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# Repentance

## And the Kingdom of Heaven

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Text: Mark 1:14-15<sup>1, 2</sup>

### Introduction

1. This is the first lesson on our theme for the year: *The Kingdom of Heaven*.
2. Both John the Baptist and Jesus began their ministries by preaching, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.*”
3. Why does God command repentance as the necessary response to the preaching the Gospel of the Kingdom?

### Discussion

#### I. The Message of Repentance

- A. Repentance is and has been the call of the gospel from the beginning:
  1. Matt. 3:1: John the Baptist preached repentance.
  2. Matt. 4:17: Jesus preached repentance.
  3. Mark 6:12: Jesus taught the disciples to preach repentance.
  4. Luke 24:47; Acts 17:30: In the Great Commission, Jesus commanded that repentance be preached to all men everywhere.
- B. Why?
  1. Acts 26:18: All men have fallen into darkness and under the power of Satan because of sin. This is what Jesus seeks to turn us away from.
  2. Ephesians 2:1: While in darkness, we are dead in our trespasses and sins.

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<sup>1</sup> Scripture quotations are taken from the NKJV Bible.

<sup>2</sup> This outline was originally written in English by David Phillips. Translation into other languages was machine-assisted using Google Translate.

3. Romans 3:23: All men have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.
4. 1 Peter 3:10-12: Through the gospel, Jesus Christ not only saves us from death, He turns us away from the sinful way of life that leads to death, so that we can become righteousness and life in Him.

## II. What Is Repentance?

- A. Repentance is the turning or changing of our mind or will away from evil and toward God.
  1. Some teach it as a turning away only. It is more than that.
  2. Turning way from sin alone cannot save.
  3. Example: If a thief decides theft is bad and he wants to stop, this is a good thing, but it will not save him.
    - a. He may do it for many reasons. Maybe he's tired of running from the police, or wants a better life.
    - b. But this change always from thievery cannot deliver him from guilt of his past actions, in this life or in eternity.
  4. Some describe repentance as sorrow, sadness or regret. This is not it.
  5. Repentance is a change of mind or will: what we love, our desires, our goals, what is important to us.
  6. Because repentance is the changing of the mind, it is the beginning of our becoming a different person.
  7. Romans 12:2: Paul said that we are to be *"transformed by the renewing of our minds"* according to the will of God. That transformation of life cannot take place until we turn our will toward God.
- B. Therefore, more than a turning away from sin, repentance is a turning of the heart **toward God**.
  1. Luke 1:16: John the Baptist prepared the way by turning the hearts of the people toward the Lord.
  2. Acts 14:15: Paul preached repentance as turning *"from useless things to the living God."*

3. Acts 20:21: He preached, “*Testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, **repentance toward God** and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.*”
4. Acts 26:20: Again, Paul preached to all, “*that they should **repent, turn to God**, and do works befitting repentance.*”

### III. Repentance and the Kingdom

- A. According to the gospel, the Kingdom is the reason and motivation that draws people to repentance.
  1. Most people experience events in our lives that motivate us to make big changes.
  2. Some people want to be a better person, do better for their families, get rich, or live healthier lives. All these can be very motivating, but they do not equal repentance for salvation.
  3. Matt. 4:17: Jesus preached, “*Repent **FOR** (because) the kingdom is at hand.*”
  4. In the gospel message, the coming Kingdom of Heaven was and is the primary reason for repentance. Not wanting a better life, feeling better about self, or living longer for our families.
  5. Why repent? BECAUSE the kingdom of heaven was at hand!
- B. Why does the message of the kingdom lead to repentance?
  1. Luke 11:22: The Kingdom of Heaven is greater and more powerful than darkness and evil.
  2. Since the kingdom of God has power over darkness, its coming means judgment against unrighteousness.
    - a. John 5:26-27: Jesus has been given all authority in heaven and on earth to execute judgment.
    - b. John 9:39: Jesus came “for judgment” meaning He came to separate those who would be saved by faith in Him and those who would be judged.

3. Acts 10:42: This means that means everyone who chooses to remain in darkness and rebellion against God will receive judgment when the time comes.
  4. 1 Timothy 2:4: God does not want you to be lost. He wants you to be saved!
- C. Luke 24:46-47: Therefore, through the gospel Jesus calls all men (even you) to repent, turn to God, and be saved from the judgment to come.
- D. Colossians 1:13: In Christ, God transfers us out of darkness and into the kingdom of His Son, where there is life and salvation.
- E. Luke 13:3-5: Our entrance into the kingdom of heaven requires that we believe in Jesus Christ and turn...
1. Away from our sinful works of darkness and toward God's marvelous light.  
Away from sin and toward God.  
Away from this world toward the kingdom of heaven.

## **Conclusion**

1. Throughout this series, as we explore the Bible's teaching on the kingdom of heaven, the need for repentance must always be on our minds.
2. Every truth and promise should cause us to reflect on our own priorities and deepen our loyalty to God and the Lord Jesus Christ.
3. Have you turned your heart toward the living God?
4. Or are you still allowing sin and darkness to darken your heart and keep you separated from your God and creator?
5. Will you repent, turn to God, believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and be saved today?