

# ARMED FOR WAR Discipleship Course

## SECTION 3 – Six Foundational Doctrines of Christ

### Lesson 6 - Repentance

**Hebrews 6:1-2** *Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment.*

Many Christians don't have a significant revelation of these foundational doctrines of Christ. We are going to give you some revelation; loaded down and breaking forth. First, is repentance from dead works. Second, faith towards God. Third, doctrine of baptisms. Fourth, the laying on of hands. Fifth, the resurrection of the dead. Sixth, eternal judgment.

#### What is the first foundational doctrine?

The beginning, the start of it all is the repentance of dead works.

**Matthew 4:17** *And from that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."*

Jesus began His ministry preaching, "Repent for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Jesus' ministry was built on repentance. Paul's ministry was built on repentance. The message of the Gospel is built around repentance.

**Isaiah 55:7** *Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; Let him return unto the Lord, and He will have mercy on him; And to our God, for He will abundantly pardon.*

The word 'wicked' literally means crooked. It means off course. He is saying, "Let the person who is simply just off course, a little off course or majorly off course, let that person forsake his way." And that word 'way' there literally means his course of life. He said let the wicked man, the one who is off course, forsake his present course of life.

Righteousness means to have the quality of the character of God. Unrighteous means that which is not lined up with the character and nature of God.

So let the man...the wicked man...who is off course forsake his way, and the one who's character is not lined up with the character of God...let him forsake his thoughts. Let him forsake his way of thinking.

Why? Because his way of thinking is what is determining his actions. Every action you and I do is a direct result of what we are thinking about. Because a thought meditated on long enough, and given the right opportunity will become an action. An action done over

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and over again begins to form a habit. A habit carried on long enough begins to create a lifestyle. And a lifestyle will always determine your destiny.

So if you want to know where you are going to end up in 10 years, 20 years, 30 years and through all eternity...you want to know where your destiny is...simply look at the direction of your present day thoughts. Because what you are thinking today you are going to act on tomorrow....it will become a habit...and then become a lifestyle...and then your destiny.

**Ezekiel 18:30** *Therefore I will judge you, oh house of Israel, and everyone according to his ways, says the Lord God. Repent and turn from all your transgressions so that iniquity will not be your ruin. Cast away from you all transgressions which you have committed and get yourself a new heart and a new spirit. For why should you die oh house of Israel.*

The message of Jesus is repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand, and if you don't repent you are going to die. Not just literally, not just in relationships. You are going to die eternally. (paraphrasing) *"I have no pleasure in death. I have no pleasure in the death of one who dies," says the Lord. "Therefore, turn and live. Turn and live."* He said if you don't turn you are going to die. If you don't forsake your transgressions you are going to die.

#### **What does the word 'repent' mean?**

The word 'repent' literally means to think differently.

Repent does not mean that you simply feel bad. Repentance is not remorse. Repent doesn't mean that you can sit there, become aware of your sin, and simply cry over it. Simply going to the altar and crying isn't repentance, because repentance requires a change in thinking.

Now we are to think differently about what? To change what you think about what? We are to repent of, to change our thinking about, our sins. But before we can do this we must understand what the essence of sin is.

**1 John 3:9** *Whoever has been born of God does not sin. For His seed remains in him and he cannot sin because he has been born of God.*

Now, I don't know about you, but right now we are all in trouble. Whoever is born of God does not sin.

**1 John 5:18** *We know that whoever is born of God does not sin, but he who has been born of God keeps himself and the wicked one does not touch him.*

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**1 John 3:9 AMP** *For any who is born of God does not habitually, knowingly, deliberately continue to practice sin.*

But what does that mean? I have asked people all over the world, “What is sin?” They don’t understand and conceptualize what sin is. What most people list as sin are simply sinful actions. They are the result of sin. But what is the essence of sin?

The Bible says that Lucifer was in heaven and he was perfect in all his ways until inequity was found in him. It wasn’t what he did outwardly. It was first found in him. And then what came from in him manifested outwardly. The Bible talks about that when sin is birthed in our hearts its from in us and then it manifests outside of us. So sin is something that is in the heart first.

And what is sin? Let me give you a definition.

*The essence of sin is the rejection of God’s legal right of authority over your life.*

Everything in the kingdom of heaven is about authority. A kingdom is a place where a king rules. It is a place where the government, the authority, the realm of a leader, of a king is. And Jesus came preaching a message of repentance. Why? For the kingdom of heaven is it hand. Repent for the authority of heaven has come back to you.

The essence of sin is the rejection of God’s legal right of authority over our lives. And that is why he says *He who is born again does not habitually, knowingly, continually practice rejecting God’s legal right of authority.* He cannot do so.

You cannot truly get born again until you get rid of this rejection of God’s right of authority over your life. You see the essence of sin is the rejection of God’s legal right of authority. Repent means to think differently about rejecting God’s authority. If you are going to truly repent, you stop rejecting God’s legal right of authority and now you accept God’s legal right of authority.

*If Jesus isn’t your Lord, he cannot be your savior.*

There’s not one place in the Bible that it ever tells you to ask for forgiveness of sin in order to be saved. He says repent and be baptized every one of you.

**Acts 2:38** *Then Peter said to them, “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.*

Now in 1 John 1:9 he says, *If we confess our sins...and he is speaking to Christians...that God is faithful and just to forgive us of our sins and cleanse us from our unrighteousness.* But even there he wasn’t talking about asking God to forgive you in order to be saved.

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**Romans 10:9** *If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart God raised him from the dead, then ye shall be saved.*

How do you get saved? If you confess. That word ‘confess’ means to strike a covenant. Make a contract with your mouth. If you confess, make a contract with your mouth, that Jesus Christ is Lord.

The word ‘Lord’ there means one that has legal right of authority over another. If you want to get saved, you need to make a covenant with your mouth that Jesus now has the legal right of authority over your life. That’s repentance, because the essence of sin is the rejection of God’s legal right of authority. When you repent you stop rejecting God’s legal right of authority and now you accept God’s legal right of authority.

And God says when you do that, then you shall be born again. Then you will be saved. Then He will forgive you of your sins. Then He will extend you His mercy...when you stop rejecting His legal right of authority.

That is why we have done a great disservice all over the world with all these altar calls when we say, “Well, just come and accept Jesus.” The issue is they must reject every other god and accept only the authority and the lordship of Jesus Christ. At that point they will truly become born again. That’s what God’s after.

**How would you restate Matthew 4:17?**

Repent, turn from your rejection of God’s legal right of authority, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

We must confess our sin. That word ‘confess’ there implies taking full responsibility and surrendering it to God.

If you confess and repent God is not only faithful and just to forgive you of your sin, but He will cleanse you of the unrighteousness that caused you to do the sin in the first place.

And when true repentance comes you have changed the way that you think. Your thinking changes so that you actually no longer desire the thing you used to desire.

Charles Finney, probably the greatest American revivalist in American history, says this: When true repentance is present, you are least likely to return to the thing that you repented of. When false repentance is present, you are very likely to go back to it.

When you are truly repentant, when you have truly given to God His legal right of authority over that part of your life, the power of God comes in, severs and breaks that thing off of your life so that you no longer desire to do the things that you used to want to do. And that’s the message Jesus came preaching. Repent for the kingdom of heaven is

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at hand. Repent for God's authority is about to come and save your life. Turn from taking control of your own life and give the legal right of authority to God.

God wants a multitude of people in America and around the world that will truly repent of rejecting His legal right of authority. Stop going through the Bible trying to figure out what maybe you can get away with. A truly repentant heart only enjoys the things of the spirit. An unrepentant heart still enjoys the things of the flesh.

#### **What are some signs of true repentance?**

When there is true repentance you want to go after God. You long after God. You desire the things of God. You have put out the old man. You are putting on the new man, which is renewed after the image of Christ. You have given to God the legal right of authority. Not my way, but Thy way. Not my will, but Your will.

God says, "Now, when you truly repent, I will release My power to break and sever from you the power of the spirit of the day, so you can truly walk in newness of spirit and fulfill My plans and my purposes for your life."

#### **For further study:**

##### **Key Topic: Repentance**

**Mark 6:12** So they went out and preached that people should repent.

**Acts 2:38** Then Peter said to them, "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.

**Acts 3:19** Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord.

**Acts 17:30** Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent.

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**Key Topic: Sin**

**John 1:29** The next day John saw Jesus coming toward him, and said, “Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!”

**Romans 5:12** Therefore, just as through one man sin entered the world, and death through sin, and thus death spread to all men, because all sinned.