

You must first REPENT!

THERE ARE TWO WORDS IN THE NEW TESTAMENT TRANSLATED, “REPENT:”

- (1) METANOEO: “To change one’s mind or purpose...for the better...an amendment.”
- (2) METAMELOMAI: “To care for...to regret”

1- **Matthew 3:1-17:** “John the Baptist came preaching...(2) ‘Repent (metanoeo), for the Kingdom of Heaven is near’...(5) People went out to him...(6) confessing their sins, they were baptized by him in the Jordan River...(7) he said to them...(8) ‘Produce fruit in keeping with repentance (metanoeo)...(11) I baptize you with water for repentance (metanoeo)’...(13) Then Jesus came from Galilee to the Jordan to be baptized by John...(16) As soon as Jesus was baptized, He went up out of the water...(17) And a voice from Heaven said, ‘This is My Son, Whom I love; with Him I am well pleased’.”

A. **John 1:29-34** continues the story: “The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him and said, ‘Look, the Lamb of God, who takes away the sin of the world!...(32) I saw the Spirit come down from Heaven as a dove and remain on Him. I would not have known Him, except that the One who sent me to baptize with water (‘for repentance,’ according to Matthew 3:11) told me, ‘The man on whom you see the Spirit come down and remain is He who will baptize with the Holy Spirit.’ I have seen and I testify that this is the Son of God’.”

(1) **John 3:22-23:** “After this, Jesus and His disciples went out into the Judean countryside, where He spent some time with them, and baptized. Now John also was baptizing at Aenon near Salim, because there was plenty of water, and people were constantly coming to be baptized (‘for repentance,’ according to Matthew 3:11).”

(2) **John 4:1** tells us that Jesus was baptizing (‘for repentance,’ according to Matthew 3:11) more people than even John the Baptist.

B. According to **Matthew 4:12-17**, when John the Baptist was put in prison, **verse 17** says: “From that time on Jesus began to preach, ‘Repent (metanoeo), for the Kingdom of Heaven is near’ (exactly like John preached in Matthew 3:3).”

2- **In Luke 13:1-9**, Jesus warned people twice (**in verse 3 and 5**): “But unless you repent (metanoeo), you too will all perish.” He then explained with a parable (**verses 6-9**): “A man had a fig tree, planted in his vineyard, and he went to look for fruit (‘in keeping with repentance,’ according to Matthew 3:8) on it, but did

not find any. So he said to the man who took care of the vineyard, 'For three years now (the length of Jesus' ministry) I've been coming to look for fruit on this fig tree and haven't found any. Cut it down! Why should it use up the soil?' 'Sir,' the man replied, 'leave it alone for one more year, and I'll dig around it and fertilize it. If it bears fruit next year, fine! If not, then cut it down'."

A. In John 15:1-8 Jesus said: "Neither can you bear fruit unless you remain in Me. I am the vine; you are the branches. If a man remains in Me and I in him, he will bear much fruit; apart from Me you can do nothing. If anyone does not remain in Me (**you have a choice to actually change or repent --- or not!**), he is like a branch that is thrown away and withers; such branches are picked up, thrown into the fire and burned."

B. Remember Jesus' warning in Matthew 7:15-27:

*"Watch out for false prophets. They come to you in sheep's clothing, but inwardly they are ferocious wolves. **By their fruit you will recognize them.** Do people pick grapes from thorn bushes, or figs from thistles? Likewise every good tree bears good fruit, but a bad tree bears bad fruit. A good tree cannot bear bad fruit, and a bad tree cannot bear good fruit. Every tree that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire. Thus, by their fruit you will recognize them.*

Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven, but only he who does the will of My Father who is in Heaven. Many will say to Me on that Day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your Name, and in Your Name drive out demons and perform many miracles?' Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoers!'

*Therefore, everyone who hears these words of Mine and puts them into practice is like a wise man who built His house on the Rock. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house; yet it did not fall, because it had its foundation on the Rock. **But everyone who hears these words of Mine and does not put them into practice is like a foolish man who built his house on sand. The rain came down, the streams rose, and the winds blew and beat against that house, and it fell with a great crash!"***

C. Just saying you're a good fig tree (Christian) isn't going to get you into Heaven. You must produce the kind of fruit that comes from a good fig tree (genuine faithful Christian). **If you aren't putting His Words** (New Testament) **into practice** (actually repenting, and changing your life); He will also tell you at the Judgment Day: **"I never knew you. Away from Me, you evildoer!"**

D. Romans 11:17-22 warns Christians: "If some of *the branches (Jews)* have been broken off, and *you (Gentiles)*, though a wild olive shoot, have been grafted in among the others and now share in the nourishing sap

from the olive root, do not boast over those branches. If you do, consider this: You do not support the root, but the root supports you. You will say then, 'Branches were broken off so that I could be grafted in.' Granted. But they were broken off because of unbelief, and you stand by faith. Do not be arrogant, but be afraid. For if God did not spare the natural branches (Jews), He will not spare you (Gentiles) either.

Consider therefore the kindness and sternness of God: sternness to those who fell, but kindness (grace) to you, provided that you continue in His kindness. Otherwise, you also will be cut off!

SEE MY STUDY ON “YES, YOU CAN FALL FROM GRACE!”

3- In Matthew 21:28-32 Jesus explains the importance of true REPENTANCE:

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’

*‘I will not,’ he answered, but later, he changed his mind (**metamelomai, repented**) and went.*

Then the father went to the second son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will sir,’ but he did not go.

Which of the two did what his father wanted?

‘The first,’ they answered.

*Jesus said to them, ‘I tell you the truth, **the tax collectors and the prostitutes** (those not allowed to worship in the synagogue or Church) **are entering the Kingdom of God ahead of you** (chief priests, Pharisees, and elders of the people). For John (the Baptist) came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, **but the tax collectors and prostitutes did**. And even after you saw this, you did not **repent (metamelomai)** and believe him.’”*

A. Why were the tax collectors and prostitutes getting to Heaven before the righteous church leaders? Because they confessed their sins and **REPENTED --- they actually stopped doing what was sin before the Lord, and changed their lives to live in the way God wanted them to live!**

(1) Luke 19:1-10 (Zacchaeus repented as a tax collector, and gave half of what he had to the poor, and four times the amount he cheated anyone)

(2) Matthew 9:9-13 (Matthew repented as a tax collector, and became the author of the Gospel of Matthew)

(3) Luke 7:36-50 (The prostitute who wet Jesus’ feet with her tears, and then wiped them off with her hair, kissed them, and poured perfume on them)

(4) **John 8:1-11** (The **woman** caught in the act of adultery that the religious leaders wanted to stone to death, left Jesus to sin no more)

(5) **John 4:1-42** (The **Samaritan woman** at the well, who was divorced 5 times, and currently living with a man outside of marriage; won many people to the Lord after she was forgiven.

- B. Jesus summed it all up in Luke 18:9-14:** *“To some who were confident of their own righteousness and looked down on everybody else, Jesus told this parable: ‘Two men went up to the Temple to pray, one a **Pharisee** (church leader), and the other a **tax collector** (banned from the Church). The Pharisee stood up and prayed about himself: ‘God, I thank you that I am not like all other men --- robbers, evil doers, adulterers --- or even like this tax collector. I fast twice a week and give a tenth of all my income.’*
But the tax collector stood at a distance. He would not even look up to Heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a sinner.’
*I tell you that this man, rather than the other (Pharisee), went home justified before God. **For everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.**”*

4- After Jesus’ death, burial and resurrection, Acts 2:38 tells us that on the Day of Pentecost, the Holy Spirit spoke through Peter, who commanded the first 3,000 Christians to **“REPENT (*metanoeo*) and be baptized, everyone of you, in the name of Jesus Christ, so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”**

A. The difference between John’s baptism and Jesus’ baptism, was **“the gift of the Holy Spirit.”** As Paul explained to some of John’s disciples in **Acts 19:2-5:** *“Did you receive the **Holy Spirit** when you believed?’ They answered , ‘No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.’ So Paul asked , ‘Then **what baptism did you receive?’ ‘John’s baptism,’ they replied. Paul said, ‘John’s baptism was a baptism of repentance. He told the people to believe in the One coming after him, that is, in Jesus.’ On hearing this, they were baptized into the Name of the Lord Jesus.”** WHY? To **“receive the Holy Spirit!”***

B. But, notice, both John and Jesus baptized for REPENTANCE.

C. However, since the first 3,000 Christians were **all Jews**, some argue that **only the Jews** had to **“repent and be baptized,”** because this command was first given by both John and Jesus only to the Jews. But Jesus made it clear before He went back into Heaven, in **Matthew 28:19,20:** **“Go and make disciples of ALL NATIONS (NOT JUST THE JEWS), BAPTIZING THEM...AND TEACHING THEM EVERYTHING I HAVE**

COMMANDED YOU (WHICH WOULD INCLUDE REPENTANCE AND BAPTISM)..."

- D.** In *Acts 20:21*, Paul tells us: *"I have declared to both Jews and Greeks (Gentiles or non-Jews) that they must turn to God in REPENTANCE (metanoeo) and have faith in our Lord Jesus."*
- 5- Romans 2:4-6 warns Christians:** *"Or do you show contempt for the riches of His kindness (grace), tolerance and patience, not realizing that God's kindness (grace) should lead you to REPENTANCE (metanoeo).
But because of your stubbornness and your UNREPENTANT heart, you are storing up wrath against yourself for the day of God's wrath, when His righteous judgment will be revealed. God will give to each person according to what he has DONE (erga, WORKS)."*
- A.** In *Acts 26:20*, Paul went on to say: *"I preached that they (Gentiles) should REPENT (metanoeo) and turn to God and prove their REPENTANCE by their DEEDS (ERGA, OR WORKS)."*
- B.** *Revelation 20:12-15* warns us, that on the Judgment Day, *"each person was judged according to what they had DONE (ERGA, WORKS)."*
- C.** GOD EXPECTS US TO REPENT, AND PROVE OUR REPENTANCE BY THE LIFE WE LIVE HERE ON EARTH. **Remember what Jesus said in Matthew 21:28-32 (point #3, above)?** It's not the one's who say they repented and will live the Christian life; it's the one's who actually do repent, and really obey Christ and live the Christian life who will get to Heaven!
- D.** *Hebrews 10:26,27* warns Christians: *"If we deliberately keep on sinning after we have received the knowledge of the Truth (unrepentant, like the son in Jesus' parable, who said he would obey his father, but never did), no sacrifice for sins is left, but only a fearful expectation of judgment and of raging fire that will consume the enemies of God."*
- E.** *I John 1:6-7* adds: *"If we claim to have fellowship with Him, yet we walk in the darkness (never repented or changed your life of sin), we lie and do not put the Truth into practice. But if we walk in the Light, as He is in the Light (truly repent and prove it by doing what Christ commands), we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, His Son, purifies us from every sin (but not until we actually REPENT and come out of the darkness of our sinful life; and CHANGE, coming back to the Light and living by His commands)."*
- (1) I John 2:3,4:** *"We can be sure we know Him (as Christians) if we obey His commands. The man who says, 'I know Him (I'm a*

Christian),’ *but does not do what He commands is a liar, and the Truth is not in him.*”

F. So, Paul warns Christians again in Galatians 5:7-21: “*You were running a good race (living a good Christian life-style). Who cut in on you and kept you from obeying the Truth? (OR, TALKED YOU INTO GOING BACK TO YOUR PREVIOUS LIFE-STYLE)... (13) You, my brothers, were called to be free. But do not use your freedom to indulge your sinful nature...(16) So I say, live by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of your sinful nature...(19) The acts of the sinful nature are obvious: sexual immorality, impurity, debauchery, idolatry, witchcraft, hatred, discord, jealousy, fits of rage, selfish ambition, dissensions, factions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and the like. I warn you, as I did before, that those who live like this (who do not REPENT and change their sinful life-style) will not inherit the Kingdom of God!*”

(1) II Peter 2:20-22: “*If they have escaped the corruption of the world by knowing our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ (REPENTED), and are again entangled in it (GO BACK TO THEIR PREVIOUS LIFE-STYLE), and are overcome (NEVER COMING BACK TO CHRISTIANITY), they are worse off at the end than they were at the beginning. It would have been better for them not to have known the way of righteousness, than to have known it and then to turn their backs on the Sacred Commandment that was passed on to them. Of them the proverbs are true: ‘A dog returns to its vomit,’ and ‘A sow that is washed goes back to her wallowing in the mud’.*”

G. SEE MY STUDY ON “THE BIBLE DOES NOT SAY ‘FAITH ONLY’”

6- When Paul wrote his first letter to the Christians in Corinth, he commanded them to expel a wicked man from their Church, who refused to REPENT of his sexual immorality (Chapter 5).

A. After he told them to “*expel the wicked man from your number,*” in *I Corinthians 5:13*; he warned these Corinthian Christians in *I Corinthians 6:9-11*: “*Don’t you know that the wicked will not inherit the Kingdom of God? Do not be deceived: Neither the sexually immoral or idolaters nor adulterers nor male prostitutes nor homosexual offenders nor thieves nor the greedy nor drunkards nor slanderers nor swindlers will inherit the Kingdom of God. And that is what some of you were (before they repented and promised to come out of the darkness of their sinful lives, into the Light of a Christian life). But you were washed (baptized), you were sanctified (forgiven and made to be a temple of the*

Holy Spirit according to *I Corinthians 3:16,17*); you were justified in the Name of the Lord Jesus Christ and by the Spirit of our God.”

B. After Paul wrote the letter and they expelled the man from the Church, he wrote them *II Corinthians 2:4-11*: “For I wrote you (in *I Corinthians 5*) out of great distress and anguish of heart and with many tears, not to grieve you, but to let you know the depth of my love for you. If anyone has caused grief, he has not so much grieved me as he has grieved all of you, to some extent --- not to put it too severely. **The punishment inflicted on him by the majority (when they expelled him for his refusal to REPENT of the sin in *I Corinthians 5*) is sufficient for him. Now, instead, you ought to forgive and comfort him (he REPENTED of the sin and stopped having sex with his father’s wife), so that he will not be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. I urge you, therefore, to reaffirm your love for him. The reason I wrote you (*I Corinthians 5 and 6:9-11*) was to see if you would stand the test and be obedient in everything. If you forgive anyone, I also forgive him. And what I have forgiven --- if there was anything to forgive --- I have forgiven in the sight of Christ for your sake, **in order that Satan might not outwit us. For we are not unaware of his schemes.**”**

(1) Satan can use this as an opportunity to make Christians feel they can simply get rid of those who sin against them (VENGENCE), and make us think we don’t have to forgive them when they REPENT and want to come back.

(2) SEE MY STUDY ON “**ANGER IS NOT ALWAYS A SIN & WE DON’T HAVE TO FORGIVE EVERYBODY**”

7- After all the Apostles were dead (except John), Jesus gave John “*The Revelation of Jesus Christ*” (*Revelation 1:1*). In this vision, Jesus expressed His concerns for all the Churches, and warned them to REPENT, or they would not be allowed into Heaven!

A. To the Church in Ephesus (that Paul started) Christ said in *Revelation 2:4-5*: “Yet I hold this against you: You have forsaken your first love. Remember the height from which you have **FALLEN! **REPENT (metanoeo)**, and do the things (**ERGA, WORKS**) you did at first. **If you do not REPENT (metanoeo), I will come to you and remove your lampstand from its place** (the whole Church was in danger of not going to Heaven...unless they REPENTED!)”**

B. To the Church in Pergamum, Christ said in *Revelation 2:14-16*: “Nevertheless, I have a few things against you: You have people there who hold to the teachings of Balaam (*II Peter 2:14-22 and Numbers*

31:15-), who taught Balak to entice the Israelites to sin by eating food sacrificed to idols and by committing sexual immorality. And you have others who hold to the teaching of the Nicolaitans (Acts 15:19,20, I Corinthians 6:9, and chapter 8). REPENT (metanoeo) therefore! Otherwise, I will soon come to you and will fight against them with the Sword of My mouth” (Ephesians 6:17).

C. To the Church in Sardis, Christ said, in Revelation 3:2,3: “Wake up! Strengthen what remains and is about to die (**remember II Corinthians 7:10 and Hebrews 10:26,27**), for I have not found your **DEEDS (ERGA, WORKS)** complete in the sight of My God. Remember, therefore, what you have received and heard; **OBEY** it, and **REPENT (metanoeo)**! But if you do not wake up (AND REPENT), I will come like a thief, and you will not know at what time I will come to you.”

D. And then Christ warned the Church in Laodicea in Revelation 3:15-19: “I know your **DEEDS (ERGA, WORKS)**, that you are neither cold nor hot (played both sides of the street --- the world’s rules and Christ’s rules). I wish you were either one or the other. So, because you are **lukewarm** (neither totally worldly, nor totally Christian) - -- neither hot nor cold --- **I am about to spit you out of My mouth...(19)** Those whom I love I **rebuke and discipline** (Hebrews 12:5-13). **SO, BE EARNEST, AND REPENT (metanoeo)!**”

SEE MY STUDY ON “WHY DO CHRISTIANS SUFFER?”