

For Our Information

Joyce Venable is doing better.

Annette Gray is to have knee surgery on April 17.

Bill Venable's brother is dealing with a few healing setbacks. A procedure that will hopefully help is scheduled for Monday. This is causing chemo and radiation treatments to be postponed.

The new address for the Simpson Family is posted on the board.

Keep our brothers & sisters in mind

Contact Us

We want opportunities to speak with others about our work in the Lord's Kingdom.

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We seek only to serve God according to His Will!

Good Or Grace?

We are often concerned about those "good neighbors" down the street. Surely if they are good, that should mean God will gladly take them to heaven one day. Wouldn't that be the loving thing to do? However, when we think this way, we are unwittingly taking away God's grace, for if the basis of God taking a person to heaven is that he is "good," then this implies that "good" earns a place with God, and God would owe it to every "good" person (of course, how "good" is defined is another matter). This means there is no grace. It also means that the shedding of Christ's blood was pointless, for if "good" action was capable of bringing us to God after we've sinned, then "good" outweighs the sin and there would no need for anything else, least of all Christ coming to earth, dying, and rising again. We should only concern ourselves with outdoing our sin by good deeds.

There is irony in this, of course. While we want to appeal to a good God to give a good neighbor a place in heaven, we are actually turning God into a graceless God who must respond to the merit of a person who did some good. We are reminded, then, of Paul's point to the Galatians. **Galatians 2:20-21** (Doy Moyer on Facebook last week)

Seeking His Righteousness

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Conversion — Repentance

Jason Malham

On an occasion of petty rivalry and quarreling among His disciples, Jesus said, "Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven." (**Matt 18:3**; compare **Mk 9:33-37**) Quite simply, no one may enter the kingdom of heaven without first being converted. That is what makes the need for a series on the subject of conversion so pressing.

In the first article, we discussed the basic principles involved in the subject. In the last article we noticed the first responsibility of the one who would be converted to Jesus Christ, faith. Faith, we noticed, is not some hocus-pocus, mystical, better-felt-than-told emotional experience. Faith is that which changes a man's intellect. But other changes (besides that of the intellect) must now take place if a person is



For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death.

2Corinthians 7:10



1512 Tanner St. Malvern, AR

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Sunday 10:20 am & 5:00 pm

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Sunday 9:30 AM

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to be converted to Christ.

Repentance. When people come to believe in the gospel (good news) of Jesus, they must then decide what they will do with that information. Will they ignore it? Will they use it to change their life? What will they do? This brings us to the Biblical concept of repentance. Repentance is that which involves the change of a person's will.

Feeling Sorry for Sins? What is repentance? Some will tell you that repentance is simply feeling sorry for your sins. Let's consider that view in light of Biblical teaching. *"For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death."* (**2Cor 7:10**) If the "godly sorrow" of that verse means anything, it means feeling sorry for one's sins. It refers to that sorrow that comes from knowing you have violated the wishes of the gracious God above. But the verse says this feeling sorry for sins is what leads to repentance. If repentance is feeling sorry for one's sins (godly sorrow), then this verse is essentially saying that "godly sorrow produces godly sorrow leading to salvation...". This cannot be the correct understanding, then, of the Biblical concept of repentance.

Turning from Sins? Some will then say that repentance is not feeling sorry for sins; rather it is the actual turning from one's sins. Repentance is that change of life that comes from feeling sorry for one's sins. Let's also consider this view in light of scripture. *"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**) This comment of Peter from one of the porches of the temple in Jerusalem begins with the command, repent. But notice what is to follow repentance

Store In My Heart

1Corinthians 15:58

Therefore, my beloved brothers, be steadfast, immovable, always abounding in the work of the Lord, knowing that in the Lord your labor is not in vain.

Sometimes it may seem we are just "spinning our wheels" in our endeavors and finish with nothing to show for our labor. Paul tells us here that we can put all our effort into doing the Lord's work because no matter what happens, our work for Him is always profitable. Though we may sometimes be discouraged by the immediate outcome of our service to God, we must keep in mind that God's work is profitable for God's cause. Since we know that such labor is profitable, we should be eager to keep steadily working for God.

according to this divinely inspired apostle: *"Repent therefore and be converted..."*

We have already learned that to be converted is to change or to turn. If, then, repentance is the actual turning from sins, Peter's comment would essentially read, "Turn/change therefore and be turned/changed..." This is more clearly seen when considering the New International Version's translation of **Acts 3:19**, *"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord"* According to the idea that repentance is the turning of a person away from his sin and changing his life to suit God, the NIV text would read: "Turn, then, and turn..." This can hardly be correct either.

After Sorrow, Before Change. Repentance, then, is that which comes from godly sorrow (**2Cor 7:10**) and leads to a change of life (**Acts 3:19**). Repentance is that which happens between those two events. Repentance, simply, is the decision one makes to change. It is the change of a person's will. He decides, determines, resolves to become somebody new. A person comes to understand that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. This is faith. This newfound faith leads one to sorrow over the life he has led in the presence of this caring God who sent His Son to die for us. This sorrow leads the sin-laden person to resolve within his heart to change his life. This decision of the heart is repentance.

Now, is that all? Are people converted once they have repented? No. At the point of repentance, they have only resolved to become somebody new. They have decided to do it but have not yet done it. Remember, repentance is only one of the things that leads to conversion. (**Acts 3:19**)