

Hebrews 6.1-3

Of Repentance

There is a simple declaration of the whole of the Christian belief here in this statement. But it also includes a reference back to the Judaic system from which the writer of Hebrews is laboring to induce the Jewish Christians to step out. It has been said that there were Christians on the earth long before there were Jews. The doctrines of Christ, though not in full flower of revelation, have been taught by those who love God from the Garden. It is these who are the descent of the promise, these people who have been called out by God, made alive to His glory and have known something of the truth that is finally revealed in Christ...

1 Peter 1:10–12 (NKJV)

¹⁰ Of this salvation the prophets have inquired and searched carefully, who prophesied of the grace *that would come* to you, ¹¹ searching what, or what manner of time, the Spirit of Christ who was in them was indicating when He testified beforehand the sufferings of Christ and the glories that would follow. ¹² To them

it was revealed that, not to themselves, but to us they were ministering the things which now have been reported to you through those who have preached the gospel to you by the Holy Spirit sent from heaven—things which angels desire to look into.

This statement is so profoundly sweeping that we often pass by its implications. But Peter is saying that the prophets who came before knew in some fashion the same Jesus we know as Savior. That God is doing the same work now that He has always been doing, and that no matter how different we think the New Testament is from the Old, it is all the same water flowing from the same fountain of grace that finds its source in the heart of God! God has been saving His people since the foundation of eternity. But the prophets Peter spoke of and the foundation that the writer of Hebrews alludes to all assume progression beyond the elementary. The prophets "inquired and searched carefully", they ministered Christ in the shadow so that we who have been given His life in the Light might understand these things. So that we might partake more fully of the light that has been given, so that we might walk in that light and not turn back to

wander in the land of night... the writer is laboring to urge the Jewish believers that they dare not return to the shadow, when they have been given the substance. He is pressing the fact that they have seen the truth, that they have understood the revelation of God, that they have been granted not only that which came before but have been ushered into the realm of all that has been the promise and the focus of millennia.

As they stood at the brink of the abyss, so too do we. For we live in a land a time where many who know much of God have willingly turned away from the basic truth of Christ and have obscured the plain and beautiful truth with the subterfuge of man's wisdom. With religious pretense and with a return to the dead works of sin and self... rejecting the light they run back into the darkness. These first 8 verses are a warning that we dare not speed over. They are also a passage that confuses many... therefore we must carefully consider just what this sure foundation IS, so that we may build upon it rather than building anew on some lesser ground. This whole discussion begins at the point of repentance from dead works...

I. REPENTANCE FROM DEAD WORKS

a. Dead in old man –

Ephesians 2:1 (NKJV)

1 And you He made alive, who were dead in trespasses and sins,

Ephesians 2:5 (NKJV)

5 even when we were dead in trespasses, made us alive together with Christ (by grace you have been saved),

Colossians 2:13 (NKJV)

13 And you, being dead in your trespasses and the uncircumcision of your flesh, He has made alive together with Him, having forgiven you all trespasses,

b. Old sins –

2 Peter 1:9 (NKJV)

9 For he who lacks these things is shortsighted, even to blindness, and has forgotten that he was cleansed from his old sins.

1 Peter 4:3 (NKJV)

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries.

- c. Sins proceed from the old man, from the nature of sin that rules.
- d. Which itself proceeds from the desires of that Nature

James 1:14–15 (NKJV)

14 But each one is tempted when he is drawn away by his own desires and enticed. 15 Then, when desire has conceived, it gives birth to sin; and sin, when it is full-grown, brings forth death.

- e. And they lead to death.
 - i. Its fruit
 - ii. Its rightful wage

Romans 3.23

iii. Its final judgement

Romans 1:32 (NKJV)

32 who, knowing the righteous judgment of God, that those who practice such things are deserving of death, not only do the same but also approve of those who practice them.

2Corinthians 5.9-11

iv. Its eternal home –

Revelation 21:8 (NKJV) ⁸ But the cowardly, unbelieving, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.”

f. The old ways of religion and ceremony did nothing to remove these things - this is what Peter alludes to in

1 Peter 4:3 (NKJV)

3 For we have spent enough of our past lifetime in doing the will of the Gentiles—when we walked in lewdness, lusts, drunkenness, revelries, drinking parties, and abominable idolatries. Returning to the dead, ineffective ways is an apostasy and a dog returning to its own vomit.

1Peter 1.18-21

g.It traps us by lust -

2Peter 5.18-22

II. REPENTANCE AND BELIEF

a.This call is the heart of the gospel.

Matthew 4:17 (NKJV)

17 From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.”

Mark 1.15

Acts 17:30 (NKJV)

30 Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,

- b. God chose to give repentance unto Israel by giving them Christ

Acts 11.18

Acts 5.31

III. Repentance Is

a. Gift from God

- i. It is God's good pleasure to give it –
- ii. It is the gift of life itself –

Acts 11:18 (NKJV)

18 When they heard these things they became silent; and they glorified God, saying, “Then God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.”

- iii. It is the gift of God through Christ, who actually bestows it –

Acts 5:31 (NKJV)

31 Him God has exalted to His right hand to be Prince and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

- b. Its nature

- i. A change in the mind and judgment

1. Used to call good evil and evil good
2. Judge that there is no sin in what we do
3. Refuse the voice of conscience
4. Refuse the testimony of evidence

ii. A change of the will and affections

1. We go from being dead IN sin to being dead TO sin.

Romans 6:11 (NKJV)

11 Likewise you also, reckon yourselves to be dead indeed to sin, but alive to God in Christ Jesus our Lord.

2. It no longer has any appeal for us
3. When we fall, rather than being pleased and satisfied, we are sorrowful and crushed by our actions

iii. A change of life and direction

1. We set ourselves to leave the old dead works behind.
2. We do not provide a place for sin
3. We do not dwell on it, live for it, fondly remember it

4. This simple thing is the ONE thing that best assures of true conversion...

Jeremiah 3:10 (NKJV)

10 And yet for all this her treacherous sister Judah has not turned to Me with her whole heart, but in pretense," says the LORD.

5. A full purpose of heart and mind for the leaving of every sin
6. Constant work to fulfill this purpose
7. Actually abandoning sin

c. It is NOT

- i. Total sinlessness - no one will ever be this side of heaven
- ii. Not complete deliverance from even great sins, anyone may be taken unawares

d. It IS

- i. to be on our guard and diligent
- ii. To be aware and tender
- iii. To be always seeking to walk closer to God than further. The question should NEVER be "how close to God do I have to walk to be saved? But rather how close to God does my salvation allow me to walk?
- iv. To remember that Jesus came to deliver men FROM their sin, NOT just its consequence.

IV. REPENTANCE IS GOD'S MERCY BUT OUR RESPONSIBILITY

a. Its Priority

- i. We were enemies of God
- ii. God crushed sin on the cross, He fully atoned for it and paid the price for our rebellion
- iii. But we also hated Him. We must walk in such a way that pulls us closer to Him rather than pushes us further away.
- iv. We must be at peace with God by the mediation of Christ on our behalf, but also at

peace with God in our souls by not loving what He hates!

Romans 6:1–2 (NKJV)

1 What shall we say then? Shall we continue in sin that grace may abound? 2 Certainly not! How shall we who died to sin live any longer in it?

- v. There is no freedom without repentance
- vi. There is no effective gospel without this beginning and constant chorus

b. Its properties

i. Solemn

ii. Universal

- 1. Every sin
- 2. Every time
- 3. Every person
- 4. For all time

iii. Searching

- 1. No secrets
- 2. No hidden things

3. No reserved places

iv. Sweet

v. Christocentric - it is impossible to see Christ crucified for sin and not be humbled FOR that sin.

vi. Ongoing - we will always need to repent

c. Its promise

i. Remember always that God has GIVEN you a spirit of repentance

ii. He has GIVEN you HIS Spirit to dwell inside you

iii. He has done EVERYTHING to make you His own

iv. He will NOT leave you, nor forsake you... the power to restore our relationship unto God NEVER wanes, for it is HIS power. It is HIS promise.

v. Do not see repentance as a bad thing, it is the best of all gifts and something that cleanses our hearts, minds and soul so that we might enjoy the presence of the God who made us for Himself, and Christ who died that we might have life