

REPENTANCE

“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind.” —ROMANS 12:2

Many people have different views of the meaning of the word ‘repentance’. Some think it’s being extremely sorry for what they have done and promising never to do it again. Others think it’s turning over a new leaf, making a fresh start and vowing to do better. To some extent, repentance may involve something of this, but what it actually means is to change the mind. The word ‘repentance’ comes from the Greek word ‘metanoeo’; meta meaning ‘to change’ and nous meaning ‘the mind’ - ‘to change the mind’.

The key to God’s working in our lives is our thinking, and repentance is a change of thinking. It is not just feeling bad about sin and good about God, but changing our thinking about both. It involves turning from dependence upon ourselves to dependence on God. It’s realizing we cannot save ourselves from sin and acknowledging our need to confess it. The only way sin leaves our body is through our mouths.

Our problem lies in the fact the only reason we commit sin is because we enjoy it, or it presents what seems to be a good way out of a situation. In due course, we may feel quite sorry and sad about it, but every sin we commit is because we wanted to at the time. If we weep over sin and not change our mind, we have not repented. On the other hand, people can change their minds about sin without

shedding a tear, and they have repented. Tears are not a reliable indication of true repentance. We can shed many bitter tears over sin and failure, but not change our minds about it.

A change of mind must lead to a change of behaviour. What we do reveals the truth of what we think, and our sins are the symptoms of an inherent sin nature, which we cannot change. This is why we do not have what it takes to live the Christian life. Hence, our need to turn from any sense of self sufficiency or self dependency, as that will eventually lead to failure.

We are all as near to God as we want to be. We may not be as close as we would like, because we have never met the requirements of confessing our sin and turning from dependence upon ourselves to dependence upon God. True repentance is a genuine response of turning from sin, and changing our thinking to dependence upon God, which then enables Him to get into business in our lives.

PRAYER: Dear Lord, help me to live a godly life and keep me always dependent upon You. Thank You, Lord.

TO REFLECT UPON: Is there sin I have yet to change my mind about?