

## **The Foundations of Life, Part 7**

### The Elementary Principles of Christ

1. Repentance from Dead Works.
2. Faith Toward God.
3. The Doctrine of Baptisms.
4. Laying on of hands.
5. Resurrection from the Dead.
6. Eternal Judgment.

We need to note one particularly important feature of this inspired outline of basic doctrines. If we follow it through given order given, it spans the entire gamut of the Christian experience. It starts-in time-from the sinner's initial response:repentance. It takes us on, by a logical succession, to the climax-in eternity-of all Christian experience: resurrection and final judgment.

While we are studying these six elementary truths, let us never forget the divine vision of eternity being laid out for us. Each doctrinal truth cannot stand by itself, it is inevitably linked together within the fabric of the eternal purpose of eternal life in Jesus Christ.

### **First, Repentance From Dead Works**

Hebrews 6 :1-2

- 1 Therefore let us go on towards perfection,\* leaving behind the basic teaching about Christ, and not laying again the foundation: repentance from dead works and faith towards God,
- 2 instruction about baptisms, laying on of hands, resurrection of the dead, and eternal judgment.

### **Conviction and the Power of God Unto Salvation.**

Jonathan Edwards

Jonathan Edwards (1703-1758) was a brilliant theologian whose sermons had an overwhelming impact on those who heard him. One in particular, his famous 'Sinners in the Hands of an Angry God,' moved hundreds to repentance and salvation. That single message helped to spark the revival known as 'The Great Awakening' (1734-1744). From a human standpoint, it seems incredible that such far-reaching results could come from one message. Edwards did not have a commanding voice or impressive pulpit manner. He used very few gestures, and he read from a manuscript. Yet God's Spirit moved upon his hearers with conviction and power.

Few know the spiritual preparation involved in that sermon. John Chapman gives us the story: 'For 3 days Edwards had not eaten a mouthful of food; for 3 nights he had not closed his eyes in sleep. Over and over again he was heard to pray, 'O Lord, give me New England! Give me New England!' When he arose from his knees and made his way into the pulpit that Sunday, he looked as if he had been gazing straight into the face of God. Even before he began to speak, tremendous conviction fell

upon his audience."

God's involvement in our presentation of the Gospel is so very important. Because it is our humbly requesting and yielding ourselves to God which enables Him to so equip us, as to touch the hearts and lives of men. Thereby eternal benefits are seen in the realm of His Kingdom and a soul's destination is forever changed by His Grace.

Jonathon Edwards was convinced he could make a difference through the anointing of God's hand upon the Word. We to should acknowledge that when God is allowed to operate in the full equation of the operation of the Holy Spirit. His value is never less than what can be expected. Lives are changed, hearts become pliable in the Master's hand, and all our earthly effort finds an eternal reward.

2 Corinthians 7:10

10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation and brings no regret, but worldly grief produces death.

In the New Testament the English verb " to repent " is normally used to translate the Greek verb metanoein. This Greek verb metanoein has one definite meaning throughout the history of the Greek language, right through classical Greek down in New Testament Greek. Its basic meaning is always the same: " to change one's mind ". Thus, "repentance" in the New Testament is not an emotion but a decision.

Knowing this fact serves to dispel many false impression and ideas connected with repentance. many people associate repentance with emotion- with the shedding of tears and so on. It is possible, however for a person to feel great emotion and to shed many tears and yet never repent in the scriptural sense. One particular biblical narrative that points this out is the account of Judas repentance about the crucifixion compared to Peter. Judas realizing what he had done in handing over our Saviour for the crucifixion repented the bible says. However, it was the Greek word for remorse that was related to us in that passage. Peter on the other hand truly repented after his denial of the Lord. One went on to a long career of service to our Lord, the other committed suicide and forever was lost to his Lord.

### **Christ's Teaching On Biblical True Repentance .**

Luke 15:11-32

11 Then Jesus\* said, "There was a man who had two sons.

12 The younger of them said to his father, "Father, give me the share of the property that will belong to me." So he divided his property between them.

13 A few days later the younger son gathered all he had and traveled to a distant country, and there he squandered his property in dissolute living.

14 When he had spent everything, a severe famine took place throughout that country, and he began to be in need.

15 So he went and hired himself out to one of the citizens of that country, who sent him to his fields to feed the pigs.

16 He would gladly have filled himself with\* the pods that the pigs were eating; and no one gave him anything.

17 But when he came to himself he said, “How many of my father’s hired hands have bread enough and to spare, but here I am dying of hunger!  
18 I will get up and go to my father, and I will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you;  
19 I am no longer worthy to be called your son; treat me like one of your hired hands.’”  
20 So he set off and went to his father. But while he was still far off, his father saw him and was filled with compassion; he ran and put his arms around him and kissed him.  
21 Then the son said to him, “Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you; I am no longer worthy to be called your son.”\*  
22 But the father said to his slaves, “Quickly, bring out a robe—the best one—and put it on him; put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet.  
23 And get the fatted calf and kill it, and let us eat and celebrate;  
24 for this son of mine was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found!” And they began to celebrate.  
25 ‘Now his elder son was in the field; and when he came and approached the house, he heard music and dancing.  
26 He called one of the slaves and asked what was going on.  
27 He replied, “Your brother has come, and your father has killed the fatted calf, because he has got him back safe and sound.”  
28 Then he became angry and refused to go in. His father came out and began to plead with him.  
29 But he answered his father, “Listen! For all these years I have been working like a slave for you, and I have never disobeyed your command; yet you have never given me even a young goat so that I might celebrate with my friends.  
30 But when this son of yours came back, who has devoured your property with prostitutes, you killed the fatted calf for him!”  
31 Then the father\* said to him, “Son, you are always with me, and all that is mine is yours. 32But we had to celebrate and rejoice, because this brother of yours was dead and has come to life; he was lost and has been found.” ’

The prodigal son recognized the waste of what he had become. He acknowledged he had sinned and he did something positive about it. He went back to his father and put his confidence in the father's care for better or worse. Realizing even the rebuke of his father and life as a servant in his house was far better than what he had become.

One of the great saints of the early church went through this same great paradox of life's ever developing journey. In his testimony we can gain much wisdom and truly understand true Bible Repentance unto Life.

### **History and True Repentance Or Confession In the Modern Church.**

#### *The Believer's Repentance – [2 Corinthians 12:20-21](#)*

The modern church places much emphasis on confession? Often at the expense of a proper understanding of repentance. While confession of sin is mentioned twice in the New Testament (James 5:16; 1 John 1:9), repentance is talked about much more. We should be careful not to confuse the two, because a believer can confess without repentance but can't repent without confession.

It is possible to feel sorry and confess sin but change nothing. Repentance (also known as contrition) means taking responsibility for sin and committing to change a wrong action or attitude; this is essential for spiritual growth. True confession? Agreeing with God's perspective about our transgression? Goes hand in hand with repentance, because if we know God hates what we're doing, then we will stop.

By means of confession and contrition, the believer accepts responsibility for ridding his life of a sin through the Holy Spirit's power. Jesus' ready forgiveness shouldn't be treated like the "get out of jail free" card from a board game. We must do more than casually say, "Lord, I've messed up again? I'm sorry." To triumph over habitual sin, we must choose to resist temptation and obey God. Satan will keep harassing us, and we may fail again. But we are to keep up sincere confession and repentance until the Father gives us victory.

Repentance isn't feeling sorry or claiming weakness in the face of temptation. It's a condition wherein our spirit understands the Lord's grief over sin, grieves with Him, and commits to changing behavior to please Him.

In Touch Daily Devotional  
by Dr. Charles Stanley

### **Peter's Biblical and Historical Example is True Bible Repentance.**

**He is recorded more than any other disciple, and was at Jesus' side at the Transfiguration, the raising of Jairus' daughter, and the Agony of the Garden of Gethsemane. He helped organize the Last Supper and played a major role in the events of the Passion. When the Master was arrested, he cut off the right ear of a slave of the high priest Malchus and then denied Christ three times as the Lord predicted. Peter then "went out and began to weep bitterly". After the Resurrection, Peter went to the tomb with the "other disciple" after being told of the event by the women. The first appearance of the Risen Christ was before Peter, ahead of the other disciples, and when the Lord came before the disciples at Tiberias, he gave to Peter the famous command to "Feed my lambs.... Tend my sheep.... Feed my sheep". In the time immediately after the Ascension, Peter stood as the unquestionable head of the Apostles, his position made evident in the Acts.**

### **The Blood Prepares Our Prayers and Praises.**

#### **What Sanctifies Our Offerings?**

*"And the priest shall put some of the blood upon the horns of the altar of sweet incense before the LORD" (Leviticus 4:7).*

The altar of incense is the place where saints present their prayers and praises; and it is delightful to think of it as sprinkled with the blood of the great sacrifice. This it is which makes all our worship acceptable with Jehovah: He sees the blood of His own Son and therefore accepts our homage. It is well for us to fix our eyes upon the blood of the one offering for sin. Sin mingles even with our holy t

things, and our best repentance, faith, prayer, and thanksgiving could not be received of God were it not for the merit of the atoning sacrifice. Many sneer at "the blood"; but to us it is the foundation of comfort and hope. That which is on the horns of the altar is meant to be prominently before our eyes when we draw near to God. The blood gives strength to prayer, and hence it is on the altar's horns. It is "before the LORD," and therefore it ought to be before us. It is on the altar before we bring the incense; it is there to sanctify our offerings and gifts. Come, let us pray with confidence, since the Victim is offered, the merit has been pleaded, the blood is within the veil, and the prayers of believers must be sweet unto the LORD.

### **True Repentance Brings About True Faith**

Acts 20:20,21

20 I did not shrink from doing anything helpful, proclaiming the message to you and teaching you publicly and from house to house,  
21 as I testified to both Jews and Greeks about repentance towards God and faith towards our Lord Jesus.

The order of Paul's message is the same: first repentance, then faith. Finally, as we have already seen in Hebrews 6:1,2, the order of the basic foundation doctrines of the Christian faith is first repentance from dead works, then faith, baptisms and so on. Without exception, throughout the entire New Testament, repentance is the first response to the gospel that God demands. Nothing else can come before it, and nothing else can take its place.

True repentance must always precede true faith. Without such repentance, faith alone is an empty profession. This is one reason why the experience of so many Christians today is so unstable and insecure. They are seeking to build without the first of the great foundation doctrines. They are professing faith but they have never practiced true repentance. As a result, the faith which they profess procures for them neither the favor of God nor the respect of the world.

In many places today the simplification of the gospel message has taken one step too far. The message of the preached today is " Only believe. " But that is not the message of Christ. Christ and His apostles preached " Repent and Believe. " Any preacher who leaves out the call to repentance is misleading sinners and misrepresenting God. For Paul tells us that it is God Himself who " commands all men everywhere to repent" ( Acts 17:30 ). That is the general edict of God to the entire human race: " all men everywhere must repent. "

Repentance removes self from the issue of Faith. Allowing you to put Christ as the Cornerstone of your very belief system. Which enables Him to accomplish His work of redemption and thoroughly furnish you unto every good work. Thereby you produce the fruit of God's grace in your life that portrays the gospel message of salvation. Showing the evidence of Christ in You the Hope of Glory.