

Repent & Return

Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away, in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord; and that He may send Jesus, the Christ appointed for you, whom heaven must receive until the period of restoration of all things about which God spoke by the mouth of His holy prophets from ancient time.

Acts 3:19-21

As seen in previous writings it is not possible for one to come into a relationship with God unless they have first been made aware of His presence. In fact, for one to attempt any kind of relationship they must not only know of presence but also who they want to be with. Thus the Hebrew writer tells us we must know that God is and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him. **Hebrews 11:6**. It should also go without saying that one must believe the things learned regarding God if they seek a relationship with Him.

Repentance Requires Change

Repentance is another action that must begin in order for one to have a relationship with God. God is light and in Him is no darkness of any kind. If we seek to have a relationship with Him we must remove darkness from our own life. Since *"all have sinned"* all must leave sin in order to come to God. Peter calls his listeners to *"repent and return"* in his message presented to the crowd attracted by the healing of a lame man. (**Acts 3:19**) His message indicates that change is necessary for the cleansing of our sin.

In the Amplified version of that verse we see some explanation of this phrase.

"So repent (change your mind and purpose); turn around and return [to God]" AMP

Notice that to repent is to change both our mind and purpose. Those who seek a relationship with God must leave behind the attitudes and purposes of this world. Paul speaks in several epistles of leaving the *"old man"* and becoming a *"new man."* The return that Peter speaks of must be a return to God, our Creator. It is, after all, God with whom we want to associate so it only makes sense that we would come to Him in our turn away from the world.

A Separating Point

When we begin to understand repentance we can clearly see that it is a sorting point among those who come to know God. One can gain knowledge of God and even believe the things that have been learned, but until they make the necessary change in their life they will never achieve a relationship with God. Repentance is where "the rubber meets the road" so to speak. James tells us that *"...even the demons believe--and shudder!"* (**James 2:19** ESV) Yet because they remain demons they will never know the blessings of a relationship with God. Jesus told the Jews *"unless you repent, you will all likewise perish."*

Are you ready to make the changes necessary to your mind and purpose to enable a relationship with God? No one will remain long in a relationship with God unless they are willing

to leave behind all things of this world and its desires and return to the God of creation. God wants servants, not acquaintances. We need to turn our will over to His desires and commands. Knowing the power and awesomeness of God, and the love He demonstrated in providing a means of returning to Him through the death of Jesus, should cause us to leave our self behind and seek His favor.

Repent and Return to God! Learn what He expects of you then set your heart to submit completely to His desire. Follow His will in all your actions and find blessing and salvation in following His Word.

Are you ready to change for God?