh, through much wantonness, those that were clean escaped from them who live in error.¹⁹ While they promise them liberty, they themselves are the servants of corruption: for of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage.

²⁰ For if after they have escaped the pollutions of the world through the knowledge of the Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ, they are again entangled therein, and overcome, the latter end is worse with them than the beginning.²¹ For it had been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than, after they have known it, to turn from the holy commandment delivered unto them.²² But it is happened unto them according to the true proverb, The dog is turned to his own vomit again; and the sow that was washed to her wallowing in the mire.

Teaching or preaching salvation without repentance is a damnable heresy. A damnable heresy is a heresy that damns a soul to hell. It is not like unto a heresy that misinterprets Bible Prophecy. What 2 Peter 2 is describing is unsaved, professing church members. It describes the condition of the false prophets, false teachers, and their followers. The folks in Matthew 7 and 2 Peter 2 look like sheep, but inwardly they are ravaging wolves. Second Peter 2:20-21 gives a very sobering warning that these individuals would have been better off in the end if they had never heard the truth and turned from it. Matthew 7:23 tells us that the Lord Jesus Christ will tell them to depart from him because he never knew them. The corrupt tree in Matthew 7 is the unsaved religious sinner and the fire into which that tree is cast is the pit of hell. A salvation tree that does not include the fruits of repentance is a corrupt tree that produces corrupt fruit. You need look no further than the corrupt churches in America in 2018 to prove that. Faith is the blossom of salvation that is pollinated by the Holy Ghost so that it can produce the fruit of repentance. What immediately follows is a partial list of the religious acts that an individual can do and still be lost:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

- A false professor can believe in God and still be going to hell (James 2:19).
- A false professor can pray to Jesus and still be going to hell (Matthew 7:22-23).
- A false professor can prophesy in Jesus' name and still be going to hell (Matthew 7:22-23).
- A false professor can cast out devils in Jesus name and still be going to hell (Matthew 7:22)
- A false professor can do wonderful works in Jesus' name and still be going to hell (Matthew 7:22-23).
- A false professor can have a zeal for God and still be going to hell (Romans 10:2-3).
- A false professor can have a zeal to make proselytes for God and still be going to hell (Matthew 23:15).
- A false professor can be very interested in Jesus Christ and still be going to hell (Matthew 19:16-22).
- A false professor can profess to know God and still be going to hell (Titus 1:16).
- A false professor can follow Jesus for a while and still be going to hell (John 6:66).
- A false professor can serve Christ as an apostle and still be going to hell (John 6:70).
- A false professor can even believe on Jesus' name and still be going to hell (John 2:23-24).

False professors put themselves in great peril by playing games with God. You can fool man, but you will never be able to deceive God. Feigned faith without repentance will put you in hell. If you are lost and you continue to reject the conviction of the Holy Ghost, there will come a time when God will quit dealing with you. Romans 1:28 speaks of a time when God turns individuals over to a reprobate mind. Those individuals are the very people that we discussed on pages 16-18 from Jude 3-19 and Titus 1:15-16. God instructs those of us who claim to be saved to examine ourselves in 2 Corinthians 13:5: "Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?". Have you examined yourself?

There is great danger in ignoring the warnings that I have put forth in these pages. The devils have a form of belief. Yet, they are still going to hell because they CANNOT repent. Repentance is the heartbeat of our salvation. Faith is the body in which repentance resides. Without repentance we are but walking, whited sepulchres that are full of dead men's bones because we are still dead in our trespasses and sins. There is a major eternal difference in what I believe and what those who preach against repentance believe. If they are wrong, it means an eternity in hell for the lost person who has not repented. If only faith is required, and I am wrong, then all I have done is motivated a heaven bound saved person to live a more holy life. As a lost person, you must repent to establish an eternal relationship with God. As a saved person, you must live a life of repentance to maintain fellowship with God. In the life of the believer, sin does not break relationship: sin breaks fellowship. There is a form of misplaced and/or feigned faith that will put us in hell. Faith that does not have repentance as its companion in salvation is a doctrine of devils. The devil, as a roaring lion, walketh about, seeking whom he may devour and his teeth are made of repentanceless salvation. You will always hear arguments against repentance, but you will never hear an argument against man having to

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

exercise faith unless it is by a universalist or a Calvinist. Why do you think that is?? It is because advocating the Biblical doctrine of repentance puts the soul winner and the preacher in direct confrontation with the Devil.

Lest I be accused of making salvation difficult, let me say this. When God is convicting the lost sinner of their need for salvation, salvation is only as difficult as the lost sinner makes it. The hearts of many folks have been so hardened by extremely wicked life styles while the hearts of many have been much hardened by extremely prideful religious works. For both types of these individuals, salvation can be an extremely difficult and lengthy process. It has been my experience that it is the holier than thou crowd that is most difficult to bring to salvation. Many of them have been fed so much works based religious garbage that they have been made twofold more a child of hell. Most of the people in the world today have never been given a scriptural presentation of the gospel. In fact, the majority of people in the world today have never heard Biblical preaching. The problem for those living extremely wicked lifestyles is that their ears have not been circumcised with the law of God. Jeremiah said in Jeremiah 6:10:

Jeremiah 6:10

¹⁰ To whom shall I speak, and give warning, that they may hear? behold, their ear is uncircumcised, and they cannot hearken: behold, the word of the LORD is unto them a reproach; they have no delight in it.

Jeremiah is saying that the people cannot hearken unto, or obey, the call of the LORD to repent because their ears have not been circumcised with the word of the LORD. Paul said in Galatians 3:24 that the law is “our schoolmaster to bring us unto Christ, that we might be justified by faith”. That is talking about conviction folks. Paul’s point by the phrase “might be justified” is that people have the potential to be justified by faith through the preaching of the law. The lost must be preached the law to bring them into salvation. The hearts of lost sinners are but fallow ground until they are plowed up by the word of God. The principle is put forth in Jeremiah 4:3-4 and Hosea 10:12-13:

Jeremiah 4:3-4

³ For thus saith the LORD to the men of Judah and Jerusalem, Break up your fallow ground, and sow not among thorns. ⁴ Circumcise yourselves to the LORD, and take away the foreskins of your heart, ye men of Judah and inhabitants of Jerusalem: lest my fury come forth like fire, and burn that none can quench it, because of the evil of your doings.

Hosea 10:12-13

¹² Sow to yourselves in righteousness, reap in mercy; break up your fallow ground: for it is time to seek the LORD, till he come and rain righteousness upon you. ¹³ Ye have plowed wickedness, ye have reaped iniquity; ye have eaten the fruit of lies: because thou didst trust in thy way, in the multitude of thy mighty men.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

In the New Testament, it is the preaching of the law and the preaching of repentance that the Holy Ghost uses to plow up the fallow ground of the unsaved heart and the fallow ground of carnal saved folk. In other words, the preaching of the law and the preaching of repentance brings Holy Ghost conviction.

DOES THE DEVIL MAKE ANYONE DOUBT THEIR SALVATION?

[\(back to top\)](#)

For many years, I have heard individuals stand up in testimony services and state that the Devil was making them doubt their salvation. That is not scriptural. Why would the Devil make anyone doubt their salvation? That very doubt would create in the individual a concern that they are not saved. The Devil would much rather have you rely upon a false profession and go to hell. Every time I hear an individual stand up and say that the Devil is making them doubt their salvation I know that the Holy Ghost is at work in their hearts. When someone does say that the Devil is making them doubt their salvation, they are unwittingly giving credit to the Devil for the convicting work of the Holy Ghost. When an individual stands up and says that the Devil is making them doubt their salvation one of two things is happening:

- (1) They are lost and the Holy Ghost has them under conviction for the purpose of bringing them to salvation.
- (2) They are a carnal Christians (carnal saved folks) in need of repentance to restore them to full fellowship with God.

From my observation of the apostate American church, I would have to say that most of those who say that the Devil is making them doubt their salvation are LOST. The reason our churches are in the condition that they are in is because they are full of unsaved professors who manifest their unsaved condition by their total lack of the evidence of repentance in their lives. While carnal saved folk will manifest sins of the flesh in their lives, you will not generally see them regurgitate the SPIRITUAL filth that comes puking forth from most churches in America who will not preach repentance. It is a stench in the nostrils of God and a grievance to the Holy Ghost when men will not preach repentance. I have come to the conclusion that most of the preachers who do not believe repentance is necessary in salvation think that the preachers that are preaching repentance are the devils that are making unsaved professors doubt their salvation.

IS THE PREACHING OF REPENTANCE IN SALVATION HERESY?

[\(back to top\)](#)

One of the biggest arguments against preaching repentance as an integral part of the gospel is that it makes believers doubt their salvation. Some even say that it overthrows the faith of the believer or puts them back under the bondage of the law. What follows is a typical response of those who are opposed to making repentance an integral part of salvation. This extended quote is from pages 72-74 of the book “Rightly Defining The Words Of Truth” by Michael T. Wolski. Here is the

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

quote:

START QUOTE

“I once attended a “revival” meeting where the preacher prompted folks all over the room to testify of the time and the place of their salvation experience. He preempted this occasion with multiple stories of faithful, godly, church members of over twenty years that served God, though they were never (according to him) born again. He warned, “Most likely there are several here that think that they are saved, but were never TRULY born again”. Sitting in the pew, an uneasy feeling came over me. I am not for being spooky, but there seemed to be an evil spirit, perhaps “the spirit of fear” (II Tim. 1:7), connected with this type of preaching. Such a presence seemed to remove the liberty and subtly infuse confusion into the church service. I wondered, “Am I saved? No, am I REALLY saved?” I quickly cast down these doubts with the word of God hidden in my heart, but the feeling persisted in the room. “Is my wife saved?” I thought. “Is she certain that she’s not just following me and going with the flow?” I then recalled to mind the times that she had had doubts and had settled those doubts securely. I sat in the pew satisfied; I had conquered the spiritual oppression proceeding from the pulpit.

Nevertheless, it continued amongst the congregation. Confusion was pressing from all sides. Instead of reviving God’s children, this preacher was “retreading” them. They were harmed instead of helped, and he departed the shores of the Red sea with yet another washed up “glory story” to tell to the next church.

The underlying issue was repentance. The question asked was, *Did you repent of your sins when you trusted Christ as your Saviour?* According to this teaching, if you have not repented of your sins, you probably are not saved. For years men have been heralding, “Repent of your sins and believe the gospel.” Certain preachers make a “hobby horse” out of it, even suggesting that many folks are not actually born again. I have heard more than a few preachers and missionaries give their testimony and declare that they repented of their sins and believed on Christ at a certain age. Some also stated their plans to evangelize other nations with the same message. For years I had never thought much about it. The terminology was normal to me; I was somewhat accustomed to it, although I did not use it personally.

On the other hand, I had once heard a preacher suggest that this teaching implied a salvation where one’s faith is preceded by a “work.” He concluded that since salvation is “not of works” (Eph. 2:9), repentance of sins is not necessary for **salvation**. That sounded right to me, but it sure kindled fires in some other preachers. They’d hop back on their hobby horse and charge this “easy believeism” gospel. While attacking the teaching, they’d boast their conviction that “more and more

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

conversions today are only false professions”.”

[In a footnote explaining his use of the word retreading Brother Wolski stated: “The term is used to describe the act of causing Christians to doubt their salvation, and then “leading them to Christ” again. Certain pushy preachers imply the need by asking things like, “But are you REALLY, TRULY saved?” or “Did you REALLY get born again, or did you just pray a prayer?” For some of these preachers, it is an effective way to boost their “conversion” counts when reporting on the success of their ministries. Others may be genuinely concerned; but, though their motives may be right, their methods are certainly not”.]

END QUOTE

I am not saying that I agree with the particular method that the revival preacher above used in his preaching. However, some observations are in order concerning the meat that he preached and Brother Wolski’s response to it.

Referencing “an evil spirit, perhaps the spirit of fear” is another way of saying the preacher who is preaching repentance is the devil that is making people doubt their salvation. You cannot retread a tire that has never been produced to start with. A believer can never be retreaded unless you believe someone can lose their salvation and we do not. While we do not believe that every church member that is in open sin is lost, we do believe that the overwhelming majority of church members in most churches today are lost because it is obvious that they have not repented. We would ask the question again, why are the overwhelming majority of churches in America in open apostasy if we are to believe the fantastically exaggerated soul winning statistics such as those quoted on page 33 below? Why has there been a massive falling away? How many have prayed a soul damning sinner’s prayer from an unbelieving heart? Most men who agonize over whether individuals are truly saved do not have “glory stories” to tell. They have horror stories. They are saved pastors and other saved victims who have watched Satan destroy men, women, children, and families because either one or both of the parents are unbelieving, professing “Christians”. In the congregation referenced above, what would be the greater harm? Would it be to see some carnal saved person get offended or have some unsaved professor cast into hell because some preacher refused to preach on repentance. Most of the time, it is not the preachers who are preaching repentance that are bragging about the number of converts they have. Most of the time, my experience has been that when I hear someone or some church bragging about the number of souls that they have won, that they have been preaching a false gospel that does not include repentance as being an integral part of salvation (the gospel).

Preachers and teachers who preach and teach that repentance is an integral part of salvation are NOT preaching and teaching false doctrine (heresy). In 2 Corinthians 13:5 the Holy Ghost says:

2 Corinthians 13:5

⁵Examine yourselves, whether ye be in the faith; prove your own selves. Know ye not your own selves, how that Jesus Christ is in you, except ye be reprobates?

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

What the preaching that was referenced by the author above done was forced him to examine whether he was in the faith. We hope that his wife and the rest of the congregation did the same. We are commanded to examine ourselves whether we be in the faith. How do we do that? We do that by comparing what we say we believe about salvation with what the Bible has to say about salvation. We do that by putting our works and attitudes up against what the Bible says they ought to be. Does not the admonition to examine ourselves imply that there might be some doubt as to whether we are saved? One of the shortest passages in the New Testament on salvation connects repentance and faith to the gospel. The Bible says in Mark 1:15:

Mark 1:15

And saying, The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: repent ye, and believe the gospel.

Note the use of the word “and” between repent and believe.

He gets it wrong on the quote that “more and more conversions are only false professions”. What I and those who believe like me actually preach and teach is “that more and more **PROFESSIONS** today are only false professions”. Conversions are not empty professions. They are full of faith and godly works. Holy Ghost conversions stick and work the work of repentance in the believer. Brother Wolski also made the mistake of equating human works with the repentance wrought by the Holy Ghost in the believer. Take note of his reference to Ephesians 2:9 in the quote above. After we get saved, the godly works that we do are the result of the repentance worked in us by the Holy Ghost. The Holy Ghost goes about conforming us to the image of the Lord Jesus Christ. Brother Wolski’s statement “According to this teaching, if you have not repented of your sins, you probably are not saved. For years men have been heralding, “Repent of your sins and believe the gospel.” Certain preachers make a “hobby horse” out of it, even suggesting that many folks are not actually born again. ” His statement begs the question, what does Mark 1:15 say? My answer is “repent ye, and believe the gospel.

WHAT ABOUT THE SALVATION OF CHILDREN?

[\(back to top\)](#)

What can we say about the salvation of children? First of all, the “age of accountability” is a theological term that is not found in the Bible. All people become accountable to God when they understand what the gospel is and what the consequences of rejecting the gospel are. Over the years I have watched God use many children to bring their parents to salvation. I have also watched God use children to bring healing to wounded and grieving Christians. During one of the toughest trials in my life, God used two little girls to apply the balm of Gilead to my soul. That event took place when it had been but a few days since the murder of my daughter. I am not one to mock the possibility of a child getting saved. I have to believe that to be so if I believe that repentance is the work of the Holy Ghost. It does not matter if it is a child or an adult. It is the Holy Ghost that does the work of repentance in the heart regardless of age. The Lord Jesus Christ had this to say about children in Mark 10:13-16:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

Mark 10:13-16

¹³ And they brought young children to him, that he should touch them: and his disciples rebuked those that brought them. ¹⁴ But when Jesus saw it, he was much displeased, and said unto them, Suffer the little children to come unto me, and forbid them not: for of such is the kingdom of God. ¹⁵ Verily I say unto you, Whosoever shall not receive the kingdom of God as a little child, he shall not enter therein. ¹⁶ And he took them up in his arms, put his hands upon them, and blessed them.

We must be very careful with our children because they are so easily deceived and because many times they respond to peer pressure and to parental pressure to “get saved”. We as Christians must do our due diligence when it comes to the salvation of our children. We must look for the fruits of repentance in their behaviour. Just as many adult professions are not real, so it is that many childhood professions are not real. Regardless of age, it is not wrong to look for the fruits of salvation in the life of anyone who professes to be a believer. God uses the lack of fruit to guide us to those who have made false professions of faith. We must bring our children up in the nurture and admonition of the Lord. That being said, I believe that in many cases that it is easier to bring a child to salvation because they have not been hardened by many years of sin.

We have all heard of the parents that get really upset when they are confronted with the very real possibility that a child who has made an earlier profession of faith is acknowledging that they are lost. Many parents will argue with their children – some of them now adults – that, “you know you are saved”. That is a very dangerous act on the part of the parent or anyone. It comes from a spirit of pride and is an attempt to usurp the role of the Holy Ghost. This is not just an issue that affects children. I have witnessed men arguing with their friends that, “you know you are saved!”, when they plainly state that they are not. Wrong move! You are not the Holy Ghost.

GOD’S REPENTANCE BRINGS SORROW, GRIEF, AND REGRET TO HIS HEART ([back to top](#))

Note the following three uses of the word repented as they relate to the sorrow and grief that man’s sin brought to God:

Genesis 6:6-7

⁶ And it **repented** the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart. ⁷ 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.

Judges 2:18

¹⁸ 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

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

them and vexed them.

1 Samuel 15:35

³⁵ And Samuel came no more to see Saul until the day of his death: nevertheless Samuel mourned for Saul: and the LORD **repented** that he had made Saul king over Israel.

All these are used in the sense of it brought sorrow, grief, or regret to the LORD. There are those that teach that sorrow is not connected to repentance. Keep in mind in the verses just quoted that we are talking about God who cannot sin. In 1 Corinthians 7:8-11 man's godly sorrow is said to work repentance. That means that sorrow is connected to repentance.

WHAT DOES THE BIBLE MEAN WHEN IT SAYS GOD REPENTS OF EVIL? ([back to top](#))

Note the following passages where it is said that God (the LORD) repented of the evil:

Exodus 32:14

¹⁴ And **the LORD repented of the evil** which he thought to do unto his people.

2 Samuel 24:16

¹⁶ And when the angel stretched out his hand upon Jerusalem to destroy it, **the LORD repented him of the evil**, and said to the angel that destroyed the people, It is enough: stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD was by the threshingplace of Araunah the Jebusite.

1 Chronicles 21:15

¹⁵ And God sent an angel unto Jerusalem to destroy it: and as he was destroying, **the LORD beheld, and he repented him of the evil**, and said to the angel that destroyed, It is enough, stay now thine hand. And the angel of the LORD stood by the threshingfloor of Ornan the Jebusite.

Jeremiah 26:19

¹⁹ Did Hezekiah king of Judah and all Judah put him at all to death? did he not fear the LORD, and besought the LORD, and the LORD repented him of the evil which he had pronounced against them? Thus might we procure great evil against our souls.

Jonah 3:9-10

⁹ Who can tell if God will turn and **repent**, and turn away from his fierce anger, that we perish not? ¹⁰ And God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and **God repented of the evil**, that he had said that he would do unto them; and he did

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

it not.

Amos 7:2-6

² And it came to pass, that when they had made an end of eating the grass of the land, then I said, O Lord GOD, forgive, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. ³ **The LORD repented for this:** It shall not be, saith the LORD. ⁴ Thus hath the Lord GOD shewed unto me: and, behold, the Lord GOD called to contend by fire, and it devoured the great deep, and did eat up a part. ⁵ Then said I, O Lord GOD, cease, I beseech thee: by whom shall Jacob arise? for he is small. ⁶ **The LORD repented for this:** This also shall not be, saith the Lord GOD.

Jeremiah 20:16

¹⁶ And let that man be as the cities which **the LORD overthrew, and repented not:** and let him hear the cry in the morning, and the shouting at noontide;

Zechariah 8:14-15

¹⁴ For thus saith the LORD of hosts; As I thought to punish you, when your fathers provoked me to wrath, **saith the LORD of hosts, and I repented not:** ¹⁵ So again have I thought in these days to do well unto Jerusalem and to the house of Judah: fear ye not.

So, do these verses mean that God sinned or done some wicked thing? Absolutely not! God cannot sin! However, they do mean that God intended to bring some sort of judgement or punishment upon those who had sinned, but that he changed his mind. The evil spoken of here in these passages was some sort of calamity or disaster that would overtake them and cause them so sort of trouble, pain, sorrow, and so forth. For clarification of what the scriptural term “evil” means refer back to pages 2-4 of this document.

WHAT MOTIVATES GOD TO REPENT?

[\(back to top\)](#)

Psalm 106:40-45 states that the LORD changes his mind because he is a merciful God. This passage states:

Psalm 106:40-45

⁴⁰ Therefore was **the wrath of the LORD kindled** against his people, insomuch that he abhorred his own inheritance. ⁴¹ And he gave them into the hand of the heathen; and they that hated them ruled over them. ⁴² Their enemies also oppressed them, and they were brought into subjection under their hand. ⁴³ Many times did he deliver them; but they provoked him with their counsel, and were brought low for their iniquity. ⁴⁴ Nevertheless he regarded their affliction, when he heard their cry: ⁴⁵ And

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

he remembered for them his covenant, and **repented according to the multitude of his mercies.**

The companion scriptures to this passage is Lamentations 3:22, 32 where it is written:

Lamentations 3:22

²² It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Lamentations 3:32

³² But though he cause grief, yet will he have compassion according to the multitude of his mercies.

The overriding theme of Psalm 136 is that the mercy of the Lord "endureth for ever". The phrase "his mercy endureth for ever" occurs 26 times in the 26 verses of Psalm 136. The Lord repents of the evil that he intended to do because his mercy endureth for ever.

GLORY SEEKING AND GLORY STEALING "SOUL WINNERS"

[\(back to top\)](#)

The biggest problem in the issue before us is pride. We are not going to give up on what we have been taught because we would have to admit we are wrong. All the wimpy men followers would have to tuck their tails under and run from their doctrinal dictators and taskmasters like scalded dogs. God forbid they should study this issue through for themselves! We have also seen pastors that not only reject counsel, but also openly rebuke counsel. **A man that will not take counsel is a fool that is right in his own eyes (Proverbs 12:15).** Most men openly reject the whole counsel of God on the issue before us choosing instead to take the counsel of great men. The fear of men bringeth a snare. Great men are not always wise. In many of our Independent Baptist churches, we have become promoters of men instead of promoters of the Lord Jesus Christ. Many Independent Baptist pastors have taken a peacock's stroll down lover's lane walking hand-in-hand with themselves. We have put unholy and wicked Doctors into our pulpits who are into self exaltation and consider themselves to be above rebuke and all the while forgetting the warning and counsel of Job and Jeremiah:

Job 32:21-22

21 Let me not, I pray you, accept any man's person, neither let me give flattering titles unto man. 22 For I know not to give flattering titles; *in so doing* my maker would soon take me away.

Jeremiah 9:23-24

23 Thus saith the LORD, Let not the wise *man* glory in his wisdom, neither let the mighty *man* glory in his might, let not the rich *man* glory in his riches: 24 But let him

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

that glorieth glory in this, that he understandeth and knoweth me, that I *am* the LORD which exercise lovingkindness, judgment, and righteousness, in the earth: for in these *things* I delight, saith the LORD.

What that tells us is that we are to neither give flattering titles or receive flattering titles. To do either is SIN. Many of these doctors have become the priest class in our Baptist churches who seek the highest seats and honours in the synagogues. A case in point is the following advertisement quoted verbatim from the back page of the August 31, 2012 edition of that Independent Baptist bastion of humility, the “Sword Of The Lord”:

*There is not a man alive who has personally won more souls to Christ than **DOCTOR** Bob Gray, Sr. He has been in the ministry for 39 years and daily wins souls. Last year he personally led 404 souls to Christ, with 107 of those following the Lord in baptism. He has been used of God to see 1,116,887 souls come to Christ while pastoring the Longview Baptist Temple of Longview, Texas. It grew from a low of 159 to averaging 2,046 the last year he was pastor, with high days over 10,000. They ran 40 bus routes and had a large Sunday School program. He led the church to give \$9,328,835.69 to missions. I want you to come hear this man of God who can help you. **DOCTOR** Russell Anderson*

Wow, what vainglory! There is nothing like a vain attempt to steal the glory from God! That is enough to make us want to puke! Bob Gray has received his reward in the praise of men. We would be ashamed to have such unadulterated worship published concerning us. Not only would we be ashamed, we would not allow it. Shame on the “Sword Of The Lord”. We cannot believe that the “conservative, fundamentalist” “Sword Of The Lord” would publish such vainglory! Uh, uh, uh we retract that statement. A search of the August 2012 issue of “The Sword” reveals that Independent Baptists are very fond of the title DOCTOR. It appears no less than 105 times in the 24 pages of “The Sword”. Just in case you have forgotten the sinner’s prayer they also include it with a copy of a decision form that may put your converts on the road to confirmation. There is also an equally effusive trip down glory road in the endorsement given to “Pastor” Terrell Hopkins on the back page. This whole paper reeks of the filthiness of the flesh and the vileness of self-esteem and self-exaltation. There is definitely no glory left there for the Lord Jesus Christ. Maybe they need to rename their newspaper “The Independent Baptist Glory Corner”. It is definitely not the sword of the Lord because in its pages man is high and lifted up. **God forbid that we should glory, save in the cross of our Lord Jesus Christ.**

Its hard for us Independent Baptists to be humble when we are so great in our own eyes. It is the vainglory like that which I just quoted that is a stench in the nostrils of God! Because we have not dealt with it after a Godly fashion, the whole Independent Baptist movement has been leavened by the ungodly conduct of these glory hounds. Do you want Scriptural proof of that?? God said in 1 Corinthians 5:6-7:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

1 Corinthians 5:6-7

⁶ Your glorying is not good. Know ye not that a little leaven leaveneth the whole lump? ⁷ Purge out therefore the old leaven, that ye may be a new lump, as ye are unleavened. For even Christ our passover is sacrificed for us:

The den of iniquity that promoted this braggadocios conduct also perverted the gospel and tolerated wicked sexual conduct in its institutions. It is going to have to be put under the fire of the Word of God to stop the leavening action. The events I just described took place almost five years ago (2012), but the fruits of it are still with us folks and that fruit is rotten to its very core. **False professions have become the leprosy of Bible believing churches in America.**

There is a Scriptural way to bring lost sinners into confrontation with their sin and unbelief. Their ears must first be circumcised with the law of God and the Word of God. Their field must be plowed, sowed, and watered with the Word of God before the harvest can take place. We have to many Christians today who are trying to pull green fruit. In fact many of them are pulling the blossoms before they can even set fruit. Soul winning is a work and not a one shot deal. Soul winning is the work of the Holy Ghost: not a formula. Religious political correctness, doctrinal compromise, the fear of men, the toleration of sin in the camp, psychology, and bragging rights have all but destroyed Scriptural presentations of the gospel.

Many so-called “soul winners” today are chest beating, back patting, glory seeking salesmen who would not dare let the Holy Ghost interfere in their “soul winning”. It smites me in my spirit when I hear an individual or a church bragging about soul winning numbers. While stealing God’s glory unto themselves, they have lost their reward. “So then neither is he that planteth any thing, neither he that watereth; but God that giveth the increase” (1 Corinthians 3:7). I refer to “The Sword Of The Lord”, that bastion of Independent Baptist publications, as “The Independent Baptist Glory Corner” because it resorts to ungodly boasting about soul winning statistics. Many of the pastor’s who follow “The Sword Of The Lord” are opposed to making repentance a necessity for salvation because it would shut their boastful mouths. God judged David and Israel for David’s sin of numbering the people when he was not instructed to do so by God Himself. The reason God judged David is because he did not do the numbering God’s way (See Exodus 30:11-16 for the reason). God forbid that we would play the numbers game and leave repentance out of God’s requirement for salvation.

Most Baptist preachers today are obsessed, maybe even possessed, with the title “Doctor”. God forbid that we would call them brother because that would bring them down to the pew level with those whom they have made their unscriptural laity. Outside the “soul winning” braggarts that infest its pages, the biggest reason I quit reading “The Sword Of The Lord” was their obsession with the title “Doctor”.

“Your just jealous”! Or, you might even hear, “Are you denying or criticizing the work of the Holy Ghost?” Those are just some of the words out of the mouths of individuals who are called out for glorying in their bloated soul winning statistics. Even if the statistics were true, and most of them are not, they are glorifying themselves rather than God. I feel like a sheep killing dog when I hear someone glorying in **THEIR** soul winning statistics. I would to God that all the soul winning statistics were true, but most of them are a lie of the Devil. All of the braggadocios soul winning

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

statistics are a hindrance to the spread of the gospel and a grief to the Holy Ghost. The reason they are a hindrance is because they deceive people into thinking that huge numbers of people are being saved. The almost universal apostasy and heresy in our churches quickly puts the lie to that pipe dream. Another huge part of the problem is that I have seen preachers try to publicly shame anyone who would even dare question the bloated statistics and the motives of the individuals that are stealing glory from God. They may not call them out by name, but they will make sure they feel like a sheep killing dog for having “questioned the work of the Holy Ghost”. These preachers need to remember that most of those who question their tactics are not doing it out of a spirit of jealousy. The preachers who think that way have a wicked pride problem. How dare you criticize me or my friends! They even use the numbers game in reverse when it is found that their methods resulted in miserable long term results. Well, you know, at least one was saved??!!?? But..... many more crashed and burned because you fed them a counterfeit gospel and gave them a false assurance. Many use the argument that they have the right motive. Uzzah had the right motive when he took hold of the ark, but he did it contrary to the instructions of God and God killed him for it.

CLOSING STATEMENTS

[\(back to top\)](#)

To preach a gospel that does not include repentance is to promote the heresy of antinomianism. Antinomianism is the theological term that used to describe those that believe that since “saved folks” are no longer bound by the law, that they are under no obligation to obey God’s moral laws. They take the liberty that we have in Christ as a license to sin. That is a wicked idea that is the product of a corrupt mind. The Holy Ghost said “ye have been called unto liberty; only *use* not liberty for an occasion to the flesh”. There is a website out there that has a “repentance blacklist” on it. Their repentance blacklist is very confusing list since many of those that are on it do not preach repentance anyhow. To deny repentance as this wicked group does is to deny the gospel. They preach and understand repentance to be a work of the flesh. That is the opposite of what the Biblical definition of it is. These people are graduates of Easy Believeism Seminary where the Satanic mantra is one, two, three, repeat this prayer after me and in hell spend an eternity. Salvation is not a product to be marketed by blind religious salesman who use psychological manipulation and worldly salesmanship techniques to get someone to pray a sinner’s prayer. These purveyors of a false gospel bring to the door the very best manipulative salesmanship techniques that man has to offer and leave the Holy Ghost outside the door.

Most of the people who go out “soul winning” today bring their load of sins with them and it blinds the people they witness to the light and power of the Holy Ghost who is covered up in the depths of the soul winners sin. The entirety of Isaiah 59 speaks so strongly to this issue. Would to God that we had a country full of Christians who would forsake their sin, forsake their spiritual and physical laziness, forsake their false doctrine, forsake their heresy, and forsake their apostasy so that the true power of the Holy Ghost might be revealed in and through their lives. The results would be that the Word Of God would go forth in the demonstration and power of the Spirit of God. Would to God that our preaching was as the preaching of the Apostle Paul who said:

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

1 Corinthians 2:4-5

And my speech and my preaching was not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: 5 That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

Most of the so-called "soul winning" that is done today is done in man's wisdom and in man's power. In other words, it relies on the arm of the flesh. The one, two, three repeat after me prayers are the enticing words of men's corrupt minds that are destitute of the truth. If we would yield to the Holy Ghost, repentance would be evidenced in our lives and the Holy Ghost would bring others to Christ through us without us trying to sell the gospel. The Gospel is the power of the Holy Ghost unto salvation. That is why we cannot lead anyone to the Lord Jesus Christ unless the Holy Ghost is in it. The Holy Ghost draws lost sinners. The Holy Ghost convicts lost sinners. The Holy Ghost converts lost sinners. The Holy Ghost regenerates lost sinners. We as witnesses are but tools in the hands of the Holy Ghost.

Repentance is not a work of the flesh. In Luke 24:47, Christ commanded that repentance be preached in presenting the gospel to the whole world. Acts 20:21 commanded repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Repentance is an evidence that the Holy Ghost is working through you to bring forth works that are meet for repentance. Repentance is the work, the evidence, and the fruit of the indwelling Holy Ghost of God. If it is a work of your flesh, then it is not a work of God. Repentance without faith is but a works based exercise in God denying futility. Most men that will not preach repentance also will not preach holiness. The reason being that where there is no repentance and no holiness there is no Holy Ghost.

I have noticed many times that when the Holy Ghost starts convicting lost people of their lost condition that they will start to forsake some of their sin in a vain attempt to satisfy God but that without faith. That was the case with me. Faithless repentance and repentanceless faith leads straight to the pits of hell fire and damnation. The reason so many today preach against repentance is because they have not repented and are still yet in their sins. They are still living in sin and do not like it because the Holy Ghost uses the doctrine of repentance to expose them. Repentance is the tool that God uses to expose false professions of faith. Repentance is one of the tools that God the Holy Ghost uses to reveal to a lost person who thinks they are saved when in fact that they are still lost. The doctrine of repentance is an expression of God's love to those who have been deceived by being led in a faithless sinner's prayer.

The Holy Ghost also uses a lack of repentance to reveal to a pastor the lost condition of some church members. The Holy Ghost also uses the doctrine of repentance to reveal to saved folk the need to pray for the salvation of individuals whose lives reveal that their professions of faith are void of any Holy Ghost fruit. Another point to be made here is that water baptism does not bring repentance. Only Holy Ghost Baptism brings repentance.

It runs up a huge red flag to me when a person who is supposed to be saved mocks and rebukes the doctrine of repentance. That is particularly true for a man who is supposed to have been called of God to preach the Word Of God. I repeat. Repentance is the heartbeat of faith. Repentance is the heartbeat of our salvation. Faith is the body in which repentance resides. Without repentance we are but walking, whited sepulchres that are full of dead men's bones because we are still dead

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

in our trespasses and sins. There is a major eternal difference in what I believe and what those who preach against repentance believe. If they are wrong, it means an eternity in hell for the lost person who has not repented. If only faith is required, and I am wrong, then all I have done is motivated a heaven bound saved person to live a more holy life. As a lost person, you must exercise faith to establish an eternal relationship with God. Repentance is the evidence that you have saving faith. If you have not repented, then you do not have saving faith. As a saved person, you must live a life of repentance to maintain fellowship with God. In the life of the believer, sin does not break relationship: sin breaks fellowship.

BOOKS WE RECOMMEND ON THE SUBJECT OF REPENTANCE

[\(back to top\)](#)

1. Who Moved The Goal Posts? A Critique Of Soul Winning In The 21st Century By Brother John Asquith: 286 pages, Published By Calvary Publishing; www.calvarypublishing.org ; Telephone: (517) 882-2112 [This book presents a supporting point of view]
2. Repentance And Soul Winning By Brother David Cloud: 198 pages; Published By Way Of Life Literature; www.wayoflife.org ; Telephone (866) 295-4143; available in print book or free ebook [This book presents a supporting point of view]
3. The Technique Catastrophe By Brother Bob Creel: 60 pages; No Publication Information: Evangelist Bob Creel; P.O. Box 4548; Sevierville, Tennessee 37864; Telephone (865) 712-4537 or (865) 908-4244 [This book presents a supporting point of view]
4. Except Ye Repent By Brother Harry Ironside: 78 page ebook: available for free download at numerous sites on the internet [This book presents a supporting point of view]
5. Rightly Defining The Words Of Truth By Brother Michael T. Wolski: 180 pages; Published By DayStar Publishing; P.O. Box 464; Miamitown, Ohio 45041 [This book presents an opposing point of view] This book only has 34 pages on repentance. One of the reasons this book is recommended is because it shows the Bible student the proper way to define Bible words by using the King James Bible. It contains 10 chapters: two of which speak to repentance.

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

APPENDIX 1

WHAT IS THE GIFT OF GOD IN EPHESIANS 2:8?

[\(back to top\)](#)

What I am about to say about Ephesians 2:8 will be controversial in some circles. For years, I have heard many Independent Baptist preachers preach and teach that the saving faith is the gift of God. Is that what the Bible teaches? I would encourage you to read the following discussion.

To add a little clarity to my understanding (not my position!) of Ephesians 2:8, I put forth the following discussion. I say my understanding because if I have a position it means that my mind is already made up. I am here both as a continuing student and as a teacher and a preacher that I may be able to teach others also through rightly dividing the word of truth. I have heard it preached by many Independent Baptist preachers that faith is the gift of God that is referred to in Ephesians 2:8. For years, I have had some reservations about faith being the gift of God referred to in Ephesians 2:8. One of the reasons for my reservations has to do with my perceived understanding of the grammar in the sentence [Understand that it has been at least 50 years since my English teacher hammered me on her anvil of English Grammar (Everyone knows there were no male English Grammar teachers: just kidding!)].

Some years ago, I attempted to have a web site that specialized in English grammar to diagram 2 Thessalonians 2:3-7 and to give a strict grammatical interpretation of who or what was the antecedent of the “he” in verse 7. Mind you that I was not asking for a theological opinion. I never received a response to any of my questions. I was, and still am, convinced that the theology of some folks has led them to violate the rules of English grammar and punctuation in 2 Thessalonians 2. Again, I am not interested in a theological interpretation. I just want to know what does the English grammar and punctuation say. The same issue of “what is the antecedent” exists with the interpretation of Ephesians 2:8. What is the antecedent of the pronoun “it” in the phrase “it is a gift of God”.

I have seen all the contorted Greek arguments on Ephesians 2:8 that appeal to the masculine, feminine, and neuter of “the Greek”. I do not need to appeal to those arguments if I will make a concerted effort to understand the English grammar and punctuation of my King James Bible. If I believe that my King James Bible is perfect, and I do, then I must believe that the English grammar and punctuation in it are perfect too.

One of the cardinal rules of English grammar is that “a prepositional phrase will never contain the subject of a sentence”. The phrase “through faith” is a prepositional phrase. Therefore, faith cannot be the subject of the sentence. For the same reason “grace” cannot be the subject of the sentence. The phrase “through faith” tells us HOW we come to salvation. Grace is God’s side of the salvation equation and faith is man’s side of the salvation equation. Personal faith is the hand through which the gift of salvation passes. While I understand that Romans 12:3 states that “God hath dealt to every man the measure of faith”, I believe that that faith is serving faith since it is given to the believer in the context of Christian service. I also think that the prepositional phrase “through faith” is being used as an adverb to modify or qualify the verb phrase “are ye saved”. I also think that the phrase “For by grace” is another prepositional phrase that is being used as an adverb to modify or qualify the verb phrase “are ye saved”. What that all means to me is that the phrase “are

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

ye saved” is the subject of the sentence. That means that salvation is the subject of the sentence. That being said, I think that the independent clause “it is a gift of God” refers to the subject of the independent clause that preceded it. So, that makes the gift of God salvation and not faith. In other words I believe the phrase “are ye saved” is the antecedent of the pronoun “it”. That is my English grammatical interpretation of Ephesians 2:8. If it is incorrect, I have a sincere desire to be corrected.

What the previous paragraph should do is alert us to the absolute necessity to know and APPLY the rules of English grammar in our interpretation of the King James Bible. An integral part of that grammar is punctuation.

This past week in Sunday School I ask the Sunday School Class if there was anyone in the class who was an expert in English grammar. Two ladies volunteered that they were. So, after Sunday School I asked them to do an analysis of the English grammar in Ephesians 2:8. Little did I know that one of those ladies has been an English grammar teacher for years. Her husband came up to me after the morning service and handed me a piece of paper where she had diagramed all of Ephesians 2:8. It brought back all of my English grammar nightmares, but it confirmed my understanding of Ephesians 2:8. Later that evening the other lady also confirmed my understanding of the grammar in Ephesians 2:8. I told both of them that I was not looking for a theological or doctrinal interpretation of the verse. My request was simply, what does the grammar say?.

I also have a theological reservation to making the “faith” of Ephesians 2:8 the gift of God. I believe that to do so gives an opening to the Calvinists to exploit their perverted doctrines of unconditional election and irresistible grace. It begs the question that if faith is the gift of God, then why is it that everyone does not come to salvation? The Calvinist would say its because saving faith is only a gift given to the elect after regeneration. To the Calvinist, if an individual must exercise faith to claim the gift of salvation, then that robs God of his sovereignty. What an insecure god the god of Calvinism is! The Calvinists err here because they make faith a work in clear violation of numerous scriptures. In the Calvinistic system, God only gives faith to those unconditionally elected to salvation. In the Calvinistic system, the sovereignty of God trumps every exercise of faith in the New Testament whether it be for salvation or service. John Calvin’s erroneous viewpoint of Ephesians 2:8 was that the grace, the salvation, and the faith were ALL the gift of God.

God gives individuals the ability, and the option, to exercise faith. God does not exercise that faith for them. True saving faith in the lost sinner combines with the grace of God, wrought through the Holy Ghost, to produce saving repentance in the lost sinner (2 Corinthians 7:9-10). Salvation is God’s gift to all those who respond to his word through faith. “So then faith cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (Romans 10:17). Faith in one sense is an act of obedience to the word of God (Romans 10:6), but that does not make faith a work. **If faith is the gift of God to the unbeliever, then what obligation is there upon the unbeliever to “believe” the gospel? Put another way, if faith is the gift, then what is God’s condition that is placed upon the unbeliever in order to receive salvation?** Making faith the gift of God in Ephesians 2:8 also opens the door for the Universalists to claim that everyone will be saved and for the Calvinists to claim that faith is only given to the elect.

The word “faith” is used 247 times in our King James Bible. All of those except two are in the New Testament. The operative words in the Old Testament are “faithful” and “faithfulness”. There is a message in that also. “Being faithful” and “having faithfulness” are a product of our

BIBLICAL REPENTANCE

works. Second Thessalonians 3:2 says that “all men have not faith”. If faith is the gift of God, then why is it that “all men have not faith”? Is God a respecter of persons? No! God has given every person the **ability** to exercise faith. In the King James Bible, faith is NEVER said to be the gift of God except through a misinterpretation of Ephesians 2:8. Faith is the condition of God for salvation. Faith is an act of the human will in response to God’s plea for them to receive the Lord Jesus Christ as their personal Saviour. If you have not exercised **FAITH** AND evidenced **REPENTANCE**, then you are still on your way to hell. If you have exercised saving faith, there is going to be at least some evidence of repentance. That evidence of repentance is going to manifest itself much stronger in individuals who have lived particularly wicked lifestyles. For the church member that gets saved, that evidence is going to be a little more difficult to detect because many of them have had their outsides thoroughly scrubbed by religion. Many Independent Baptist have used 2 Corinthians 5:7 to scrub the outside of the vessel squeaky clean without the Holy Ghost having cleansed the inside of the vessel. They have produced whited sepulchres that are full of dead men’s bones, uncleanness, and iniquity.