

## Scriptures and Doctrine :: Understanding Repentence

### Understanding Repentence - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/13 2:12

I am pretty sure this topic has been discussed at length before but I don't think I've ever taken part. I was hoping some would be willing to discuss it afresh.

My current understanding of repentence is that it basically means "to change the way you think." *Fruit* of repentence (such as remorse, crying, reconciliation, etc.) is something different. Those things might happen, but that's not what repentence is. Those things are evidence of repentence.

So if I was talking to someone who didn't know "Chrisianeze", instead of saying, "You need to repent" I could just say "You need to change the way you think." Right?

### Re: Understanding Repentence - posted by letsgetbusy (), on: 2005/7/13 2:18

todd,

The best take I've heard is Greg Locke on this site, "A change of mind that results in a change of actions." There is much more that many on this site could add to this in a spiritual explanation (do you think that's true or not, brothers), but that is the best layman's term I've heard.

Even more simply, "turn." From sin, toward Christ.

### Re: Understanding Repentence, on: 2005/7/13 2:19

No, cause i thought Repentence is talked about in Hebrew as Turning TOWARD GOD. And in the Greek Turning AWAY FROM SIN. Nothing about 'thinking', ive never heard that (also, i could be wrong..because i never looked those translations of 'repent').

I normally(in the past, before Ray Comfort) tell people, or ask them 'have you ever done anything wrong before, well if you love God you should turn away from all those wrongful things. Do you think a marriage should be all in adultery or a 1 on 1 commentment?' Of course, those questions would have pausing in between.

### Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/13 2:34

lgb,

Is there any Scriptural back-up for including "a change of action" in the understanding of repentence? I think it's really important to distinguish what repentence actually means and what might happen as a result of it.

I understand why people would want to tag on "resulting in a change of actions", because that will probabaly, perhaps definitely, happen if they truly change their mind about something. But I want to be real clear, the word itself does not speak about actions, right?

Yesh,

Maybe you're thinking of Hebrews 6:1 which speaks of, "a foundation of repentence from dead works and faith toward God." But I just understand this as changing the way you think concerning this area of dead works and faith. Now, instead of thinking that works will save you, understand that it is faith toward God that you need. This is foundational change in thinking that must take place.

It's like if I was preaching I could say, "Your dead works can't save you, faith towards God can! Change the way you think!

**Re: Understanding Repentance - posted by Nasher (), on: 2005/7/13 2:36**

Repentance is more than just changing the way you think.

It is turning from Satan and turning to God.

In Philologos' sermon on Repentance (<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid=2161>) he gives a very simple "military" definition:

Halt!  
About Face!  
Quick March!

**Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/13 4:03**

Nasher,

What I think is important is to distinguish between the *subject* of repentance and simply the word itself.

I can definately understand including the action aspect of it in a discussion on the subject of repentance. But I am unsure if it has a place if we are just looking at the word itself.

I don't think I've listened to Philo's sermon, perhaps I will do that soon.

I like the "Halt! About face!" if we're referring to what takes place in the mind (changing the way you think), but it's the "Quick march!" that I question when only discussing the word itself.

I am curious if Philo was referring to only what the word "repentance" means or if he was referring to the subject of repentance. The man himself will likely be able to clear that up for us shortly.

This may seem like an insignificant subtlety, but it makes a big difference, at least as I have come to understand it.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/7/13 6:35**

hi todd

(<https://www.sermonindex.net/modules/mydownloads/visit.php?lid2161>) Repentance (Rora 2003)

Description: Having begun in the Spirit. Part 1 of 4; Repentance, a change of direction. Delivered at a conference in Devon UK. "Session 1" examines the nature of genuine repentance by demonstrating its essential 'God-consciousness'. It distinguishes between a genuine sorrow which leads to genuine repentance, and 'the world's sorrow' which leads to death.

Let me know what you think?

**Re:, on: 2005/7/13 11:37**

Quote:

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todd wrote:

Yesh,

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It's like if I was preaching I could say, "Your dead works can't save you, faith towards God can! Change the way you think!"

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I think that is doing the scripture injustice. You have taken what Hebrew 6 was talking about. It was talking about 6 foundational things of the faith, because they were still 'milk drinkers' and not 'meat eaters'.

Any works without God is Dead works. It's not 'solo faith'. The bible has NEVER preached that, OT and NT, God has never changed salvation. Faith without works is dead, that's not in the just the book of James, check out the OT.

Oh, I looked up the Hebrew word 'repent' and the Greek word 'repent'.

So far, I've only seen 3 different definitions on the word Repent. 2 in the Hebrew, one in the Greek.

One in the Hebrew means 'to be sorry'.

Another in the Hebrew means 'to turn back' (to God in this case).

Greek means 'to change the way of thinking'.

So, I can see how the preacher I've heard said 'In Hebrew it means to turn to God and in Greek it means to turn away from sin'. So, it is correct.. (talking to my self on this one)

**Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/15 1:38**

Yesh,

You make a very good point about Heb. 6:1. I think it is an excellent insight and that you are right in saying "And works without God is dead works." I didn't mean to come across as denying that faith without works is dead. I wasn't even thinking about that.

But like you said, Hebrews 6 is talking about the foundational things of the faith. And what is more foundational than how we can be made righteous? So I think we are both right here. I just didn't include the truth that you have brought forth. So now I think we have a more complete understanding of it which I am happy about.

Yet this doesn't change the principle as far as repentance. I still understand the verse as referring to changing the way you think concerning works and faith. We have to change the way we think about works. We have to understand that our good works won't make us righteous and can't save us. And we must understand that faith is the way to righteousness.

It's a changing of the way we think, a changing of direction, if you will- *from* a place of thinking we can be made righteous by works apart from God, *towards* a place of thinking that we are made righteous through faith in God.

I admit, the language in this verse is not the clearest to me, but I still see it and think it works well this way.

I did a little more study and I've found 2 Hebrew and 5 Greek words that I think are most relevant to this discussion. Let me expand on these words to facilitate our discussion. For my Word Study on the Hebrew words I am using the lexical aids in my NASB Key Word Study Bible and quoting from it.

The 2 Hebrew words are "Nacham" and "Shuwb."

1. **Nacham** (#5162)

"To draw the breath forcibly, to pant to breathe strongly, to groan; to be sorry, to pity, to grieve; to feel repentance, to repent; to take revenge or vengeance; to have compassion, to console, to comfort... The KJV translates *nacham* as "repent" 38 times. Most of these refer to God's repentance. Usually when man repents, the verb *shuwb* is used... Essentially *nacham* is a change of heart or disposition, a change of mind, a change of purpose, or a change of ones conduct. The Septuagint translates *nacham* by both *metanoeo* (3340) and *metamelomai* (3338)."

2. **Shuwb** (#7725)

"To turn back, to turn (oneself), to turn around, to return, to come back, to turn around (figuratively), to turn to Jehovah (i.e., a spiritual return to the Lord)... to turn to, to turn from, to cease from, to leave off, e.g. from an evil way... to be restored; to restore, to repeat; to cause to return, to lead back, to seduce; to refresh, to be turned aside; to turn away, to turn up on; to draw, to bring, to drive, to lead back; to give back; to answer; to recall, to revoke, to render, to offer; to be brought back, to be given back... The basic meaning of *shuwb* is movement back to the point of departure. A good example of reversal in direction is found in 2 Kings 20:10-11 concerning the sundial... The word is used of simple physical motion about 270 times... A number of places refer to the return from exile."

The 5 Greek words are "Metamellomai", "Metanoeo", "Metanoia", and "Strepho", and "Epistrepho."

1. **Metamellomai** (#3338)

This word literally means "to care after." It's like looking back on the mistake you just made and feeling bad about it. Regret. However, this word translated "change mind" in Hebrews 7:21.

2. **Metanoeo** (#3340)

This word literally means "to know after." My NASB lexical aid describes it: "It signifies a change of mind consequent to the after knowledge indicating regret for the course pursued and resulting in a wiser view of the past and future." I picture a detective who has been on a case for months and feels somewhat confident about his assessment of it but something just doesn't quite add up and it has been driving him crazy. Then all of the sudden he gets a new clue that makes it all clear. I picture him slap his forehead like "duh." He gets it now. He "knows after." The Thayer and Smith Greek Lexicon gives these 2 definitions: (a) to change one's mind, i.e. to repent and (b) to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins.

3. **Metanoia** (#3341)

My NASB lexical aid says, "a change of mind... a change or alteration of mind. Repentance, change of mind from evil to good or from worse to better... cf. baptism of repentance, baptism which identifies one as having repented."

4. **Strepho** (#4762)

To turn, to turn oneself; in a moral sense, to change, alter, adopt another course.

5. **Epistrepho** (#1994)

To turn toward, turn about, return, convert, turn to God and holiness.

Ok, finally finished with that. I'm just going to post this and then later I will try and communicate some of what I've learned from this study so far.

**Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/15 2:46**

Ron,

I didn't get a chance to listen to your message yet but I hope to soon. I want to kind of get my bearings first.

**Re: - posted by philologos (), on: 2005/7/15 4:40**

hii todd

One of the key things about bible study is my often repeated adage that 'bible words do not have definitions they have histories'. This is particularly important with words relating to 'repentance'. Much of the vocabulary of the Greek New Testament has an Old Testament Hebrew mind-set root. The Greek word metanoia, for example, cannot be understood alone by reference to Classical or even contemporary Greek. The LXX had provided a Greek vocabulary for many Hebrew words which means that when we encounter them in the New Testament they already have a hidden history.

An example of this might be 'ekklesia' which is usually translated 'church' in our English versions. 'ekklesia' is a Greek word but it had been used to translate a Hebrew concept. qahal is used in over a hundred verses in the OT

Gen. 28:3; 35:11; 48:4; 49:6; Ex. 12:6; 16:3; Lev. 4:13-14,21; 16:17,33; Num. 10:7; 14:5; 15:15; 16:3,33,47; 19:20; 20:4,6,10,12; 22:4; Deut. 5:22; 9:10; 10:4; 18:16; 23:1-3,8; 31:30; Josh. 8:35; Judg. 20:2; 21:5,8; 1Sam. 17:47; 1Kings 8:14,22,55,65; 12:3; 1Chr. 13:2,4; 28:8; 29:1,10,20; 2Chr. 1:3,5; 6:3,12-13; 7:8; 20:5,14; 23:3; 24:6; 28:14; 29:23,28,31-32; 30:2,4,13,17,23-25; 31:18; Ezra 2:64; 10:1,8,12,14; Neh. 5:13; 7:66; 8:2,17; 13:1; Job 30:28; Psa. 22:22,25; 26:5; 35:18; 40:9-10; 89:5; 107:32; 149:1; Prov. 5:14; 21:16; 26:26; Jer. 26:17; 31:8; 44:15; 50:9; Lam. 1:10; Ezek. 16:40; 17:17; 23:24,46-47; 26:7; 27:27,34; 32:3,22-23; 38:4,7,13,15; Joel 2:16; Mic. 2:5

In over 70 of these instances the LXX translated qahal by the Greek word 'ekklesia'. When Christ said 'I will build my church' the disciples already knew the conceptual meaning of the word. All they had to do was to transpose it into their new setting.

We are probably most familiar with its use in Psalm 22 where it is translated as 'congregation' in the KJV. Psa. 22:22 I will declare thy name unto my brethren: in the midst of the congregation will I praise thee.

Psa. 22:25 My praise shall be of thee in the great congregation: I will pay my vows before them that fear him. We are probably also aware that when Psalm 22 is quoted in the letter to the Hebrews the KJV uses the word 'church' from its und

erlying Greek word 'ekklesia'.

For this reason you are absolutely right to go back into the Hebrew and to pick out the sense of 'grief' that is to be found in the Hebrew concept. The point is that we must then add that to all NT uses of 'metanoia' because, as with all languages, use has redefined the word. Those who say that 'metanoia' only means a 'change of mind' have completely missed this vital ingredient of word study as pertaining to the scriptures. Consequently 'metanoia' in the New Testament must be understood as the Hebrew mind-set would understand it and not restrict itself to the specific word definition as would be found in a Greek lexicon.

**Re: - posted by todd, on: 2005/7/15 10:41**

Philo,

Thanks for that insight. I will give it some thought. But before I leave this morning I want to clarify that I like "change the way you think" much better than "change your mind." I just set up that word study mostly from the lexical aids in my Bible and an online source I use called [www.searchgodsword.com](http://www.searchgodsword.com). I just wanted to get it out there so we can reference it, and it helps me learn to do that kind of thing.

I should also be able to listen to your teaching today so I will hopefully get to do that and share my response later.