

“What Must I Do To Be Saved?”

Acts 16:30

Learn The Gospel

John 6:45; Romans 10:17; James 1:22-25

Believe On GOD In CHRIST

Hebrews 11:6; John 3:16; James 2:14-26

Confess CHRIST

Romans 10:9-10; Matthew 10:32-33; 7:21

Repent Of Sin

Acts 3:19; Matthew 3:8

Be Baptized Into CHRIST

Mark 16:16; Romans 6:3-6; 1st Peter 3:21

“Let The Word... Dwell In You Richly”

Colossians 3:16

The current memory assignment is: *“Behold what manner of love the Father has bestowed on us, that we should be called children of God! Therefore the world does not know us, because it did not know Him”* (1st John 3:1).

“The Assembling Of Ourselves Together”

Hebrews 10:24-25

Sunday

10:15 am.....Worship

Las Vegas Library

833 Las Vegas Boulevard North

Wednesday

7:00 pm.....Various Studies

Jerry & Beverly Dockens residence

Friday

7:00 pm.....Ladies' Study

Alexis Barajas Dockens residence

“Give Attention To Reading”

1st Timothy 4:13

Sunday.....Romans 5-7

Monday.....Romans 8-10

Tuesday.....Romans 11-13

Wednesday.....Romans 14-16

Thursday...1st Corinthians 1-3

Friday.....1st Corinthians 4-6

Saturday...1st Corinthians 7-9

“Sound Doctrine”

Titus 2:1

“REPENTANCE LEADING TO SALVATION”

Bryan Matthew Dockens

God *“commands all men everywhere to repent”* (Acts 17:30), and Jesus' purpose on earth was to call *“sinners to repentance”* (Luke 5:32). Repentance is necessary to receive the remission of sins (Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38); the alternative being death (Luke 13:3, 5).

Repentance simply means to change one's mind. The word of God consistently calls for such mental renovation (Romans 12:2; Ephesians 4:23).

Before repentance. Repentance on the part of man is made possible by goodness on the part of God. In one passage, Paul asked, *“Do you despise the riches of His goodness, forbearance, and longsuffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leads you to repentance?”* (Romans 2:4). Indeed, in the absence of divine longsuffering there could be no opportunity to repent. With reference to God's plan to destroy the earth, Peter explained that *“The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance”* (2nd Peter 3:9).

On man's part, repentance is predicated on remorse. It is not possible to repent of sin without regretting it first, *“For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death”* (2nd Corinthians 7:10).

No sinner can approach God without experiencing sorrow, as
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Vegas Valley Church Of CHRIST

Romans 16:16

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it is written, *"The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit"* (Psalm 34:18). James penned, *"Draw near to God and He will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners; and purify your hearts, you double-minded. Lament and mourn and weep! Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom"* (James 4:8-9). The sorrowful will be *"cut to the heart"* when informed of their error (Acts 2:37); they will be *"ashamed"* of themselves and *"blush"* at their misdeeds (Jeremiah 6:15; 8:12).

Yet, not all sorrow is acceptable. Our Lord discriminates between *"godly sorrow"* and *"the sorrow of the world"* (2nd Corinthians 7:10). Worldly sorrow manifests itself in the one who grieves the consequences of sin more than sin itself, like Cain who killed his brother, and despaired not at his own reprehensible behavior, but at what might befall him in recompense (Genesis 4:13-14). Likewise, worldly sorrow is demonstrated in self-pity, as was the case with Judas Iscariot, who *"seeing that He had been condemned, was remorseful and brought back the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders, saying, 'I have sinned by betraying innocent blood.' And they said, 'What is that to us? You see to it!' Then he threw down the pieces of silver in the temple and departed, and went and hanged himself"* (Matthew 27:3-5). Judas' sorrow stands in direct contrast to that of Peter. Having denied Christ three times the night of His arrest, *"when he thought about it, he wept"* (Mark 14:72). Moved as he was with sorrow, Peter did not become suicidal as Judas did, but pursued the resurrected Christ, first running to the tomb (Luke 24:12), and later swimming a hundred yards to meet Him on the shore of Tiberias (John 21:7-8), at which time he reaffirmed his love for the Master verbally (John 21:15-17).

After repentance. Repentance, which is a change of mind, is meaningless without a subsequent change of behavior. Paul spoke of the need to *"repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance"* (Acts 26:20). In like manner, John preached, *"Bear fruits worthy of repentance"* (Matthew 3:8; Luke 3:8). The context of John's command was one in which Pharisees and Sadducees had come to him for baptism (Matthew 3:7; Luke 3:7), the implication being that it was withheld from them for lack of evidence they had repented. Those truly

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moved by shame and sorrow to amend their minds will, invariably, have something to show for it. In another place, Jesus said, *"You will know them by their fruits. Do men gather grapes from thornbushes or figs from thistles? Even so, every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, nor can a bad tree bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Therefore by their fruits you will know them"* (Matthew 7:16-20).

Jesus illustrated *"works befitting repentance"* when He taught that *"the men of Nineveh... repented at the preaching of Jonah"* (Matthew 12:41; Luke 11:32). *"So the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them. Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, 'Let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish?' Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it"* (Jonah 3:5-10).

The Ninevites believed, humbly expressed their deep remorse, appealed to God, and quit their evil behavior. That's what the Almighty recognizes as repentance. Anything less is not *"repentance leading to salvation"* (2nd Corinthians 7:10).

With repentance comes reward. Peter taught, *"Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord"* (Acts 3:19). Not only is the sinner refreshed by it, but it brings about joy even in heaven. *"There is joy in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents"* (Luke 15:10)!