

The Seven Faces of Repentance

Introduction:

1. Begin with asking some thought-provoking questions:
 - a. Why is it that so many professed Christians live “borderline lives” (elab.)?
 - b. Why is it that a number of people, almost as soon as they are baptized, return to the “*weak and beggarly*” elements (Gal. 4:9) of the world?
 - c. Why is it that many of those who are baptized do not feel as if a heavy burden of weight has been lifted?
 - d. Why is it so difficult to persuade many who have publicly sinned against God and against their brethren to confess their wrong doing?
 - e. Why is it so difficult to persuade some “alien sinners” (some of whom can quote the plan of salvation backwards and forwards) to be baptized?
2. Other similar questions could be asked. I believe the answer to each of these questions (in most instances) is the same – the people alluded to have not repented! At least, not completely.
3. With this introduction, I announce the title of this lesson, it being: “The Seven Faces of Repentance.”
 - a. Note: The expression “the seven faces of repentance” is not specifically used (at least, not in those words) in the Scriptures; however, it is an expression which capsules what is really involved in genuine repentance.

Discussion:

I. The Necessity of Repentance.

- A. It is implied by the Existence of sin.
 1. Romans 3:10,23.
- B. It is Mandated by the Supreme Ruler of the Universe.
 1. Matt. 3:1,2,7,8; 4:17; Mark 2:17; Luke 13:3,5; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22.
- C. Its Necessity is Implied by:
 1. The Immediate result of sin, Isaiah 59:1-2.
 2. The Ultimate results of sin, Rev. 21:8.
 3. The Price paid for redemption, John 3:16; Rom. 5:8; Heb. 2:9.

II. The Nature of Repentance.

- A. “*Repent*” (verb) is from *metanoeo* (Greek).
 1. *Meta* after (implying change) and *noeo* (to perceive),
 - a. This definition may be illustrated by considering Matt. 21:28-31. Note: verse 29: “*afterward he repented himself and went*” (KJV), “*he changed his mind and went*” (NIV).
- B. “*Repentance*” (Noun) is from *metanoia*.
 1. After-thought, a change of mind.
 2. A change of mind which involves a turning from sin, and a turning to God.
- C. “*Repent*” in the Old Testament is from *Shubh* (word most generally used).
 1. It means “to turn, go back again, return.”
 - a. Used over 1,050 times in the Old Testament, the 12th most frequently used verb in the Old Testament. Often used in a physical sense, as in Genesis 3:19.
 - b. Also used with reference to turning from sin. Jonah 3:10; Matt. 12:41; Luke 11:32.
 2. This word is said to be used 164 times in the O.T. in a “covenantal context.” Cf. Jer. 3:12,22.

III. “The Seven Faces of Repentance.”

- A. Conviction.
 1. Defined as: “The act of proving or declaring guilty; the state of being convinced.”
 2. Proof: Acts 2:37.
 - a. Convicted or convinced that Jesus is the Son of God.
 - b. Convinced that they were sinners and lost.
 - c. They discovered that their whole lives had been one frightful and fatal mistake!
 3. Question: How do we **see conviction**? The same way we **see the wind** – by the action it prompts. Acts 2:38,41.
- B. Contrition.
 1. Defined as “sorrow for one’s sin or guilt; deep regret.”
 2. Example: 2 Cor. 7:9-11.

- a. *“Godly sorrow”* was the motivating force causing the Corinthians to repent, and causing Paul to be thankful for their actions.
 - b. The *“sorrow of the world”* is not because of the sin, but because of the penal consequences. Cf. Matt. 27:3-5.
- C. Confession.
1. Defined as: *“An owning up; acknowledgement; the acknowledging of the sin, or of sinfulness.”*
 2. Example: Psalm 51:1-3.
 - a. David did not confess his sin at first, 2 Sam. 12:1-13. He, whose sin remained, was ready to convict another.
 - b. But when David truly repented, he acknowledged his *“transgressions,”* his *“iniquity,”* his *“sin.”* He did not mention his *“failure,”* his *“mistake,”* his *“weakness,”* etc.; he mentioned his *“transgressions!”*
 - c. True repentance does not make demands; it seeks pardon.
 - (1) Illus. Gov Neff was elected governor of Texas in 1920. He visited a state prison, where inmate Huddie Ledbetter (often called Lead Belly) often entertained visitors with songs he had written (such as Good Night Irene, and Midnight Special). In one of his songs he said *“If I had you, Gov. Neff, like you got me, I’d wake up in the morning and set you free.”* Gov. Neff gave him an unconditional pardon.
 3. James 5:16; I John 1:8-9.
 - a. *“He who is too proud to confess is too proud to repent.”*
- D. Renunciation.
1. Defined as: *“The act of giving up (could be right, title, possession, sin, etc.).”*
 2. Example: Isaiah 55:7; Eph. 4:22-24.
 3. Illus. A Bible class teacher ask her class what was meant by repentance. One boy raised his hand and said, *“It is being sorry for our sins.”* A little girl then said, *“It is being sorry enough to quit.”* Cf. I Cor. 6:9-11.
 - a. Yet some people glory in their shame! Phil. 3:19.
- E. Restitution.
1. Defined as *“The giving back what has been taken away. The act of making good any loss, damage, or injury.”*
 2. Examples: Luke 19:8-9; Eph. 4:28.
 - a. Converts return what they have taken unlawfully – merchandise, lands, wives, etc.
- F. Reformation.
1. Defined as: *“Change for the better or improvement.”*
 2. This follows repentance. Luke 3:8; 2 Tim. 2:19; I Pet. 4:1-4.
 3. Cf. Hos. 6:1,6. What God wants is not just pious words or rituals, but a changed life!
- G. Transformation.
1. Defined as: *“To change in condition, nature, or character.”* It suggests a thorough, fundamental change”
 - a. Illus. From a caterpillar to a butterfly.]
 2. Example: Rom. 12:1-2.
 - a. What do they tell alcoholics at AA, the smoker at some clinic, the over-eater at Weight Watchers? *“You can’t go back and be the same person again!”*
 - b. Repentance looks in two directions – to the **past** with regret and to the **future** with a watchful eye.

Conclusion.

1. Repentance *“is difficult to trigger in a hardened heart.”*
2. *“You cannot repent too soon, because you know not how soon it will be too late.”*

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