

Soteriology

Session 6



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Soteriology Overview

- I. Definition
- II. Election
- III. Atonement
- IV. Salvation words
- V. God's one condition of salvation**
- VI. Results of salvation
- VII. Eternal security
- VIII. Faulty views of salvation

Soteriology Overview

This Session

V. God's One Condition of Salvation (Continued)



V. God's One Condition of Salvation

- A. Misconceptions – multiple steps, poor word choices
- B. Around 200 passages teach that justification is conditioned on faith alone
- C. Why God has conditioned salvation on faith alone
- D. What saving faith is – trust
- E. What saving faith is not – Jas 2:19
- F. Content of saving faith – John 8:24; 20:30-31; 1 Cor 15:1-4
- G. An evangelistic model
- H. Response to problem passages

Soteriology Overview

Next Session

V. God's One Condition of Salvation (Response to Problem Passages)



V. God's One Condition of Salvation

- A. Misconceptions – multiple steps, poor word choices
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- C. Why God has conditioned salvation on faith alone
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- E. What saving faith is not – Jas 2:19
- F. Content of saving faith – John 8:24; 20:30-31; 1 Cor 15:1-4
- G. An evangelistic model
- H. Response to problem passages: harmonization?**

Response to Problem Passages

- Repent (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Pet 3:9)? Change of mind
- Lordship (Matt 16:24-25)? Discipleship vs. justification
- Receive/Accept Christ? – Synonym of faith (John 1:12)
- Believe and work (Eph 2:8-10; Jas 2:14-26)?
Sanctification
- Believe and be baptized (Mark 16:15-16; John 3:5; Acts 2:38; Col 2:11-12; 1 Pet 3:21)? Context

Response to Problem Passages

- Confession of Christ before man (Rom 10:9-10; Matt 10:32-33)? Context
- Ask Jesus into your heart (Rev 3:20)? Context
- Confess your sins (Matt 6:12; 1 John 1:9)? Context
- Forgive others (Matt 6:14-15)? Father (6:9) vs. judge
- Sell your possessions (Matt 19:21-22)? Unique situation
- Prayer and saving faith? Faith expressed by the prayer saves and not merely the prayer

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Repentance

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2. *Meta* = change (exs: metabolism, metamorphosis, metastasize)
3. *Noeō* = notion = mind
4. “Change of mind”
5. Change mind about whatever is preventing someone from trusting in Christ alone
6. Synonym for faith (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30; 2 Pet 3:9)

B. What repentance does NOT mean

1. Feeling sorry or guilty (Heb 12:17; *metamelomai*)
2. Turning from sin (John 4:10, 17-19)

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Dr. Jim McGowan – Dispensationalism and the Nature of the Church:
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The key question that must be addressed is; ***Is the word repentance (to repent) correctly defined as – “a turning from sin?”*** A brief look at two of the most authoritative Greek Resources indicate that indeed, this is **NOT** the case!

A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature (BAGD) indicates that the Greek word “μετανοέω” is used to translate the English verb “repent” and means “to change the mind.” (see BAGD, s.v. “μετανοέω,” 513.). ***Moreover, this is a compound verb made up of the preposition μετα, “after”, (BAGD pg. 636) and the verb, νοέω, “to grasp or comprehend something on the basis of careful thought, to perceive, think” (BAGD pg. 674). Thus, “to perceive afterwards,” or “to change the mind.”***



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Additionally, the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament* states:

In pre-biblical and extra-biblical usage μετανοέω and μετάνοια are **not** firmly related to any specific concepts. At the first stage they bear the intellectual sense of "*subsequent knowledge.*" With further development both verb and noun then come to mean "*change of mind.*"

...The change of opinion or decision, the alteration in mood or feeling, which finds expression in the terms, **is not in any sense ethical.** It may be for the bad as well as for the good...



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For the Greeks μετάνοια **never** suggests an alteration in the total moral attitude, a profound change in life's direction, **a conversion which affects the whole conduct... (bold mine)**

Johannes Behm and E. Würthwein,
“μετανοέω, μετάνοια” in *TDNT*, 4 (1967): 979.

That the Greek word “μετανοέω” means “to change the mind” is the consistent judgment of all lexicographers!

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[A] serious Arminian error respecting this doctrine occurs when repentance is added to faith or believing as a condition of salvation. It is true that repentance can very well be required as a condition of salvation, but then only because the change of mind which...has been involved when turning from every other confidence to the *one needful trust* in Christ. Such turning about, of course, cannot be achieved without a change of mind.



This vital newness of mind is a part of believing, after all, and therefore it may be and is used as a **synonym** for believing at times (cf. Acts 17:30; 20:21; 26:20; Rom. 2:4; 2Tim. 2:25; 2 Pet. 3:9). Repentance nevertheless cannot be added to believing as a condition of salvation, because upwards of 150 passages of Scripture condition salvation upon believing only (cf. John 3:16; Acts 16:31).



Similarly, the Gospel by John, which was written that men might believe and believing have life through Christ's name (John 20:31), does not once use the word repentance. In like manner, the Epistle to the Romans, written to formulate the complete statement of salvation by grace alone, does not use the term repentance in relation to salvation.



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In contrast to the teachings of Lordship Theology that “repentance and belief” are separate acts, it must be recognized that when the words “***believe and repent***” are found together, they are ***never*** used in a manner that would suggest two separate requirements for salvation. ***On the contrary***, when salvation from eternal condemnation is in view, repent (*a change of mind*) and believe are in essence used as ***synonyms***.



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Chafer again notes:

“... it is as dogmatically stated as language can declare, that repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, **but it is included in believing and cannot be separated from it.**” (bold mine); Lewis Sperry Chafer, *Vital Theological Issues*, Roy B. Zuck, General Editor, Kregel, Grand Rapids, 1994, p. 119).

A few examples where repentance is equivalent to belief in the person and work of Christ, include:

- Luke 5:32 - Jesus declares, “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” Here repentance is evidently a synonym for faith (or salvation through faith). The whole tenor of Jesus' ministry was to call men to faith in the gospel, thus He says, “Repent and believe in the gospel” (Mark 1:15).



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Examples continued:

- Acts 11:18 - the apostles declare, “God has also granted to the Gentiles repentance to life.” It is clear from the context that “repentance to life” refers to the Gentiles' faith in Christ (10:43; 11:17).
- Consider also: Acts 10:43 with 11:17-18; 13:38-39 with 2:38 also note 16:31 which uses “believe” alone.
- 2 Peter 3:9 – “The Lord...is not willing that any should perish but that all should come to repentance.” Here one clearly sees the convergence of repentance and faith. Men will perish unless they come to faith in Christ, but men will not come to faith in Christ unless there is a change of attitude (mind) about Him and His promises.

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Hebrews 12:17 (NASB)

“For you know that even afterwards, when he desired to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance [*metanoia*], though he sought for it with tears.”



Matthew 27:3 (NASB)

“Then when Judas, who had betrayed Him, saw that He had been condemned, he felt remorse [*metamelomai*] and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and elders.”



John 6:64, 71 (NASB)

“But there are some of you who do not believe.” For Jesus knew from the beginning who they were who did not believe, and who it was that would betray Him...Now He meant Judas the son of Simon Iscariot, for he, one of the twelve, was going to betray Him.”





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The first example of the apostolic preaching of repentance is Peter's sermon recorded in Acts 2:38. There he responds to the crowd's question of "What shall we do?" (v. 37) with the words, "Repent, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Notice that the text (v. 37) describes the emotional state of the people: they were "cut to the heart" (*katanyssomai*). This word connotes a "sharp pain connected with anxiety, remorse." This is a description of their deepest, innermost feelings.



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Peter's admonition to repent therefore must certainly address another kind of response ***besides*** emotional grief. Clearly, the people were compelled by feelings of remorse to seek an avenue of change and it was for this reason that Peter says repent, or in other words, ***change your mind and attitude about Jesus Christ!***

But how were these devout Jewish men brought to this point?
This is THE crucial question!



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There are clues *in the context* about the focus of their repentance.

First of all, Peter addresses the specific sin of Israel’s crucifixion of the Lord Jesus (v. 36). In context then, verse 37 reveals that the source of their remorse was the mistake of crucifying the Messiah. Now they must repent, or change their minds about who He is and change their disposition toward Him.



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Dr. Charles H. Talbert comments,

The condemnation of Christ had been done in ignorance (Acts 3:17; 13:27), but in raising Jesus, God showed the Jews they had made a mistake: they had crucified the Christ (Acts 2:36). Now, however, the Jews are given a chance to change their minds, to repent (2:38; 3:19; 5:31).

Charles Talbert, Reading Luke: A Literary and Theological Commentary on the Third Gospel
(New York: Crossroad Books, 1982)



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Dwight Pentecost agrees and writes:

They had already come to regret their sin, now Peter urges them on to a change of mind about Christ. ***Of course, repentance to the exclusively Jewish addressees (cf. vv. 14, 22, 36) had special significance*** in that they had to change their attitude about their own righteousness in contrast to God's provided in the Messiah.

Pentecost, *Sound Doctrine*, 67-68.



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Notice that the progression in Acts 2:37-38 is expressed by 2 Corinthians 7:10, “For godly sorrow produces repentance to salvation.” From their sorrow the Jews were led to the point of repentance, and being repentant they believe in Christ (v. 44). Their remorse over the sin of crucifying Christ moved them toward a true repentance which focused on their thinking about Christ.

Simply put, Peter challenged these heart broken Jews to change their minds and attitudes (repent) about Messiah, a change that if real, would then lead to their outward identification with Christ through baptism, the natural result of their new spiritual birth.

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Some examples:

In *The Gospel According to Jesus*, John MacArthur Jr. initially argues for the basic meaning of “*change of mind*” then later says, “***but biblically its meaning does not stop there.***”

John MacArthur, Jr.

The Gospel According to Jesus, 162.

Echoing this sentiment, Marc Mueller declares, “***Repentance is far more than a ‘change of mind’ about who Christ is.***”

Marc Mueller

“*Lordship Salvation Syllabus*,” 21.

Grace Community Church, 1981, 1985.



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This is a basic tenet for both Reformed Theologians and Lordship advocates. ***According to this view***, one is saved by repenting which ***always*** means ***a turning from sin***.

Some illustrative quotes from the Lordship camp:

“The necessary element in salvatory repentance is a true recognition of one's evil state and ***a decided resolve to forsake sin*** and thrust oneself at Christ's mercy” (emphasis mine).

Ken Gentry, "*The Great Option*,"
Baptist Reformation Review 5:60.



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Some illustrative quotes from the Lordship camp: (cont'd)

“Repentance is related to the issue of sin, which also includes unbelief in Christ” (emphasis his).

Marc Mueller,
“The Lordship Syllabus,” 21.

“The primary New Testament word, *μετανοέω*, ‘always speaks of a change of purpose, and specifically a turning from sin’”
(emphasis his).

John MacArthur Jr.
The Gospel According to Jesus, 178.



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Some illustrative quotes from the Lordship camp: (cont'd)

“Repentance is a supernatural and inward revelation from God, giving a deep consciousness of what I am in His sight, which causes me to loathe and condemn myself, resulting in a bitter sorrow for sin, a holy horror and hatred for sin, and **a turning away from or forsaking of sin.**” (emphasis mine).

A. W. Pink, *The Doctrine of Salvation*
(Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1975), 58.

As stated, these definitions make turning away from sin an essential and necessary component of repentance and ultimately of salvation.



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But Richard C. Trench deals a fatal blow to this idea of a “**greater meaning**” demonstrating that these added concepts have been **forced upon the text**. He states:

“It is only after μετάνοια has been taken up into the uses of Scripture...that it comes predominantly to mean a change of mind, (with the added idea of) taking a wiser view of the past, ...a regret for the ill done in the past, and out of all this a change of life for the better; ...

This is all imported into, does not etymologically nor yet by primary usage lie in, the word” (bold mine)

Richard C. Trench,
Synonyms of the New Testament, pg. 242



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Did you get that?

*This so-called “greater meaning”
for **μετανοέω** came into the picture
only after certain theologians
“**added to**” its legitimate, received
definition!*



Charles Ryrie



“John 4:10 – New life through the Spirit...Salvation is a gift from Jesus Christ, the Son of God and Messiah. Notice that Christ asked the woman to receive Him and His gift without any prerequisite change in her life. After she believed, and because she believed, her way of living would be changed.”



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Conclusion:

Is repentance a condition for receiving eternal life?

Yes, if it is repentance or changing one's mind about Jesus Christ.

No, if it means to be sorry for sin or even to resolve to turn from sin, for these things *will not save*.



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Conclusion (cont'd):

Is repentance a precondition to faith?

No, though a sense of sin and the desire to turn from it may be used by the Spirit to direct someone to the Savior and His salvation.

Repentance may prepare the way for faith, but it is faith that saves, not repentance (unless repentance is understood as a synonym for faith or changing one's mind about Christ)

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