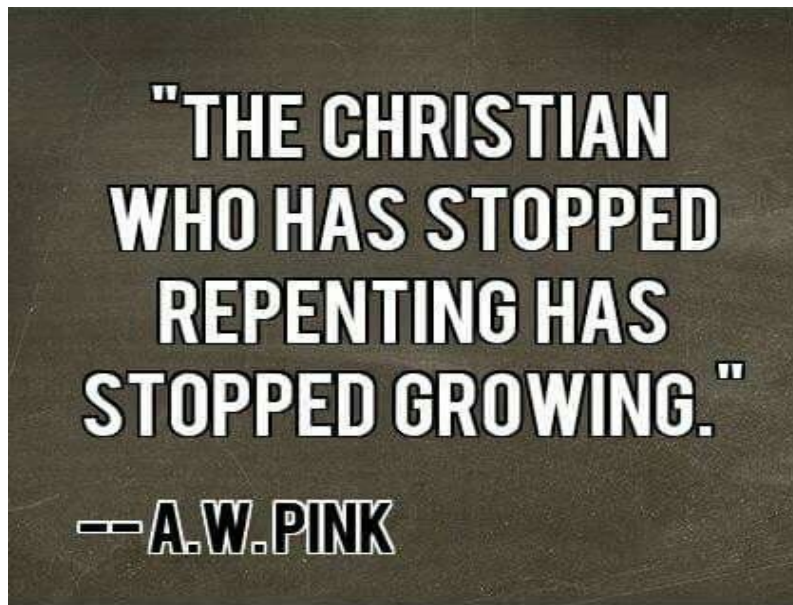


BETHANY BAPTIST CHURCH
NEW MEMBER LESSON #6 – REPENTANCE



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Introduction

Have you ever done something, maybe to a relative, friend, or even a stranger on the highway, only to regret it later? Have you ever felt deeply remorseful for even a negative thought towards an enemy? Consequently, you felt the urge or need to tell that person you are sorry, if so that was the Holy Spirit prompting you to repent for that action.

This lesson will define repentance, cover the impact repentance has on the life of a believer, the consequences of ignoring the Lord's prompting to correct a wrong doing and the blessed promises of God to everyone who listens and takes the necessary to action to repent (turn away from) from doing wrong.

LESSON

Repentance: The Bible Study Tools Dictionary defines repentance as “to turn” or ‘to return’; to change one’s mind; think differently; to feel Godly sorrow for one’s action and then turn to obedience in Christ.

In Lesson 5 we discovered the importance of confessing our error to the Lord and agreeing with God that His ways are perfect. This lesson takes the confession step a little further in that we now have the opportunity to repent (change directions) and live out the dictates of God’s word with our actions.

Impact of Repentance on the Life of a Believer:

Repentance is necessary to begin a life with Jesus Christ as Lord. We change our mind and directions **and turn to God**. Acts 3:19 (NIV) says “Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord.” The moment we accept, believe and confess, we become Christians following a new way of life with God.

Actually, God reveals Himself to us all the time; through the good and bad circumstances in our lives, God is there. Romans 2:4b (NIV) says God's kindness is intended to lead us to repentance. He blesses us in our mess, pulls us out time and time again and delivers us from dangers seen and unseen with the intent that we would recognize God and repent and live our life in Christ Jesus.

The Lord still requires us to forsake wicked ways and evil thoughts *and turn to God* as an act of true Repentance. (Isaiah 55:7) In return, the believer receives the gift of the Holy Spirit to lead and guide us the right way we should go. In Acts 2:38 (NIV) "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive that gift of the Holy Spirit."; Acts 3:19 states "Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord. I know we need refreshing on a daily basis; relief from our stale way of living is reason enough to repent and trust God.

Impact of Refusing to Repent/ Ignoring God:

Life is busy and moves swiftly. Often times we ignore the Holy Spirit's prompting to repent. Ignoring long enough will prevent the Lord from speaking to us. We can be involved in some very good things and still be out of the will of God.

In Revelation 2:5 the Church at Ephesus was busy doing good deeds, active in Church Service, but the "Wow" factor was gone; their love for God had died down. It is easy to get in a rut and do our own things. The enemy will deceive us into thinking all is well. In the Revelation passage, the Church is told to repent and turn to God, their 1st love and allow Him to lead them in all things.

Consequently if we choose to ignore God, He will ignore us and tragic things will happen. The worst being, that God will leave us to our own destructive devices. We forfeit the blessings of God. None of us are smart enough to maneuver life without God. The Lord's desire is to lead and guide us into everything that is right. He is a gentleman, and he will not force his will upon us. However, when we ask, He gladly comes through for us.

Promises to those who Repent/Turn to God:

The promises will be summed up by taking a look at what happens when we turn/re-turn to the Lord- Our Shepherd.

1. We return to the Good Shepherd – who laid down His life for the sheep (that's Us); We are forgiven; sin erased.
2. We return to the Great Shepherd – who tenderly cares for the sheep He bled for (that's Us): We are Nurtured
3. We return to the Chief Shepherd – who leads us into green pastures: We get answers, provisions, and protection.

The Lord is Our Shepherd and we shall not want for anything when we listen and respond to him. We have everything we need. When we draw near to God, he promises to show us great and mighty things that we did not already know!

Review:

1. What does it mean to repent?
2. Who do we turn to when we repent?
3. Do we have to repent, whose business is it anyway?
4. What happens if I choose to ignore God?
5. What are the promises to the one who repents?

Name

Date