Bible Study Lesson 17: Repentance

I. INTRODUCTION

The truth in this lesson is one seldom mentioned. Repentance is not a popular subject. Repentance is absolutely necessary and is indispensable to salvation.

Webster defines repentance as "to turn from sin and dedicate oneself to the amendment of one's life; to feel regret or contrition." This is partially correct. The noun in Greek is *metanoia*, meaning "change of mind." The corresponding verb means "change one's mind." The basic meaning you should remember is "to turn in respect to sin."

II. BASIC SCRIPTURES

Matthew 3:1-2; 4:17

Mark 6:12

Luke 13:5; 24:47

Acts 2:38; 11:18; 20:21; 26:20

Romans 2:4

2 Corinthians 7:10

2 Timothy 2:24-25

Revelation 2:5,16, 21; 3:3,19

III. THE NUCLEUS OF THIS TRUTH

Repentance and faith are the two necessities for conversion. Repentance is turning from self, faith is the turning to God; repentance looks within, faith looks above; repentance sees our turmoil, faith sees our Savior.

Repentance is a threefold action:

- in the understanding—knowledge of sin
- in the feelings—pain and grief
- in the will—a change of mind (*metanoia*) and a turning around. It is a realization of self, the despair of guilt, a renouncing of self

IV. THE GREAT TRUTH — REPENTANCE

A. THE REPENTANCE OF GOD

1. The repentance of God is not the same as that of man.

   a. The word "repent" in the Old Testament means "to feel sorry, comforted." In order to portray the nature of God in terms we can understand, it is necessary to describe Him in terms of a human personality. The Bible states, *"God is not a man, that he should lie; neither the son of man, that he should repent"* (Numbers 23:19).

2. God's repentance is based on conditional and unconditional covenants He has made with man.

   a. There would seem to be a contradiction in Scripture. The Bible says in in some places that God never repents. In other portions of Scripture, we find He does repent.

   b. The statements (as we shall see) are not a contradiction. The Bible is never contradictory. Whether God repents or not is based on the response of people.

3. God does repent, based on His conditions.

   a. God *"repented…that He had made man"* (Genesis 6:6). The repentance of God in this passage is based upon the conditional warning in Genesis 6:3.

Write out Genesis 6:3 _____

_____

_____

Because of man's failure to change, God repented. He was sorry that *"he had made man on earth, and it grieved him at his heart"* (Genesis 6:6).

   b. God's repentance signifies a change of relations and circumstances. (Jeremiah 18:5-13)

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Write out Jeremiah 18:10 _____

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c. God repented toward Nineveh because they turned from evil after Jonah had preached as God had instructed.

d. From these few examples, you see that God repents only when the people meet His conditions. He "turns" from judgment if the people change. He also "turns" to judgment if people do not obey His word.

4. God does not repent, based on unconditional covenants.

a. When God makes an unconditional covenant, He never repents—He never "changes." It stands forever (1Samuel 15:29).

b. God made an unconditional covenant with Abraham (Genesis 12:1-3).

Write out the first phrase of Psalm 110:4_____

_____

c. The covenant God made with David is unconditional (2 Samuel 7:12-16).

Write out verse 16:_____

_____

The covenant is immutable. The entire psalm is a confirmation of the Davidic Covenant.

d. God declared Christ to be a Priest after the order of Melchizedek and He will not repent.

B. THE REPENTANCE OF MAN

1. The meaning of repentance for man.

a. In the New Testament there are three Greek words for repentance.

(1) The verb *metamelomai* means "regret, being annoyed with the results of sin.

(2) The usual verb is *metanoeo*, meaning to "change one's mind."

(3) The corresponding noun is *metanoia*, meaning "change of mind in respect to sin."

b. The meaning of *repentance* is "a change, an act of will, with respect to sin that leads to a change in conduct. It is changing one's direction toward God."

2. John the Baptist preached repentance.

a. Isaiah had prophesied the mission of John the Baptist in Isaiah 40:3-5, He fulfilled the prophecy in announcing the Messiah (John 1:19-23).

b. Write out Matthew 3:2_____

_____

3. Jesus preached repentance.

a. Jesus began His public ministry by preaching repentance.

Write out Matthew 4:17_____

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b. He called sinners to repentance.

Write out Matthew 9:13_____

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c. Jesus used Jonah to teach repentance.

Write out Matthew 12:41_____

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4. Repentance was preached by the apostles.
    a. Peter preached repentance.

Write out Acts 3:19_____

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    b. Peter, John, and Philip preached repentance in Samaria. Underline Acts 8:22 in your Bible.
    c. Paul preached repentance to the Athenians on Mars Hill.
    d. When Paul preached to the Ephesians, he gave that great verse on repentance. You should memorize, underline and **write out Acts 20:21**

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Notice that repentance is toward God; faith is toward our Lord Jesus Christ. It takes both repentance and faith to be saved.

    e. Paul's teaching concerning Israel and her future is applicable to us.

Write out Romans 11:29_____

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    f. Paul spoke concerning "godly sorrow" in 2 Corinthians 7:10. He said, *"Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation.*
    g. A change in thinking about sin, *"repentance toward God, and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ"* (Acts 20:21).

C. THE EVIDENCE OF REPENTANCE

1. A perfect illustration of repentance.
    a. The parable of the prodigal son is our Lord's teaching of real repentance (Luke 15:11-32).
2. Repentance is evidenced in three ways.
    a. Intellectually—a change of mind—*"he came to himself"* (verse 17)
    b. Emotionally—a change of heart—*"I have sinned"* (verse 18)
    c. Volitionally—a change of will—*"I will arise and go to my father"* (verse 18)
3. The evidence of repentance seen in other men.
    a. Thomas repented of his unbelief with his confession. (John 20:28).
    b. Paul repented on the road to Damascus (Acts 9:1-18).
    c. The Philippian jailer *"believed in God with all his house"* (Acts 16:34).

D. INCENTIVES TO REPENTANCE

1. The consequences of sin
    a. Sin leads to destruction. "The wages of sin is death" (Romans 6:23).
    b. Jesus said, *"Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish"* (Luke 13:3).
2. The goodness of God
    a. His goodness is revealed in daily blessings.
    b. His goodness is revealed in His mercy and longsuffering.
    c. The one supreme revelation of God's love for the lost and His goodness toward mankind is in the gift of His Son (John 3:16).