

Change Your Mind Toward God



***"I am Jesus . . . I am sending you
to open their eyes, so that they may turn
from darkness to light and
from the power of Satan to God,
that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a
place among those who are sanctified by faith in me."***

Acts 26:15-18

*by
Jerry O. Loutzenhiser*

Change Your Mind Toward God

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Dedicated to
Lloyd A. Deal

who preaches boldly the gospel of Christ. I heard him preach to audiences in a Municipal Auditorium, at a Fairgrounds while sitting in the bleachers, rented school buildings, and at assemblies in buildings of the churches of Christ, and many other places of which I have little memory. His messages were always well delivered and filled with Scriptures. At the age of 85, he still "baptizes" (John 4:1 – 2) those whom he teaches via Bible correspondence courses and *God Makes a Man* in Kenya and Uganda and the USA.

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ISBN: 978-0-578-42778-2

Printed by: Mennonite Press, Inc.

532 North Oliver Road

Newton, Kansas 67114

Printed in USA

Table of contents

Chapter	Page
Preface	1
1. Introduction.	10
2. More Clarification Since June 20, 2015.	13
3. Latin, in the Latin Vulgate, to French to English.	15
4. English Translations.	21
5. New Testament Greek is <i>koine</i> Greek.	36
6. The Meaning of the Greek Words from New Testament Lexicons.	42
7. God Chose a Greek Word which in English Is " <u>Change of Mind</u> ".	46
8. Philip Proclaims the Christ.	53
9. Peter's Message at the Home of Cornelius.	54
10. The Holy Spirit Sends Barnabas and Saul to Proclaim God's Word.	56
11. Paul and Silas to Macedonia.	61
12. Paul and Silas in Thessalonica and Berea.	63
13. Paul in Athens and Corinth of Greece.	64
14. At Ephesus Many Respond to God.	69
15. The Conversion of Saul, Who Became the Apostle Paul.	72

Table of contents

Chapter	Page
16. A Comparison of a Change Of Mind and Repent Of Sins.	76
17. "Repent": The Worst Translation in the New Testament.	82
18. History of Indulgences in the Catholic Church.	88
19. The Difference between "Repent of Sins" and "Change of Mind"	92
20. God Uses Both the Noun and the Verb	97
21. God Has Granted Change of Mind that Leads to Life	102
22. What it Means to Have a Change of Mind.	105
23. Now Under the New Covenant.	108
24. "Repent therefore of this your wickedness" (Acts 8:22)	111
25. Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage and "Repent of Sin".	115
26. The Gospel of Christ.	121
27. "Repent of Sins" and the Abundant Life in Christ.	126
28. Change Your Mind toward God.	138

Acknowledgements

The writing of this book has been in progress for a long time. What I mean by this is, I have been seeing a need to communicate the truth of this work in a more permanent way. The many times of teaching "change of mind" in home studies, adult classes and sermons in congregations, have received good input from those who have participated. This has been over a long time and with many people of whom I could not possibly name. Thanks to all!

Most recently, Louise Regan, who has proof read many of my series of Bible lessons, read the earliest writing of this, and gave me some very good insights into its production. She is very insightful and has the ability to correct the English.

Larry Fayer and his wife Carol edited the manuscript to correct the grammar and punctuation which Louise had done with my other writings. These two edited separate copies and helped much with making the content comprehensible. Larry also highlighted items he thought needed to be more understandable. He also suggested I should cover one more topic to complete the thesis of this book.

Many thanks to all. You had a great part in helping me finish this work.

Jerry O. Loutzenhiser, December 11, 2018

Change of Mind Toward God

"... preaching, both to Jews and Greeks,
a **change of heart toward God**
and faith toward Jesus our Lord." Acts 20:21 *TEG*

Preface.

If there is a God, the only way we would know that is if he revealed himself to us. He has revealed himself through the Scriptures, which is called the Bible, written over a period of 1600 years in Hebrew and Greek and a little Aramaic. The way that he did this is described by Peter: "... knowing this first of all, that no prophecy of Scripture comes from someone's own interpretation. ²¹ For no prophecy was ever produced by the will of man, but **men spoke from God** as they were carried along by the Holy Spirit. (2 Peter 1:20-21)

It helps one's understanding by knowing that the word prophecy means, to speak forth, therefore "no prophecy of Scripture" means no speaking forth of Scripture. In the speaking forth of Scripture sometimes there are predictions. For example, when David was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write Psalm 22, in which Psalm is predicted the crucifixion of Jesus.

I have always believed that the Scriptures came from God. From infancy, my parents took me to

assemblies of the church. I do not ever remember not being in the worship of God on the Lord's day.

My father saved all the writings which I sent him over the years. I would sometimes go preach in a series of meetings for which there would be a brochure about that event. My father kept all these in a file cabinet. It was not until after his death that I knew this file existed. It must've been about two inches thick. One of the items in that file was a certificate showing that I had been enrolled in the *Cradle Role*. The certificate was dated three months after my birth, and signed by my grandfather, who was the superintendent of the Sunday school in which I was enrolled.

At times, I have told people that I've never changed in regards to my religious belief, because I have always believed in God. Of course, there are some things that I did not understand until later on in life from the Scriptures, but what is meant by my never changing is that I have always wanted to serve God, to do his will and not to add to or take from his Word. This has always been my course, and, like the apostle Paul who had a radical change in his life, I have some small ones.

Which brings me now to the incentive or motivation for the preparation of this study: *Change your Mind Toward God*.

I was raised attending the Sunday Bible school and services of the church of Christ (Christian). The last congregation of this was the Alvarado Church of Christ in Los Angeles, California. On the back wall of the building of this congregation is a plaque with my tagged name on it, as one going into a full-time work of the Lord. While still in high school I decided that I wanted to preach the gospel. This congregation was quite large and had a teenage group of over 80 young people.

Because of the large number of teenagers, every summer this congregation had its own Bible camp, at the Bethel Camp in Azusa, California. I started attending this camp at the age of ten and continued on until I was a senior in high school. When I was 16 years old and a sophomore, two classes that I remember very clearly were, *Personal Evangelism* and *The Qualities of One I'd Marry*. There was a separate class for the girls with the same subject on marriage.

The next summer, the girl that I would marry, started coming to the Alvarado congregation about a month before camp. Her uncle, who was a Christian, encouraged her to attend the congregation and the camp. It was late in the week of that summer camp when we were waiting to play volleyball, that Pat and I began to visit and discuss things about which 17-year-olds would talk. The main thing of which

we visited that day was mission work and doing some kind of ministry for Jesus. So on August 8, 1946, the date we met, Patricia Downey would be the one I would marry some two years later on September, 5, 1948.

When we were 17 years old, we were not thinking about marriage. We were the best of friends and did a lot of things with the teenagers in the congregation. The class on marriage the summer before really helped! My mother saved the paper I had to write on the qualities of one to marry, and she gave it back to me some years later. I still have it.

Not only that, but also the study which I had in personal evangelism gave me the tools I needed to teach and encourage three people to obey the gospel of Christ before graduating from high school. I still have those class notes.

What does all this have to do with this study of *Change your Mind toward God*?

The Scriptures, the word of God, have always been a part of my life even from infancy. Those who had the most profound influence on me were my Bible school teachers and the teachers in the Bible camp classes. The names of those who taught me the two courses mentioned above, I do not remember. But I

do remember some of the other teachers I had in the Bible school. What their most prominent teaching over those years was, obey God. Find out what God says and do that, because the opinions of men do not count. Therefore, all my life I have gone to the word of God to find what God says and strive to do what he says.

Where is it found in the word of God?

There is a doctrine taught by many religious people and churches that one must "repent of sins" to be right with God. The phrase "repent of sins" is not found in the translations of the Scriptures. (There is a non-translation called NLT2 which will be noted later.) Yet there are those who keep telling one outside of Christ that they must "repent of sins". If this doctrine were in the Scriptures, one should be able to produce the book, chapter and verse. It's just not there!

In 1964, Lloyd Deal and I published a Bible study named *God Makes a Man*. Over 700,000 of these are in print in English, and many other thousands of copies in other languages. On the last page of the study are the examples of conversion in the book of Acts. Along with the questions on Acts 2:38 is this statement: (Definition: to *repent* means to determine in one's heart to turn to God.) Also, because the word baptism is not a translation, we put this

statement near the end of the study: (Definition: the New Testament was written in Greek; the word *baptize*, in English, means to *immerse*.)

In this Bible study guide, two questions later, which is the next to the last question in this study is: 20. Have you been immersed? _____.

The one using the Bible study guide and doing the teaching would expand on these two points, if necessary.

To tell a person whom one may be encouraging to put on Christ to "repent of sins" is not a teaching from God! There is a lot of difference between telling a person to change your heart toward God and to turn to God, than to tell him that he needs to repent of his sins.

Lloyd Deal and I, starting in 1964, were supported by the College church of Searcy, Arkansas for over 40 years. During that time, thousands of workers, who were taught how to use *God Makes a Man*, helped us with the campaigns which were conducted in Iowa, northern Missouri, Minnesota and South Dakota. In 1975 I was sent to Minnesota and Lloyd was charged to stay in Iowa. Our teams, at times, were three and four full-time evangelists working together. One winter, in Minnesota, once a week I taught my team New Testament Greek.

Also, both of us were requested to help with work in different countries, and sometimes the elders of the College church sent us to those foreign places. After graduating from Pepperdine College in 1951, I began finding places to preach where there was no New Testament church.

Like the evangelists in the New Testament, I never "tried out"! I helped Harvey Rosier begin the congregation in South Los Angeles which later became the Gardena church.

Then in 1952, a preacher from Redding, California requested that I take into consideration starting a work at Burney, California. In Burney I worked at the Scott Lumber Company pulling chain. One Sunday afternoon, the mill whistle blew and the employees went out to fight a fire. My job pulling lumber in the planing mill was gone because it burned up. By this time there were 54 attending the Sunday assemblies and we had purchased property for a meeting place.

Back to Los Angeles.

It was not long until the Northside church in Compton asked Pat and me to go to Dubuque, Iowa, a city of over 70,000 people, where there were two Christians they knew, and begin preaching the gospel there. By this time, three of our six children

were born. The elders said the Northside church would support us for nine weeks and then I was to have my own support, like I had been doing, by finding a secular job. After deliberating on this for several weeks we said we would go, sold all our furniture that would not fit in a seven foot trailer and made preparation to go 2,000 miles, to Dubuque, knowing only one family there.

With the trailer hooked up to the car and telling our relatives goodbye, one of them said to us "What kind of security is that, you are going all that way with three children?" Our answer was "since we understand that it is God's will that we do this work, and then if we don't do it, then where is our security?" Up to this date of October, 2018, we have never been without support. The nine weeks promised by the Northside church turned into nine years. The next year after we left, Northside grew twice as many in numbers and continued paying my monthly salary.

For 40 years the College church paid my salary with a retirement fund of the last 18 years, paid solely by that congregation. Jesus said: "But seek first the kingdom of God and his righteousness, and all these things will be added to you." (Matthew 6:33) Pat and I knew this, we believed it, and we left our families and home in California to take the gospel throughout the world. At that time, we did not know

that later in life we would take God's message also to people in three nations of Africa, and New Zealand, and three times to Hungary.

In the fall of 1957 the saints at Marshalltown asked me to come and work with them, which I did to February, 1964, when I began work with the College church.

This brings us back to my thesis of teaching what God says to do in proclaiming God's message to the listeners to "Change your Minds toward God".

Chapter 1

Introduction.

The usage of a word in its context always defines the meaning of that word. It will become clear, in this writing, that the meaning of the words in the Greek for what is translated into English as repent or repentance is: "a change of mind". Nowhere in all of the Scriptures is there found the phrase: "repent of sins"!

There needs to be a distinction made between that which prompts a change of mind and the change of mind itself. To give an example of this, in the Old Testament Scriptures, that which prompted God to change his mind (repent) was the change of mind of those to whom he had addressed his wrath. God changed his mind because the people changed theirs. As we shall see in the New Testament preaching of the gospel, the listeners were prompted to change their mind, about or toward God, then turn to God. It will become apparent as we look at their definitions, that many *scholars* often use the word *repent*, to force within its definition, something to do with sin. Sin is not inherent in the meaning of the word repent. If sin were inherent in the word repent, then when this word is used with God, of what sin is he to "repent"?

***If sin were inherent
in the word repent,
then does God sin?***

That which is most obvious is often overlooked in regards to the preaching of the gospel. To put it in

the words of the inspired apostle Paul, the message was Christ and him crucified. (1 Cor. 2:2) The proclamation of the messages in the book of Acts are centered around both Jesus, who is proclaimed as the Christ, and the Father.

Within the framework of each message one must place "change of mind". What is the context within which, each time the English word, for the Greek μετανοέω actually occurs? Are any of the messages, which Jesus said to start preaching, beginning in Jerusalem, laced with the subject of sin? The messages which Peter, Philip, and Paul preached will be carefully examined. Our message today should be the same as that which was preached by the apostles, and which has been recorded by divine revelation into the New Testament Scriptures.

***The message today
should be the same as
preached by the
apostles.***

Throughout all the Scriptures God speaks many times about those who have ears to hear but cannot hear, eyes to see but cannot see. They are unable to see the truth of God. The god of this world has them under his control. This is also emphasized by the apostle Paul in second Thessalonians. There he speaks about the evil one having exercised wicked deception over those who are perishing, because they refuse to love the truth and so be saved. So they have a strong delusion whereby they may believe what is false. "And then the lawless one

will be revealed, whom the Lord Jesus will kill with the breath of his mouth and bring to nothing by the appearance of his coming. 9 The coming of the lawless one is by the activity of Satan with all power and false signs and wonders, 10 and with all wicked deception for those who are perishing, because they refused to love the truth and so be saved. 11 Therefore God sends them a strong delusion, so that they may believe what is false, 12 in order that all may be condemned who did not believe the truth but had pleasure in unrighteousness.” 2 Thessalonians 2:8-12.

In the Scriptures, what is this condition called? Jesus speaks of it as one who is lost. “For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.” (Luke 19:10) Let’s think about being lost! What does this mean to you? Have you ever been lost? This is the condition of those who are perishing. *Repentance* is a change in mind in regards to which one is following, and turning towards a new god, in this case the true and living God, the one who created the heavens and the earth. Another figure which Jesus uses is this: “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. 14 For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few. (Matthew 7:13-14) According to the Son of God, there are two ways one may walk, there is the way that leads to destruction, and there is the way which leads to life. The way that leads to life has a gate that is narrow and the way is hard.

Chapter 2

More Clarification Since June 20, 2015.

The studies that I have made since the above date, have produced more clarification, as to how God used the word **μετανοέω**, which is translated repent in most English translations of the Bible.

1) I discovered on June 23, 2016 that a translation had been made by Hugo McCord of the New Testament Scriptures with the title: ***The Everlasting Gospel***. In his translation he not only translates, as did Alexander Campbell, the Greek word for baptism as immersion, but McCord also translated the Greek word for repent: "change of heart". More information on this will be given later.

2) For some time I knew that in the 1400's, the word repent came from the French. I will trace back in this undertaking, its etymology, to show how it originated, as noted in the Merriam-Webster dictionary, from the Latin into French and then English. When one perceives the progression of this from Jerome's Latin Vulgate, which was a translation from the Greek (OT from LXX) into Latin 390 – 405 A.D., it will become obvious that the Greek word, for the English word repent, is not translated.

3) During the summer of 2016 I had my assistant do a research of websites of churches of Christ across the United States which had "repent of sins", in normally their explanation of: "What We Believe". One outstanding result of this research was, there were those who did not or could not, answer this question: "When you tell people to repent, what are you telling them to do? In other words, what is the meaning of repent?" Those who fit into this class of answers (who gave no meaning to the word repent) would usually give about a page of passages of Scripture, which passages had the word repent in them, as if this answered the question: *what is the meaning of the word repent?*" Of course, some did not answer the email sent requesting information about their teaching of "repent of sins".

Chapter 3

Latin, in the Latin Vulgate, to French to English.

It is interesting to see how the word repent came into existence. From the Merriam-Webster Dictionary is found the origin and etymology of repent:

Middle English, from Anglo-French *repentir*, from Medieval Latin *repenitēre*, from Latin *re-* + Late Latin *poenitēre* to feel regret, alteration of Latin *paenitēre* — more at penitent

Webster Learner's Dictionary definition of Penitent

: feeling or expressing humble or regretful pain or sorrow for sins or offenses : repentant
: a person who is sorry for doing something wrong and asks for forgiveness : a penitent person
penitents seeking God's forgiveness

Along with the word repent, here are several other words that were first used in the 1400's: penitent, print and printing, propitiation, repentance and restitution.

The following three illustrations of Jerome's translation of the Greek into Latin pinpoint how the usage of penitent and its meaning came to be the usage and definition of "repent". You may not know

Latin but carefully note the origin of English words in this translation.

Luke 13:3 non dico vobis sed nisi **paenitentiam** habueritis omnes similiter peribitis

Acts 2:38 Petrus vero ad illos **paenitentiam** inquit agite et baptizetur unusquisque vestrum in nomine Iesu Christi in **remissionem** peccatorum vestrorum et accipietis donum Sancti Spiritus

Acts 26:19-

20 unde rex Agrippa on fui incredulus caelestis visionis ²⁰

Jerome - Latin Vulgate

paenitentiam	
paenitentiam	remissionem
paenitentiam	paenitentiae

sed his qui sunt Damasci primum et Hierosolymis et in omnem regionem Iudaeae et gentibus adnuntiabam ut **paenitentiam** agerent et converterentur ad Deum digna **paenitentiae** opera facientes

Unfortunately, Jerome, the translator of the Vulgate, translated *metanoēō* (μετανοέω) in the imperative as “do penance.”¹

"Since it was easy to make the transition from penitence to penance, Jesus and the apostles were represented as urging people to "do penance" (Lat. *poenitentiam agite*). Eng. "repent" is derived from

¹ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., “3210. μετανοέω,” in *The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary – Lambda-Omicron*, (Springfield, MO: Complete Biblical Library, 1991),

Lat. *repenitire* and inherits the problem of the Latin, making grief the principal idea and keeping in the background the fundamental NT conception of a change of mind (i.e., purpose) with reference to sin. But the exhortations of the ancient prophets, of Jesus, and of the apostles show that the change of mind is the dominant idea of the words employed, while the accompanying grief and reform of life are necessary consequences."²

As stated above, the word repent was not existent until in the 1400's. Following are some translations of the Scriptures in French which have the spelling repent and repentance in them. You will also notice several other words that have the English spelling in the following verses. These are simply French words which were taken into the English Scriptures. Therefore, one should call the language in which repent and repentance are found as French. They are French words used by the English translators. (See if you can identify the exact passage from which these are quoted. Maybe you would like to underline other "English words" which were first French.)

Louis Segond Bible

à ceux de Damas d'abord, puis à Jérusalem, dans toute la Judée, et chez les païens, j'ai prêché la

² Geoffrey W. Bromiley, ed., *International Standard Bible Encyclopedia, Revised Edition – Volume Four: Q-Z*, (Chicago, IL: Howard-Severance Company, 1915; repr., Grand Rapids, MI: William B. Eerdmans, 1979), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 136.

repentance et la conversion à Dieu, avec la pratique d'oeuvres dignes de la **repentance**.

Martin Bible

Mais j'ai annoncé premièrement à ceux qui étaient à Damas, et puis à Jérusalem, et par tout le pays de Judée, et aux Gentils, qu'ils se **repentissent**, et se convertissent à Dieu, en faisant des œuvres convenables à la **repentance**.

Contexte

Actes 26:19-21

...19En conséquence, roi Agrippa, je n'ai point résisté à la vision céleste: 20à ceux de Damas d'abord, puis à Jérusalem, dans toute la Judée, et chez les païens, j'ai prêché la **repentance** et la conversion à Dieu, avec la pratique d'oeuvres dignes de la **repentance**. 21Voilà pourquoi les Juifs se sont saisis de moi dans le temple, et ont tâché de me faire périr.

The string of verses were given in the French to identify the fact that what is now in English translations as repent and repentance were really French words. Before continuing into the progression of the French word used by the English translators, it seems good to give some of the things Jerome wrote concerning translating the Scriptures from the Greek into Latin. He considered what he was translating as the word of God. He understood the Scriptures to say there are three persons in the Godhead. (Colossians 2:9 ASV)

Faulty Manuscripts Must Be Corrected.

JEROME: Some of my enemies have accused me of trying to correct passages in the Gospels. . . . I am not so stupid or ignorant as to suppose that any of the Lord's Word is in need of correction or is not divinely inspired, but the Latin manuscripts of the Scriptures are evidently faulty because of the variations that they all exhibit, and my intention has been to restore them to the form of the Greek original. LETTERS 27.1.³

The Purpose of the Latin Translation.

JEROME (TO AUGUSTINE): You ask why a former translation that I made of some of the canonical books was carefully marked with asterisks and obelisks, whereas I afterwards published a translation without these. You must pardon my saying so, but it seems to me that you have not understood the matter at all. The former translation is from the Septuagint, and whenever there are obelisks, they are designeto indicate that the Seventy have said more than is in the Hebrew.⁴

In Creation and Redemption. JEROME: When the plural is used of the person of God, it is to be understood in the same sense as it is in Genesis, where we read, “Let us make

³ Gerald L Bray, *Ancient Christian Doctrine – We Believe in One God: Volume I*, (Nashville,TN: InterVarsity Press, 2009), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 21.

⁴ Gerald L Bray, *Ancient Christian Doctrine – We Believe in One God: Volume I*, (Nashville,TN: InterVarsity Press, 2009), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 29.

humankind in our image and likeness" —as a sign that points to the Trinity. And when we read in the Gospel how our Lord said, "I and the Father are one," we refer the "one" to the divine nature and the "are" to the different persons. COMMENTARY ON ISAIAH 3.6.8. (*The first use of the non-biblical Trinity was the 13th century, not in the fourth when Jerome lived. jol*)

One Lord, One Faith, One Baptism.

JEROME: There is one Lord, and there is one God, because the dominion of the Father and the Son is one divinity. Moreover, there is also said to be one faith, because we believe in the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit in the same way. There is also one baptism, because we are baptized in exactly the same way into the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. We are even **immersed** three times in order to show that it is one sacrament of the Trinity. Furthermore, we are not baptized in the names of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit but in one name, which is the name of God. COMMENTARY ON EPHESIANS 2.4.5.⁵ (*Baptize - 13th century jol*)

⁵ Gerald L Bray, *Ancient Christian Doctrine – We Believe in One God: Volume I*, (Nashville, TN: InterVarsity Press, 2009), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 82-83.

Chapter 4

English Translations.

Now, it is time for us to look at English translations and see how the word was used by the early English translators. Some of this will be difficult to read, because it is in old English. I suggest that you read it out loud and begin to see what is the word that seems to be misspelled, then you will be able to understand the quotations.

The first word which we'll look at in the Old English is **Repenten**.

This proses of Judicum schulde stire cristene men for to flee synne, and loue God that doith so greet mercy to hem that **repentyn** verili. 'This book comprehendith the storie of Ruth, that was an hethene womman, and lefte her nacoun, and ydolatrie, and bileeuede in God, and kepte his lawe. Therefore sche was weddid to a noble man of the Jewis, and is set in the genelogie either kynrede of oure Sauyours.⁶

But it is for to drede ful sore lest kingis and lordis ben now in the formere synnes of Manasses; God graunte that thei **repenten** verily and make amendis

⁶ Wycliffe, J. (1850). *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books: Early Version*. (J. Forshall & F. Madden, Eds.) (Vol. 1, p. 9). Oxford: Oxford, at the University Press.

to God and men, as he dide, in the ende; for thei setten idolis in Goddis hous, and exciten men to idolatrie, and scheden innocent blood in many maners, as Manasses dide. ⁷"

God schal punysche hem with huge veniaunce, that alle that heeren ben astonyed. Natheles if whanne alle these veniances ben fallen on hem, thei **repenten** verily in the herte, and turne azen to God, ⁸

and seide, Do 3e **penaunce**, for the kyngdom of heuenes shal neize⁹ (Matthew 3:2)

³ Y seie to 3ou, nay; alle 3e schulen perische in lijk manere, but 3e han **penaunce**. ⁴ And as tho eiztetene, on which the toure in Siloa fel doun, and slowe hem, gessen 3e, for thei weren dettouris more than alle men that dwellen in Jerusalem? ⁵ Y seie to 3ou, nai; but also '3e alle schulen perische, if 3e doon not **penaunce**.¹⁰ Luke 13:3-5

³ Take 3e hede 3ou silf; if thi brothir hath synned azens thee, blame hym; and if he do **penaunce**, for3yue hym. ⁴ And if senene sithis in the dai he do synne azens thee, and seuene sithis in the dai he be

⁷ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. 1, p. 30

⁸ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. 1, p. 7.

⁹ Wycliffe, J. (1850). *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books: Later Version*. (J. Forshall & F. Madden, Eds.) (Vo l. I-IV, Mt 3:2). Oxford: Oxford, at the University Press.

¹⁰ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV, Lk 13:3-5

conuertid to thee, and seie, It **forthenkith** me,
 forȝyue thou hym.¹¹ Luke 17:3-4
 (**Luke 17:3-4 (ESV)** ³ Pay attention to yourselves!
 If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents,
 forgive him,⁴ and if he sins against you seven times
 in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I
 repent,’ you must forgive him.”)

You will notice from the footnotes in this section,
 that all the quotations are taken from the Wycliff
 Bible translated from the Latin Vulgate by John
 Wycliff. This translation was made in the old
 English in 1383-1395. Also following are a couple
 of notes from the Wycliff Bible which uses the word
repenten.

1 John 2:2 Note "*for the synnes of al the world; as
 to sufficience, but oonly for chosen men as to affect,
 for othere men setten letting. Jhesu Crist is oure
 auocat anentis the fadir, and sheweth his woundis to
 the fadir, v. and sithen Jhesu is iust, he preieth not
 for al manere synneris, but oonly for hem that
repenten veraily.*"¹²

Note on Proverbs 1:28 **Proverbs 1:28 (ASV)** ²⁸
 Then will they call upon me, but I will not answer;
 They will seek me diligently, but they shall not find
 me:

schal not here; for the tyme of merit is passid, as to
 deed men, ether for thei that synnen **repenten** not

¹¹ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV, Lk 17:3-4).

¹² Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV

verily, that is, for the loue of good, but onely for drede, and hidousnesse of peyne. *Lire here*.¹³

In this section of this undertaking, so one may accurately follow the progression development of the word which we have in our modern English translations as repent the old English words we have quoted. Therefore it seemed to be appropriate to display, from a dictionary of that time. the usage of the word repent. Before the word repent really came into the English language notice how definitions are given for the old English word punchen.¹⁴ This word could have been used instead of repent.

Old English dictionary:~For-A3/**punchen**~,
v. to **repent**, S; ~**forthynketh**~, _pr. s.
impers_., MD; ~**forthenkith**~, W;
~**forAzynkez**~, 82; ~**forthinke**~, _imp. pl_.,
S2; ~**forthou3*te**~, _pt. s_. , W. ~For-~ I.)

There are certain abbreviations in this boxed quotation from the old English dictionary. One may investigate their usage from the source given.)

From Merriam-Webster's dictionary we have the following definition of **forthynketh** or **forthought** \ 'thòt\; **forthought**; **forthinking**; **for-thinks** *now chiefly Scottish* : to **change the mind** of (oneself); *often* : REGRET,

¹³ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV

¹⁴ The Project Gutenberg EBook of *A Concise Dictionary of Middle English* by A. L. Mayhew and Walter W. Skeat

now chiefly Scottish : to have a **change of mind** or a feeling of regret.¹⁵

Later on in this study, a section is added of Greek scholars, and their giving of the meaning of **μετανοέω**. Consistently, their definition will be "change of mind".

There was an Old English word which could have been used which gave the New Testament Greek meaning, but instead, an ecclesiastical term was substituted. John Wycliff was loyal to the Pope and the Catholic Church. He never gave up that loyalty. He was denounced, along with other things, for putting into the vernacular language a translation of the Scriptures for the common people.

By that time (1374) Wycliffe had developed startlingly unorthodox opinions, which were condemned by Pope Gregory VII in 1377. He had come to regard the scriptures as the only reliable guide to the truth about God and maintained that all Christians should rely on the Bible rather than the unreliable and frequently self-serving teachings of popes and clerics. He said that there was no scriptural justification for the papacy's existence and attacked the riches and

¹⁵ <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/forthink>

power that popes and the Church as a whole had acquired. He disapproved of clerical celibacy, pilgrimages, the selling of indulgences and praying to saints. He thought the monasteries were corrupt and the immorality with which many clerics often behaved invalidated the sacraments they conducted. If clerics were accused of crime, they should be tried in the ordinary lay courts, not in their special ecclesiastical tribunals. At Christmas in 1384 Wycliffe was at Mass in the church at Lutterworth on December 28th when he had a stroke and collapsed. He had suffered a previous stroke a year or two before and the second one proved fatal. He never spoke another word and died on the 31st. (The theologian was denounced by the church on May 4th, 1415.) His body was buried in Lutterworth churchward, where it remained until 1428 when, following the orders of the Council of Constance, it was dug up and burned. The ashes were scattered in the nearby River Swift.¹⁶

Several *printings* of the Wycliff Bible came out between 1383 – 1395. The quotations below from

¹⁶ Richard Cavendish | Published in History Today Volume 65 Issue 5
May 2015

the Wycliff Bible were from the earlier editions. The words in these verses were not sustained, but rather the word repent came into use. The purpose that I have for giving these two verses with some meaning of for-thinking will become apparent a little later on when we get into the resources for the use of the word **μετάνοια** in the New Testament.

for-thinke, *to repent*, Ex. 23:21; Mk. 1:15; *pr. t.* for-thenkith, Gen. 6:7; Lk. 17:4; *p. t.* for-thou3t, Gen. 6:6; Mt. 21:29; *pr. p.* for-thenkyng, for-thinkyng, Rom. 2:29; 2 Cor. 7:8¹⁷ (from the Glossary Wyliffe's Bible)

¹⁴ Forsothe after that Joon was taken, Jhesus came in to Galilee, preching the gospel of the kyngdam of God,¹⁵ and seiynge, For tyme is fulfillid, and the kyngdam of God shal 'come ni3'¹⁸

²⁹ Sothely he ansverynge seith, I nyle; forsothe afterward he stirid by **penaunce**, 'or **forthenkyng**, wente¹⁹ (Matthew 21:29)

You will notice I have included in the quotations what was in the original text and comments by those who prepared the manuscript of Wycliff's Bible. The resources for all of these are dutifully done.

¹⁷ Wycliffe, J. (1850). *The Holy Bible, containing the Old and New Testaments, with the Apocryphal Books: Early Version*. (J. Forshall & F. Madden, Eds.) (Vol. 4, p. 715). Oxford: Oxford, at the University Press.

¹⁸ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV, Mk 1:14-15

¹⁹ Wycliffe, J. (1850). op. cit. Vol. I-IV, Mt 21:28-29

Let us go on to some of the later English translations of which I will first give a summary of the various major translators. "The chief translations are: Wyckliffe's New Testament, from the Latin in 1380, and his followers also translated the Old Testament; these were written not yet printed. Tyndale's, from the Greek, first English New Testament, printed 1526. Coverdale's Bible, 1535, chiefly from the Latin. This was the first entire Bible printed in English, and probably at Zurich. Matthews' Bible, a fusion of the translations by Tyndale and Coverdale, and made by John Rogers, the martyr, under the name of Matthews. 1537. It was published with the English king's license, and hence was the first authorized version in English. Taverner's Bible was a revision of Matthews' issued in 1589. Cranmer's, or the Great Bible, was simply a new edition of Matthews', issued under the sanction of and with a preface by, Cranmer, also in 1539. **The Genevan New Testament, 1557, and Genevan Bible, 1560, were made by English refugees at Geneva, during the persecution under the English queen, Mary, who was a Roman Catholic. It was the first complete English translation from the original Hebrew and Greek texts, and the first English Bible divided into modern chapters and verses.** The Bishops' Bible, 1568-1572, a revision of the Great Bible, made by 15 scholars, eight of whom were bishops. The Rheims, New Testament, 1609, and Douai Bible,

1610, made by Roman Catholic scholars at Douai. The King James', or so-called Authorized Version, made from the Hebrew and Greek by 47 scholars, under sanction of James II., king of England, 1611. The Anglo-American revised Bible, New Testament, 1881, Old Testament, 1885. This is a revision of the so-called A. V. made by a company of 67 British and 34 American scholars appointed by a Committee of the Church of England, through the Convocation of Canterbury, in 1870."²⁰

I will now choose, at random, passages of Scripture from the New Testament, with the translation of the Greek word **μετάνοια** from some of the later English translations.

Tyndale's Bible 1535

36 So therfore let all the housse of Israel knowe for
a suerty yt God hath made ye same
Iesus whom ye have crucified lorde and Christ.
37 When they hearde this they were pricked in their
hertes and sayd vnto Peter and vnto the other
Apostles: Ye men and brethre what shall we do?
38 Peter sayde vnto them: **repent** and be **baptised**
every one of you in the name of Iesus Christ for the
remission of synnes and ye shall receave the gyfte
of the holy goost.

²⁰ People's Dictionary of the Bible, Edwin W. Rice, editor, 1893

39 For ye promyse was made vnto you and to youre chylde and to all that are afarre even as many as ye Lorde oure God shall call.

40 And with many other wordes bare he witnes and exhorted them sayinge: Save youre selves from this vntowarde generacion. (Acts 2:36-40)

Coverdale's Bible 1535

^eWhan they herde this, their hert pricked them, and they sayde vnto Peter and to the other Apostles: Ye men and brethrē, [†]What shal we do? Peter sayde onto them: **Amēde** youre selues, and let euery one of you be baptysed in the name of Iesus Christ, for the remyssion of

synnes, and ye shal receaue the gifte of the holy goost.²¹ (Acts 2:37-38)

The Bishop's Bible 1568

Repent ye therfore and convert, that your finnes may be done away, (Acts 3:19)

Geneva Bible 1557

37 Now when they heard it, they were pricked in their hearts and said unto Peter & the other Apostles, Men & brethren, what shal we do?

38 Then Peter said unto them, **Amend** your lives, and be baptized everie one of you in the Name

^e Zach. 12. c.

[†] Luc. 3. b. Act. 9. a. and 16. d.

²¹ Coverdale, M. (Trans.). (1838). *The Holy Scriptures, Faithfully and Truly Translated* (Ac 2:30–47). London: Samuel Bagster.

of Jesus Christ for the remission of sinnes: & ye
shal receive the gift of the holie Gost. ²² (Acts 2:37-
38)

King James Bible 1611

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient
vnto the heauenly vision:

20But shewed first vnto them of Damascus, and at
Hierusalem, and thorowout all the coasts of Iudea,
and then to the Gentiles, that they should **repent**
and turne to God, and do works meete for
repentance. **21**For these causes the Iewes caught
mee in the Temple, and went about to kill me. (Acts
26:19-21)

"Much of Tyndale's work eventually found its way
into the King James Version (or "Authorized
Version") of the Bible, published in 1611, which,
as the work of 54 independent scholars revising
the existing English versions, drew significantly on
Tyndale's translations. The King James Version
New Testament is 83.7 per cent Tyndale's work,
with the KJV Old Testament 75.7 per cent
Tyndale's."²³

²² *Geneva Bible*. (1560). (Ac 2:37–38). Geneva: Rovland Hall.

²³ www.tandfonline.com/doi/abs/10.1179/ref_1998_3_1_004 **1535**

When Tyndale burns at the stake for heresy for translating the Bible into
English. His work becomes the foundation of the King James Bible.
<https://books.google.com/books?id=>

Whereas John Wycliffe had earlier produced an English translation of the Bible from Latin, Tyndale was the first to translate from the original Greek language. This was only made possible after Erasmus made the Greek New Testament available in Europe.

Printing broke forever the monopoly of the priests. Besides the Greek text and new Latin version of Erasmus for the scholars, the people at large learned the facts and the truth from the numerous translations made even before Luther, or Calvin, or Zwingli. England, far behind the continental nations in enlightenment, popular education, and general culture, had long to wait, while France, Spain, Italy, and Holland **had printed Bibles in the vernacular**, for king and prelates shut out of England the printed word of God. There had been numerous Dutch versions of the whole Bible, probably as many as twenty-four editions of the New Testament and fifteen of the whole Bible, printed in the Netherlands, while in Germany seventeen editions of the Scriptures were printed and widely circulated even before Luther was known, and all before one Bible was printed in England, where no Bible left the presses until 1538. Hence in this one country the prelates got ahead of the people,

or, in a sense, pre-vented them. It is true, . . . **the common people of England were far behind the people of the Continent in biblical knowledge**, and did not discover the facts revealed by the New Testament until long after the Swiss, Dutch, and Germans. The Reformation on the Continent was largely a popular movement, and **directly connected with the reading of the Greek Testament by the scholars**, and of the vernacular Bibles by the common people. . . . Hence England was still semi-papal long after the churches on the Continent had been Reformed. Hence, also, the method of Reformation was different from that on the Continent. In Germany, Switzerland, and Holland **the people were far more familiar with the Scriptures than were their English brethren**, and hence their more thorough rejection of unscriptural claims.²⁴

The richest fruit of Luther's leisure in the Wartburg, and the most important and useful work of his whole life, is the translation of the New Testament, by which he brought the teaching and example of Christ and the Apostles to the mind and heart of the

²⁴ William Griffis, "The Validity Of Congregational Ordination," — *Bibliotheca Sacra* 050, no. 200 (Oct), WORDsearch CROSS e-book: 597-598. *BSac* 50:200 (April 1893) p. 598

Germans in life-like reproduction. It was a republication of the gospel. He made the Bible the people's book in church, school, and house. If he had done nothing else, he would be one of the greatest benefactors of the German-speaking race.¹

His version was followed by Protestant versions in other languages, especially the French, Dutch, and English. The Bible ceased to be a foreign book in a foreign tongue, and became naturalized, and hence far more clear and dear to the common people. Hereafter the Reformation depended no longer on the works of the Reformers, but on the book of God, which everybody could read for himself as his daily guide in spiritual life. This inestimable blessing of an open Bible for all, without the permission or intervention of pope and priest, marks an immense advance in church history, and can never be lost.²⁵

Archbishop Berthold of Mainz, otherwise a learned and enlightened prelate, issued, Jan. 4, 1486, a prohibition of all unauthorized printing of sacred and learned books, especially the German Bible, within his diocese, giving as a reason that the German language was incapable of correctly rendering the profound sense of Greek and Latin

Froude (*Luther*, p. 42) calls Luther's translation of the Bible "the greatest of all the gifts he was able to offer to Germany."

²⁵ Schaff, P., & Schaff, D. S. (1910). *History of the Christian church* (Vol. 7, p. 341). New York: Charles Scribner's Sons.

works, and that laymen and women could not understand the Bible. Even Geiler of Kaisersberg, who sharply criticised the follies of the world and abuses of the Church, thought it “an evil thing to print the Bible in German.”²⁶

The purpose for adding this information above is to show that the English Scriptures were still carrying the papal dogma in regards to penance and restitution. The dogma of "repent of sins" is largely a result of this failure of early English translations to translate the words in the original Greek "change of mind".

The English Scriptures were still carrying the papal dogma in regards to penance and restitution.

Whereas the Dutch translated the word baptism from the Greek as "dopen" which in both Dutch and German mean "to dip. To immerse".²⁷

From a Dutch Bible: " ³⁸Petrus antwoordde: 'U moet zich **bekeren tot God** (convert to God) en u laten **dopen** (immerse) in de naam van Jezus Christus, want dan worden uw zonden vergeven, en de Heilige Geest zal in u komen wonen.'"²⁸ Acts 2:38

²⁶ Schaff, P., & Schaff, D. S. (1910). op. cit Vol. 7, pp. 342–344

²⁷ <https://en.wiktionary.org/wiki/dopen>

²⁸ Het Boek Copyright © 1979, 1988, 2007 by Biblica, Inc.® Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide.

Chapter 5

New Testament Greek is *koine* Greek.

Now that an investigation has been made of the progression of the word *repent* from Latin to English, it's time to explore how Greek scholars have written their definitions of the Greek words "μετανοέω (verb *repent*) and μετάνοια (noun *repentance*) in the New Testament.

However, to those who have not been informed, Gustav Adolph Deissmann discovered that the New Testament Greek was *koine* Greek and not classical. The word "*koine*" means common. The Greek of the New Testament is the language spoken by the common person.

This discovery was made at the end of the 18th century and those that have been developing lexicons and Greek works since that time, have taken into their production the fact that the Greek of the New Testament is now known to be the *koine* Greek.

"By New Testament times many of these Jews had lived in foreign countries so long that they had little or no knowledge of Palestinian languages such as Hebrew and Aramaic. Instead they spoke Greek, the common language of the Roman Empire, and so became known as Hellenists (from the word *hellas*,

meaning 'Greece'). At the same time they maintained their Jewish identity through keeping the Jewish law."²⁹

Deissmann will point out that both the proclaimers of the gospel as well as many of those who heard the gospel were just common ordinary people.

At the end of the 18th century and early into the 19th there was much controversy among lexicographers as to how to approach the Greek of the New Testament. One of the major contributors to the TDNT wrote the following, notice how he gives evidence that the Greek of the New Testament was from the common man. (*The highlighting of certain words and phrases will be mine. jol*)

"Deissmann attacked the isolating and canonising of the language of the NT which he perceived in Cremer's work. He could find many of the supposed peculiarities of the NT in account books, wills, petitions, private letters, public records, contracts of marriage, letters of divorce, judicial reports, magical texts and horoscopes from papyri of the period. **This proves that Christianity had no language-building power.** The supposed

²⁹ Don Fleming, "DISPERSION," in *The AMG Concise Bible Dictionary*, (Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers, 1990), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "DISPERSION".

creations of the apostles and evangelists **were inventions of the lexicographers.** Deissmann admits that Christianity could transform terms but not that it could construct them. The apostles did not use a language consecrated by sacral usage and they certainly did not use a secret language. **They simply spoke as everyone else did in their day, so that they could be understood by anybody.** The total of words used in the NT alone was reduced to a minimum by Deissmann. He was able to show that 33 words which Cremer had called biblical could be found on inscriptions or the papyri. H. A. A. Kennedy had counted 4829 words in the NT and described 580 of these as biblical words. Grimm in his *Clavis Novi*

Testamenti had noted 253 biblical words. Deissmann, however, estimates them at only about 50. Thus of the 5000 or so words in the NT only about 1%, not 10-12%, are specifically Christian or biblical. If no non-biblical instance of some NT words has yet been found, it is probably a pure accident that no such parallel has as yet been discovered. Deissmann did not merely oppose **the idea of biblical words.** He also opposed the mistaken concept of a NT Greek constructed from an

intermingling of Semitic and Greek linguistic influences. For him **there is no Jewish Greek** and the number of semitisms in the NT has been much exaggerated. Anything that does not tally with classical Greek has been called a semitism. Through his papyri researches Deissmann was able to show that many things called semitic could be explained **in terms of the *koine***.

A further concern of Deissmann's was to point out that both the preachers and the hearers of the New Testament message were uneducated people belonging to the lower strata of society. As he sees it, the Bible was the book of the little man. He thus attacks the treatment of non-literary texts as literature. To be sure, there are here and there in the NT erratic blocks from the cultural sphere of the day. On the whole, however, Paul's Greek is not literary but non-literary. It is strongly permeated by the rough terms of popular speech and is perhaps the most brilliant example of the ordinary prose, natural but not inartistic, of a travelled cosmopolitan of imperial Rome.

Both the preachers and the hearers of the NT message were uneducated people.

Deissmann cannot deny, of course, that the language of Hebrews is more artistic than that of the papyri and makes some literary impression. He explains this, however, by suggesting that Hebrews opened a new epoch of early Christianity in which Christianity took over the cultural media of the day. 'The literary and theological age has begun; the creative age is drawing to its close.'³⁰ (*My understanding: Since God is the author of the Scriptures, he determined how to use the language chosen. jol*)

Also note the following quote found recently after the above comment: "Revelation, as it stands in the Bible, is given, not only in the common language of the generations to which it was addressed, but also in the peculiar style and manner of each one of the persons originally chosen to be the channels of the revelation."³¹

Whereas Deissmann worked for the most part in the field of lexicography and showed that individual words were not uniquely Christian, J. H. **Moulton** tried to demonstrate

³⁰ Gerhard Kittel, ed., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Volume X*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 646.

³¹ C Stowe, "The Right Interpretation Of The Sacred Scriptures — The Helps And The Hindrances," – *Bibliotheca Sacra* 010, no. 37 (Jan), WORDsearch CROSS e-book: 37.

from grammar that NT speech corresponds to the *koine*. He refers to the revolutionary change which discovery of the papyri brought about in our views of NT Greek. Not everything which offends classical Greek in the NT is a semitism. **The papyri have finally destroyed the fiction of a special NT Greek.** Whereas Cremer and his predecessors saw in biblical Greek the language of the Holy Spirit, **Moulton** concluded that **the Holy Spirit used the language of the people when he addressed men.** J. H. **Moulton** and G. Milligan collected from non-literary documents the material which was most important for the NT. In their *Vocabulary of the Greek Testament* they do not offer an ordinary lexicon but a collection of material from papyri and inscriptions which is relevant for **a NT dictionary.** . . . The material is designed to demonstrate the *koine* character of NT Greek."³²

³² Gerhard Kittel, ed., op. cit. *Volume X*, 661

Chapter 6

The Meaning of the Greek Words from New Testament Lexicons.

Now that it has been made clear that the New Testament was written in **koine** Greek we will proceed to look at the various New Testament lexicons. The first one that shall be examined is the *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*. This is a 10 volume set. It goes into great detail of how the word was used in the Septuagint, and by classical writers and others. Then the TDNT authors always give the meaning of the Greek word in the New Testament. It is not important how the classical writers such as Homer or Aristotle used the Greek word, or how it was used in the Septuagint, but how did those who were speaking and writing in the koine Greek use the word. What meaning did they give to it?

1) "μετανοέω (verb) and μετάνοια (noun) in the New Testament. Both words are most common in the Synoptic Gospels (μετανοέω 16 times, 9 in Lk.; μετάνοια 8 times, 5 in Lk.) and Acts (verb 5 times, noun 6), cf. also μετανοέω) 12 times in Revelation. Paul uses the verb only once, the noun 4 times (once in **Past.**). Elsewhere μετάνοια is found 3 times in Hebrews. and once in 2 Peter. The popular Greek sense (→ A. **not koine**) is most likely at Lk. 17:3 f., where μετανοεῖν denotes regret for a fault against one's brother, and 2 Cor. 7:9 f., where the

combination with → μεταμέλομαι, → λύπη and → λυπέω suggests remorse (though → 1004 f.). Elsewhere the only possible meanings are "to change one's mind," "change of mind," or "to convert," "conversion,"³³

2) μετανοια <G3341>, μετανοιας, ἡ (μετανοεω), a change of mind:³⁴

3) It is only after μετάνοια has been taken up into the uses of Scripture, or of writers dependent on Scripture, that it comes predominantly to mean a change of mind³⁵

4) A word compounded of the preposition μετά, *after, with*; and the verb νοέω, *to perceive*, and to *think*, as the result of perceiving or observing. In this compound the preposition combines the two meanings of *time* and *change*, which may be denoted by *after* and *different*; so that the whole compound means *to think differently after*. Μετάνοια (*repentance*) is therefore, primarily, an *after-thought*, *different* from the former thought; then, a *change of mind* which issues in *regret* and in *change of conduct*.³⁶

5) **Repent ye** (*metanoēsate*). First aorist (ingressive) active imperative. Change your mind and your life. Turn right about and do it now. You *crucified* this

³³ Gerhard Kittel, ed., op. cit. *Volume IV*, 999.

³⁴ J. H. Thayer, trans., *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament*, (New York: Harper & Brothers, 1889)

³⁵ Richard Trench, *Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament*, Eleventh ed. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1890), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 259.

³⁶ Marvin R. Vincent, *Word Studies in the New Testament*, (New York: Scribners, 1887), , Under: "Matthew 3:2".

Jesus. Now *crown* him in your hearts as Lord and Christ.³⁷ (*from Acts 2:38*)

6) μετα-νοέω, f. ήσω, *to change one's mind or purpose*³⁸

7) In Greek, the distinguishing semantic characteristic of μετάνοια or μετανοέω is that of *change (of mind)*,³⁹

8) *change one's mind*⁴⁰

9) "repentance" (*metanoēō*, cf. vv. 9, 10). It is a compound from "after" + "mind," which implies a new mind, a new way of thinking, a new attitude toward life and God. This is true repentance.⁴¹

10) That should still be the goal of every sermon, **to cause a needed change of mind, which is the meaning of repent (*metanoēō*)**.⁴²

11)". . . . μετανοεῖν and μετάνοια gradually advanced in depth and fulness of meaning, till they became the fixed and recognized words to express

³⁷ Archibald Thomas Robertson, A.M., D.D., LL.D., Litt. D., *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, (Nashville, TN: Broadman Press, 1930), Under: "Acts 2:38".

³⁸ H. G. Liddell and R. Scott, *An Intermediate Greek-English Lexicon: Founded Upon the Seventh Edition of Liddell and Scott's Greek-English Lexicon*, (Oxford: Oxford University Press, 1889), WORDsearch CROSS e-book,

³⁹ Horst Balz and Gerhard Schneider, *Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament – Volume 2*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing, 1981)

⁴⁰ Frederick William Danker, in *A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature*, Third ed. (Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2000),

⁴¹ Utey, R. J. (2000). *Paul's Fourth Missionary Journey: I Timothy, Titus, II Timothy* (Vol. Volume 9, p. 158). Marshall, Texas: Bible Lessons International.

⁴² Zodhiates, S. (1992). *Sermon starters* (Vol. 1–4). Chattanooga, TN: AMG Publishers.

that mighty change in mind, heart, and life wrought by the Spirit of God⁴³

Finally, Dr. Hugo McCord of Freed Hardeman University, in his fifth revision of the translation he made of the New Testament, said this in the appendix: "Likewise, **the word “repent” is eliminated because it does not accurately translate the Spirit’s word metanoeo.** The word “repent” simply means “be sorry again” (repenitere). Repenitere (Latin), metamelomai (Greek), and “repent” English) are synonyms, all pointing to regret and sorrow. But they are not synonyms of metanoeo (2 Co 7:10). Regret and sorrow may lead to metanoeo (Mt. 21:29; Mk. 14:72), but they may stop short (Mt. 27:3). Metanoeo has both a prerequisite and a consequent (Mt. 3:8; Lk. 19:8). The literal meaning of metanoeo is to think afterwards, to have an afterthought, to change the mind. In Hebrews 12:17 this translation uses the literal phrase “change of mind.” In other places, since biblically man’s mind is his heart (Genesis 6:5; Acts 8:22), and since deeper feeling is usually associated with the word “heart” than with the word “mind,” this translation uses the phrase “change the heart.” (TEG)

⁴³ Richard Trench, *Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament*, Eleventh ed. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1890), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 260.

Chapter 7

God Chose a Greek Word which in English Is "Change of Mind".

Easton, in his Bible dictionary, defines the Greek word *metanoeo* as follows: "Metanoeo, meaning to change one's mind and purpose, as the result of after knowledge."⁴⁴ Another has put it this way: "**μετάνοια, ας, ἡ** strictly *later knowledge, subsequent correction*."⁴⁵

These may not *flesh out* completely the meaning of the Greek word, but it will help us to accomplish the task now of viewing and summarizing each sermon in the book of Acts to see that God desires all, everywhere to change their minds. (Acts 17:30)

The gospel was first preached on the day of Pentecost following the resurrection of Jesus. In this very first gospel sermon on that day Peter preached about who Jesus is. Finally in the sermon, he said God has made him both Lord and Christ. Many of those in Peter's audience believed that Jesus was an imposter or blasphemer. (John 10:33, 36) This Jesus whom you crucified is both Lord and Christ

⁴⁴ Matthew George Easton, "Repentance," in *Illustrated Bible Dictionary: And Treasury of Biblical History, Biography, Geography, Doctrine, and Literature*, (London: T. Nelson and Sons, 1897), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Repentance".

⁴⁵ Friberg, T., Friberg, B., & Miller, N. F. (2000). *Analytical lexicon of the Greek New Testament* (Vol. 4, p. 260). Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books.

They needed to change their minds about this belief and affirm that he is the son of God. Peter exhorted them to change your minds and be immersed for the forgiveness of their sins. They realized their sin against Jesus, who is the son of God, and were told that that they needed to "change their minds" as to who he is.

On the day of Pentecost, when Peter proclaimed the gospel, as Jesus commanded, his message was “**Jesus** of Nazareth, a man attested to you by God with mighty works this **Jesus**, delivered up you crucified . . . ²⁴ God raised **him** up, ²⁵ For David says concerning him, “I saw the **Lord** always before me, for **he** is at my right hand that I may not be shaken; ²⁵ For David says concerning **him**, . . . “I saw the **Lord** always before me, . . . ²⁷ For you will not abandon **my soul** to Hades, . . . ³⁰ Being therefore a prophet, . . . ³¹ he foresaw and spoke about the resurrection of the **Christ**, . . . ³² This **Jesus** God raised up . . . For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he himself says, “The Lord said to my **Lord**, “Sit at my right hand, ³⁶ Let all the house of Israel therefore know for certain that God has made **him** both **Lord and Christ**, this **Jesus** whom you crucified.” (Acts 2:22-36 ESV)

Those thousands who were listening to this proclamation now have knowledge they did not have before. So, "after knowledge", (that is, before,

they thought Jesus was a blasphemer) now they believe him to be both Lord and Christ! Therefore, they ask the apostles; "Men, brothers, what should we do?" 38Peter said, **Change your hearts**, and be immersed, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ into the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." (Acts 2:37-38 TEG) On that day there were at least 3000 who changed their hearts and were immersed.

Peter did not tell them "repent of sins" ("change your mind of sins"?) Nowhere in all the Scriptures, has God inspired his "Authors", through the Holy Spirit, to write: "repent of sins".

Nowhere in all the Scriptures, has God inspired his "Authors", through the Holy Spirit, to write: "repent of sins".

Sometime later, at 3pm, Peter and John went to the temple, at the hour of prayer. There was a beggar there, who was crippled, who was more than 40 years old and who had never walked. Peter said to him "look at us", which he did, and then Peter told him I have no silver or gold to give you but what I do have I give to you, "And he took him by the right hand and raised him up, and immediately his feet and ankles were made strong.⁸ And leaping up he stood and began to walk, and entered the temple with them, walking and leaping and praising God."

(Acts 3:7-8) When the other worshipers saw the man now walking and leaping, they all ran to him.

After the resurrection of Jesus, the next time the word repent is used is found in Acts 3:19. Following is that passage of Scripture and notice that in the context Peter tells them that they crucified Jesus in ignorance. Of what were they ignorant? They were ignorant of the Old Testament Scriptures and how it was prophesied that the Christ should suffer. This is what Jesus fulfilled. So their need was to change their minds about who Jesus is and “turn again” to be with God.

And when Peter saw it he addressed the people: “Men of Israel, why do you wonder at this . . . the God of our fathers, glorified his servant **Jesus, whom you delivered over and denied in the presence of Pilate, when he had decided to release him.** ¹⁴ **But you denied the Holy and Righteous One, . . . and you killed the Author of life, whom God raised from the dead.** To this we are witnesses. ¹⁶ And **his name . . . that is through Jesus** has given the man this perfect health in the presence of you all. . . . God foretold . . . That **his Christ would suffer, he thus fulfilled.** ¹⁹ **Repent therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out, . . . that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus,** Moses said, ‘The Lord God will raise up for you a prophet like me

from your brothers. You shall listen to him in whatever he tells you. . . . And all the prophets . . . Proclaimed these days. ²⁵ You are the sons of the prophets and of the covenant that God made with your fathers, saying to Abraham, ‘**And in your offspring shall all the families of the earth be blessed.**’ ²⁶ **God, having raised up his servant,** sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.” (Acts 3:11-26)

The message was all about Jesus. Peter proclaimed the gospel to them concerning the death and resurrection of Jesus. He directs their attention to the prophet that Moses said to whom they must give heed. Also he emphasizes that this is the "offspring" God promised to Abraham, that through him the earth will be blessed. This Jesus is the author of life, the holy and righteous one. He is the Christ (Greek), the Messiah (Hebrew), the one who had to suffer for all mankind. Jesus is the Messiah, the one for which they had hope to come. He is Jesus of Nazareth who suffered and died for them.

The Father did not tell us how many he turned to him that day, but now "the number of the men came to about 5,000." (4:4) Those who changed their minds and turned to him, God said he will "bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness." (3:26)

"On the next day their rulers and elders and scribes gathered together in Jerusalem And when they had set them in the midst, they inquired, "By what power or **by what name did you do this?**"⁸ Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them,
.that by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified, whom God raised from the dead⁹ if we are being examined today concerning a good deed done to a crippled man, by what means this man has been healed by the name of **Jesus Christ of Nazareth. . . . This Jesus is the stone**
.And there is salvation in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given among men by which we must be saved." (Acts 4:5-12)

Those rulers and members of the Council could not deny the fact that a great miracle had been done in the healing of the crippled man. The apostles were threatened not to speak anymore in the name of Jesus and, after their threats, they let them go. What had they done ?

"They were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." (4:2)

"They were teaching the people and proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection from the dead." (4:2)

Whereas in Acts 3 Peter was speaking to the people, now in chapter 5 he is speaking to the Council and specifically to the high priest. However, the context

is the same, because the Jewish rulers had the need to change their minds about Jesus being the Christ, the Messiah. The Council is telling the apostles not to preach in the name of Jesus Christ. Look at their reply: “But Peter and the apostles answered, ‘We must obey God rather than men. 30 The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree. 31 God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.’” Acts 5:29-31. The purpose of their preaching Jesus Christ was to bring about a change in their minds concerning God’s will for his people Israel. They needed to hear the prophets, and the apostles, and believe that Jesus is the Christ the son of the living God, the Messiah that had been promised for ages.

Chapter 8

Philip Proclaims the Christ.

"Now those who were scattered went about preaching the word. ⁵ Philip went down to the city of Samaria **and proclaimed to them the Christ.**" (Acts 8:4-5 ESV)

Now an angel of the Lord said to Philip, "Rise and go toward the south to the road that goes down from Jerusalem to Gaza." And there was an Ethiopian. . . . seated in his chariot, and he was reading the **prophet** Isaiah. ²⁹ And the Spirit said to Philip, "Go over and join this chariot." ³⁵ Then Philip beginning with this Scripture he told him **the good news about Jesus.** ³⁶ And as they were going along the road they came to some water, and the eunuch said, "See, here is water! What prevents me from being baptized?" ³⁷ *And Philip said, If thou believest with all thy heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that **Jesus Christ is the Son of God.** Acts 8:37 (ASV)* ³⁸ And he commanded the chariot to stop, and they both went down into the water, Philip and the eunuch, and he baptized him. ³⁹ And when they came up out of the water, the Spirit of the Lord carried Philip away, and the eunuch saw him no more, and went on his way rejoicing. ⁴⁰ But Philip found himself at Azotus, and as he passed through **he preached the gospel to all the towns** until he came to Caesarea. (*Acts 8:38-40 ESV*)

In chronological order, the account of the conversion of Saul is first given in the next chapter of Acts. What is recorded there and in chapter twenty-two, will be included with his account in chapter twenty-six of Acts.

Chapter 9

Peter's Message at the Home of Cornelius.

Here are the next two times that the word repentance is found in Acts. The first one in 11:18, is about Cornelius and his household becoming Christians. "When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also God has granted **repentance that leads to life**. Acts 11:18. The next incident (Acts 13:24, see also 19:4) is about the baptism of John of which we will give more attention later.

The gospel had not yet been preached to the Gentiles. There were proselytes in the audience when Peter preached the gospel for the first time. In Acts 6:5 of the seven who served the widows was a proselyte from Antioch but no Gentile had become a Christian yet. Cornelius, a Roman centurion, was, "a devout man who feared God with all his household". He was told by an angel "send men to Joppa and bring one Simon who is called Peter. . . .

When Peter entered, . . . Cornelius said So I sent for you at once, and you have been kind enough to come. Now therefore we are all here in the presence of God **to hear all that you have been commanded by the Lord.**" So Peter opened his mouth and said: "Truly I understand that God shows no partiality,³⁵ but in every nation anyone who fears him and does what is right is acceptable to

him. ³⁶ As for the word that he sent to Israel, preaching good news of peace through **Jesus Christ (he is Lord of all)** **how God anointed Jesus of Nazareth with the Holy Spirit and with power.** He went about doing good and healing all who were oppressed by the devil, for God was with him. ³⁹ And we are witnesses of all that he did both in the country of the Jews and in Jerusalem. **They put him to death by hanging him on a tree,** ⁴⁰ **but God raised him on the third day And he commanded us to preach to the people and to testify that he is the one appointed by God to be judge of the living and the dead.** ⁴³ **To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name.”** (Acts 10:1 - 43)

While Peter was preaching the Holy Spirit gave the same gift to these Gentiles as he gave to the apostles. Peter, giving a report back in Jerusalem of the Gentiles receiving the word of God, told how "he commanded them to be baptized **in the name of Jesus Christ.**" (Acts 10:44 - 48) The brethren in Jerusalem glorified God saying "Then God has given to the Gentiles a change of heart that leads to life." (Acts 11:18 TEG)

Chapter 10

The Holy Spirit Sends Barnabas and Saul to Proclaim God's Word.

It is now time for the gospel to be proclaimed throughout all the world. The first messengers were sent from the church at Antioch and first went to the Isle of Cyprus and points beyond in Asia minor. Here is the record of that event. "So, being sent out by the Holy Spirit, **they proclaimed the word of God** in the synagogues of the Jews. . . . Sergius Paulus, a man of intelligence, who summoned Barnabas and Saul and sought **to hear the word of God**. . . . Then **the proconsul believed**, when he saw what had occurred, **for he was astonished at the teaching of the Lord**. (Acts 13:1-12)

The thesis that is being established is: what is the message being proclaimed. Since it is the purpose of this study to show that "repent of sins" is not the message, many details about where they went and what happened there are not included. The references are given so at your leisure you may fill in those details as you desire.

"Now Paul and his companions set sail from Paphos and came to Perga in Pamphylia. . . . they went on from Perga and came to Antioch in Pisidia. And on the Sabbath day Paul stood up, David to be their king, of whom he testified and said, 'I have

found in David the son of Jesse a man after my heart, who will do all **my will.**' ²³ **Of this man's offspring God has brought to Israel a Savior, Jesus, as he promised.** ²⁴ Before his coming, John had proclaimed a baptism of repentance to all the people of Israel. . . . And though **they found in him no guilt worthy of death, . . . they took him down from the tree and laid him in a tomb.** ³⁰

But God raised him from the dead, . . . And we bring you the **good news** that what God promised to the fathers, ³³ this he has fulfilled to us their children **by raising Jesus, . . .** ³⁷ but he whom **God raised up . . .** that **through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you,** ³⁹ and by **him everyone who believes** is freed from everything from which you could not be freed by the law of Moses. . . . **The next Sabbath almost the whole city gathered to hear the word of the Lord.** ⁴⁵ But when the Jews saw the crowds, they were filled with jealousy and began to contradict what was spoken by Paul, reviling him. ⁴⁶ And Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly, saying, **"It was necessary that the word of God be spoken first to you. Since you thrust it aside and judge yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.** ⁴⁷ For so **the Lord has commanded us,** saying, "'I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth.'" ⁴⁸ And when the Gentiles heard this, **they began rejoicing and glorifying the word**

of the Lord, and as many as were appointed to **eternal life believed.** ⁴⁹ **And the word of the Lord was spreading throughout the whole region. . . .**

And the disciples were filled with joy and with the Holy Spirit. (Acts 13:13 - 52)

Here, in the city of Antioch of Pisidia, is the last time the word "sins" is recorded until Acts 22:16. Let us review what was said concerning forgiveness of sins.

1) *Acts 2:38* And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ **for the forgiveness of your sins**, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

2) *Acts 3:19* Repent therefore, and turn back, **that your sins may be blotted out**,

3) *Acts 5:31* God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel **and forgiveness of sins**.

4) *Acts 10:43* To him all the prophets bear witness that everyone who believes in him **receives forgiveness of sins through his name.**"

5) *Acts 13:38* Let it be known to you therefore, brothers, that **through this man forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you**,

The Word sins is not given by God through all the missionary journeys recorded from Acts 13:38 through Acts 22:16. No preaching with "repent of sins" as a part of the gospel.

6) *Acts 22:16* And now why do you wait? Rise and **be baptized and wash away your sins**, calling on his name.'

The forgiveness of sins, is when one is baptized as Jesus has commanded. All the above verses could be melded into 22:16 concerning the time when one has his sins washed away in the blood of Christ. One is not washed when he believes that Jesus is the Christ the son of the living God, or when he changes his mind, or when he confesses his faith in Christ. Paul had a change of mind for three days before Ananias came to him and told him to "rise and be baptized and wash away your sins."

The last passage in the book of Acts which has the word sins in it is twenty-six. Since Paul gives a summary of his work up to that time in this passage of Scripture, it will be cited later on with further comments.

In our journey through the book of Acts, we now come to the city of Iconium. "Now at Iconium they entered together into the Jewish synagogue and spoke in such a way that **a great number of both**

Jews and Greeks believed , , , , they . . . fled to Lystra and Derbe, cities of Lycaonia, and to the surrounding country, ⁷ and there **they continued to preach the gospel.**" (Acts 14:1-7)

"Now at Lystra there was a man sitting who could not use his feet. He was crippled from birth and had never walked. ⁹ He listened to Paul speaking. And Paul, looking intently ¹⁰ said in a loud voice, "Stand upright on your feet." And he sprang up and began walking. ¹¹ And when the crowds saw what Paul had done, they lifted up their voices, saying in Lycaonian, "The gods have come down to us in the likeness of men!". . . . "Men, why are you doing these things? We also are men, of like nature with you, and **we bring you good news, turn from these vain things to a living God**, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness." (Acts 14:8-17)

"But Jews came from Antioch and Iconium, and having persuaded the crowds, they stoned Paulthe disciples gathered about him, he rose up and entered the city, and on the next day **he went on with Barnabas to Derbe.** ²¹ **When they had preached the gospel to that city and had made many disciples, they returned to Lystra and to Iconium and to Antioch,** ²² **strengthening the souls of the disciples. . . .** " (Acts 14:19-23)

Chapter 11

Paul and Silas to Macedonia.

Barnabas and Paul returned to Antioch. Then for a time they went to Jerusalem to take care of a matter. Returning to Antioch, both are sent out again to proclaim the gospel to the world. Barnabas chooses Mark, and Paul takes Silas with him. They go different places.

Paul and his fellow workers are directed by vision as to their destination. Luke is now with them. "And when Paul had seen the vision, immediately we sought to go on into Macedonia, concluding **that God had called us to preach the gospel to them**. . . . And on the Sabbath day we went to the riverside, **spoke to the women** One who heard us was Lydia, who was a worshiper of God. The Lord opened her heart to pay attention to **what was said by Paul**.¹⁵ And after **she was the baptized, and her household as well**, she urged us, saying, "If you have judged me to be faithful to the Lord, come to my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us." (Acts 16:9 - 15)

This all happened in Philippi of Macedonia. While preaching the word in that place a slave girl, who had a spirit of divination "followed Paul and us, crying out, "These men **are servants of the Most**

High God, who proclaim to you the way of salvation she kept doing for many days. Paul, . . . said to the spirit, “I command you in the name of **Jesus Christ** to come out of her.” And it came out that very hour.¹⁹ But when her owners saw that their hope of gain was gone, they seized Paul and Silas and dragged them into the marketplace the magistrates tore the garments off them and gave orders to beat them with rods.²³ And when they had inflicted many blows upon them, they threw them into prison, . . . About midnight Paul and Silas were **praying and singing hymns to God** suddenly there was a great earthquake. . . . When the jailer woke and saw that the prison doors were open, he drew his sword and was about to kill himself But Paul cried with a loud voice, “Do not harm yourself, for we are all here.”²⁹ And the jailer called for lights and rushed in, and trembling with fear he fell down before Paul and Silas.³⁰ Then he brought them out and said, “**Sirs, what must I do to be saved?**”³¹ And they said, “**Believe in the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your household.**”³² **And they spoke the word of the Lord** to him and to all who were in his house.³³ And he took them the same hour of the night and washed their wounds; and **he was baptized at once, he and all his family.** . . . And he rejoiced along with his entire household **that he had believed in God.** (Acts 16:10-34)

Chapter 12

Paul and Silas in Thessalonica and Berea.

As Paul and Silas continued through Macedonia "they came to Thessalonica, where there was a synagogue of the Jews. ² And Paul went in, as was his custom, and on three Sabbath days **he reasoned with them from the Scriptures,** ³ explaining and proving that **it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead, and saying, "This Jesus, whom I proclaim to you, is the Christ."** ⁴ And some of them were persuaded and joined Paul and Silas, as did a great many of the devout Greeks and not a few of the leading women The brothers immediately sent Paul and Silas away by night **to Berea**, and when they arrived they went into the Jewish synagogue. ¹¹ Now these Jews were more noble than those in Thessalonica; **they received the word with all eagerness**, examining the Scriptures daily to see if these things were so. ¹² **Many of them therefore believed, with not a few Greek women of high standing as well as men. . . .** Those who conducted Paul brought him as far as Athens" (Acts 17:1-15)

Those in Berea believed what they heard which was Jesus is the Christ, that he had to suffer, be crucified and then be risen from the dead. Many of them believed the message including Greek women of high standing as well as men. The message was of Jesus, why it was predicted of the Messiah in the Old Testament, and how that this Christ was to suffer for them.

Chapter 13

Paul in Athens and Corinth of Greece.

Upon leaving Berea, Paul first went on by himself to the city of Athens. He was brought there safely by some of the brethren from Berea. It is in Athens where Paul preaches his sermon, directed by God, "The Unknown God". This message was prompted by his seeing in the city an idol to the unknown God.

Paul begins his message by referring to the altar of *the unknown god*. He said to them what you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. He concludes this message by saying: "Being then God's offspring, we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. 30 The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **he commands all people everywhere to repent**, 31 because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." Acts 17:29-31

In his proclamation to them, Paul does not mention the word sin. He speaks of the way that the world will be judged in righteousness, but nowhere does he say "repent of sins". His whole message is about who God is and that Jesus is his son, the one

through whom, by the appointment of God, will judge the world. Paul concludes by saying, the reason we know this is going to happen is because Jesus has been raised from the dead. Repentance in this context has to do with the change in mind of who is god, about righteousness and judgment, and through whom the world will be judged. Always, in every age, the big issue is “who is god”? Who is the one that man is to worship? Who is the god to whom we should give our allegiance and thankfulness for being our sustainer of all good things? Paul is saying the God he proclaimed is the one who gives to all mankind life and breath and everything (verse 25).

The need of every man is to confess that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. In other words, he needs to change his mind about who is god and confess that Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. God is central in all the messages preached in the New Testament. The real action one needs to take in his life is to determine that he is going to follow the living God and not a god he has made up in his own mind.

***he needs to change
his mind about who
is god***

At this time, we shall review the context of the Scriptures. "Now while Paul was waiting for them at Athens, his spirit was provoked within him as he

saw that the city was full of idols. ¹⁷ So he reasoned in the synagogue with the Jews and the devout persons, and in the marketplace every day he was preaching Jesus and the resurrection. ¹⁹ And they took him and brought him to the Areopagus, saying, "May we know what this new teaching So Paul. . . . said: **What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you. . . . we ought not to think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone, an image formed by the art and imagination of man. . . . The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent,** ³¹ because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed; and of this he has given assurance to all by raising him from the dead." ³² Now when they heard of the resurrection of the dead, some mocked. But others said, "We will hear you again about this." ³³ So Paul went out from their midst. ³⁴ But some men joined him and believed, among whom also were Dionysius the Areopagite and a woman named Damaris and others with them. (Acts 17:16-34)

One of those who responded to the email survey of "repent of sins", responded to the question that was asked, concerning his meaning of repent, was this: **"Repent of past sins."** *The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now he commandeth men that they should all everywhere repent*" (Acts

17:30). " He gave no meaning to what he was telling people to do. The word sin is not found in this context, in fact, the last time God puts sin in this Scripture was chapter 13:38. It is not found again until 22:16.

Paul's subject in Acts 17 is not "sin" but: "For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, **'To the unknown god.'** What therefore you worship as unknown, **this I proclaim to you.**" (Acts 17:23) He told about the true God and their need to change their minds about him, because there will come a day in which they will have to give an account of their relationship to him. Paul was **not** preaching about their sins, but he was preaching about Jesus and the resurrection. His message was: **change your mind and turn to God!** Continuing on through Acts, that God had written, the messages are the same.

Paul in Corinth

"After this Paul left Athens and went to Corinth. . . .

And he found a Jew named Aquila, a native of Pontus, recently come from Italy with his wife Priscilla. . . . And he went to see them,³ and Stayed with them and worked, for they were tentmakers by trade.⁴ And **he reasoned in the synagogue every Sabbath, and tried to persuade**

Jews and Greeks. ⁵ When Silas and Timothy arrived from Macedonia, **Paul was occupied with the word, testifying to the Jews that the Christ was Jesus. . . .** he went to the house of a man named Titius Justus, a worshiper of God. His house was next door to the synagogue. ⁸ **Crispus, the ruler of the synagogue, believed in the Lord, together with his entire household. And many of the Corinthians hearing Paul believed and were baptized.** ⁹ And the Lord said to Paul one night in a vision, “Do not be afraid, but go on speaking and do not be silent, ¹⁰ for I am with you, and no one will attack you to harm you, for **I have many in this city who are my people.**” ¹¹ **And he stayed a year and six months, teaching the word of God among them.** (Acts 18:1-11)

Again, the message that was preached in Corinth was the gospel. (1 Corinthians 15:1 – 4) Paul stayed a while longer in Corinth, but then left for Syria taking Priscilla and Aquila with him. They sailed to Ephesus and Paul went to the synagogue and reasoned with the Jews. They wanted him to stay in order that they may hear more, but he said I will return to you, if the Lord wills, and then he set sail for Antioch. After spending some time there he left and went back to the places in which he had preached before, strengthening all the disciples.

Chapter 14

At Ephesus Many Respond to God.

Paul now returns to the city of Ephesus to bring to them the gospel of Christ. It is here where Paul has one of his greatest confrontations with those who would oppose his teaching about the true and living God. There was a great trade in Ephesus of silversmiths who crafted images of their goddess Artemis, also known as Diana of the Ephesians. The response of the preaching of Christ to the Ephesians was so great that "many of those who were now believers came, confessing and divulging their practices."¹⁹ And a number of those who had practiced magic arts brought their books together and burned them in the sight of all. And they counted the value of them and found it came to fifty thousand pieces of silver. " (Acts 19:18-19) In today's currency those books would have been worth "thirty-five thousand dollars in today's U.S. currency."⁴⁶ The silversmiths were afraid they would lose their trade because there were so many turning to the living God, all because of the preaching of Paul and his fellow workers.

Before we continue with Paul in Ephesus, we'll return to the end of the 18th chapter to learn about

⁴⁶ William J. Larkin Jr., *The IVP New Testament Commentary Series – Acts*, ed. Grant R. Osborne, (Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press, 1995), 278.

the preaching of Apollos, who was a native of Alexandria. Alexandria is a city commissioned by Alexander the great, on the northern Delta of the river Nile. There were great libraries in the city. It is in this city that by 235BC the Greek translation of the Old Testament, called the Septuagint (LXX), was achieved. This city was the home of Apollos, who first taught at Ephesus and later on in Corinth.

"Now a Jew named Apollos, a native of Alexandria, came to Ephesus. He was an eloquent man, competent in the Scriptures. ²⁵ **He had been instructed in the way of the Lord.** And being fervent in spirit, he spoke and taught accurately the things concerning Jesus, though he knew only the baptism of John. ²⁶ He began to speak boldly in the synagogue, but when Priscilla and Aquila heard him, they took him aside and **explained to him the way of God more accurately.** ²⁷ And when he wished to cross to Achaia, the brothers encouraged him and wrote to the disciples to welcome him. When he arrived, he greatly helped those who through grace had believed, ²⁸ for he powerfully refuted the Jews in public, **showing by the Scriptures that the Christ was Jesus.** Acts 18:24-28

And it happened that while Apollos was at Corinth, Paul . . . came to Ephesus. There he found some disciples. ² And he said to them, "Did you receive

the Holy Spirit when you believed?” And they said, “No, we have not even heard that there is a Holy Spirit.” ³ And he said, **“Into what then were you baptized?”** They said, “Into John’s baptism.” ⁴ And Paul said, **“John baptized with the baptism of repentance,** telling the people to believe in the one who was to come after him, that is, **Jesus.”** ⁵ On hearing this, **they were baptized in the name of the Lord Jesus.** There were about twelve men in all. ⁸ And he entered the synagogue and for three months spoke boldly, reasoning and persuading them about the kingdom of God. ⁹ But when some became Speaking evil of the Way before the congregation, he withdrew from them and took the disciples with him, reasoning daily in the hall of Tyrannus. ¹⁰ This continued for two years, **so that all the residents of Asia heard the word of the Lord, both Jews and Greeks.** (Acts 19:1-10)

Chapter 15

The Conversion of Saul, Who Became the Apostle Paul.

(In Acts, there are three accounts of Saul's turning to the Lord. The first account is in Acts chapter 9. This chapter I left in **black type**. The second is in chapter 22, in **red type**, and the third in chapter 26 in **blue type**. I have not changed the person in any of the chapters but left them as written.)

Acts 22:2 And he said: **3** “I am a Jew, born in Tarsus in Cilicia, but brought up in this city (*Jerusalem*), educated at the feet of Gamaliel according to the strict manner of the law of our fathers, being **zealous for God** as all of you are this day. **Acts 26: 4** “My manner of life from my youth, spent from the beginning among my own nation and in Jerusalem, is known by all the Jews. . . **9** “I myself was convinced that I ought to do many things in opposing the name of Jesus of Nazareth. **22:19** And I said, ‘Lord, they themselves know that in one synagogue after another I imprisoned and beat those who believed in you. **20** And when the blood of Stephen your witness was being shed, I myself was standing by and approving and watching over the garments of those who killed him.

Acts 9:1 Saul, still breathing threats and murder against the disciples of the Lord, went to the high priest **2** and asked him for letters to the synagogues at Damascus, so that if he found any belonging to the Way, men or women, he might bring them

bound to Jerusalem. **22:4** I persecuted this **Way** to the death, binding and delivering to prison both men and women, I journeyed toward Damascus to take those also who were there and bring them in bonds to Jerusalem to be punished. **26:10** And I did so in Jerusalem. I not only locked up many . . . but when they were put to death I cast my vote against them. **11** And I punished them often I persecuted them even to foreign cities. **12** “In this connection I journeyed to Damascus with the authority and commission of the chief priests.

9:3 Now as he went on his way, he approached Damascus, **26:13** I saw on the way a light from heaven, brighter than the sun, that shone around me and those who journeyed with me. **14** And when we had all fallen to the ground, I heard a voice saying to me in the Hebrew language “Saul, Saul, why are you persecuting me? **14** It is hard for you to kick against the goads.’ **22:8** And I answered, ‘Who are you, Lord?’ And he said to me, ‘**I am Jesus of Nazareth**, whom you are persecuting.’ . . . **22:10** And I said, ‘What shall I do, Lord?’ And **the Lord** said to me, ‘Rise, and go into Damascus, and there you will be told all that is appointed for you to do.’ **11** And since I could not see because of the brightness of that light, . . . I was led by the hand by those who were with me, and came into Damascus.

9:9 And for three days he was without sight, and neither ate nor drank. **10** Now there was a disciple at Damascus named Ananias. The Lord said to him in a vision, “Ananias.” And he said, “Here I am, Lord.” **11** And the Lord said to him, “Rise and go to the street called Straight, and at the house of Judas

look for a man of Tarsus named Saul, for behold, **he is praying, 12** and he has seen in a vision a man named Ananias come in and lay his hands on him so that he might regain his sight.” **13** But Ananias answered, “Lord, I have heard from many about this man, how much evil he has done to your saints at Jerusalem. **14** And here he has authority from the chief priests to bind all who call on your name.” **15** But the Lord said to him, “**Go, for he is a chosen instrument of mine** to carry my name before the Gentiles and kings and the children of Israel. **16** For I will show him how much he must suffer for the sake of my name.”

17 So Ananias departed and entered the house. **13** **came to me, and standing by me,** And laying his hands on him he said, “Brother Saul, **the Lord Jesus** who appeared to you on the road by which you came has sent me so that you may regain your sight **I received my sight and saw him. 14** And he said, ‘The God of our fathers appointed you to know his will for you will be a witness for him to everyone of what you have seen and heard. **16** And now why do you wait? Rise and be baptized and wash away your sins, calling on his name.’ **9:18** **Then he rose and was baptized;** **19** and taking food, he was strengthened. **20** And **immediately he proclaimed Jesus** in the synagogues, saying, “**He is the Son of God.**”

16 But rise and stand upon your feet, **for I have appeared to you for this purpose,** to appoint you as a servant and witness to . . . your people and . . . ,the Gentiles—to whom I am sending you **18** to

open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and a place among those who are sanctified by faith in me.

Acts 9:20 And immediately he proclaimed Jesus in the synagogues, saying, "He is the Son of God."

22:17 "When I had returned to Jerusalem"

A Summary of Paul's Preaching

Jesus said: "You will open their eyes, turning them from **darkness** to **light**, and from **the power of Satan** to **God**, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are dedicated by faith in me." King Agrippa, **I obeyed** the heavenly vision, and I began calling on those in Damascus, and then those in Jerusalem and all Judea, and among the Gentiles, **to change their hearts and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with a change of heart.**" (Acts 26:18-20 TEG)

Chapter 16

A Comparison Of A Change Of Mind And Repent Of Sins.

Now that it has been established that the Greek New Testament word for which we read in our modern translations as repent should be *Change of Mind*, a comparison will be made between a change of mind and repent of sins.

Let us suppose that there are two groups of evangelistic workers going from house to house and encouraging the residents to study the Scriptures with them. One group is working on the north side of town and the other on the south. The group on the north side are encouraging those with whom they study to "change their minds toward God". (Acts 20:21) Those in the house studies are guided to read these Scriptures that speaks of what God has done for them.

1) "God has made **him** both **Lord and Christ**, this **Jesus** whom you crucified." (Acts 2:36)

2) "Philip went down to the city of Samaria **and proclaimed to them the Christ**." (Acts 8:5)

3) And they glorified God, saying, Then to the Gentiles also God has granted **a change of mind that leads to life**. (Acts 11:18)

4) "I have made you a light for the Gentiles, that you may bring salvation to the ends of the earth."'" ⁴⁸ And when the Gentiles heard this, **they**

began rejoicing and glorifying the word of the Lord." (Acts 13:47 - 48)

5) **"we bring you good news, turn from these vain things to a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea he did good by giving you rains from heaven and fruitful seasons, satisfying your hearts with food and gladness."** (Acts 14:15 - 17)

6) **" For as I passed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription, 'To the unknown god.' What therefore you worship as unknown, this I proclaim to you.** ²⁴ **The God who made the world and everything in it, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man** . that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. Yet he is actually not far from each one of us, ²⁸ for **"In him we live and move and have our being'**; as even some of your own poets have said, **"For we are indeed his offspring.'**The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now he commands all people everywhere to change their minds." (Acts 17:23-30)

7) Jesus said: **"You will open their eyes, turning them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive the forgiveness of sins, and an inheritance among those who are dedicated by faith in me."** King Agrippa, **I obeyed** the heavenly vision, and I began calling on those in Damascus, and then those in Jerusalem and

all Judea, and among the Gentiles, **to change their hearts and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with a change of heart.**" (Acts 26:18-20 *TEG*)

Thus, those on the north side of town, teaching as a part of the gospel message, to change their hearts and turn to God, they encouraged those who are studying with them to do so.

Now let us turn to the other group on the south side of town who are teaching those that hear them to "repent of sins". Since there is no place in the Scriptures that says "repent of sins", there is no place to which they may turn. (There is one place in the NIV where the translators rendered Isaiah 59:20 thus "'The Redeemer will come to Zion, to those in Jacob who repent of their sins,' declares the LORD." I found no other.)

However, there is a "translation" that adds to repent, every time it is found in the book of Acts, "of sin", even though the word sin is not in the context of the original Greek. This is how Acts 2:38 is in this version: Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins, turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ to show that you have received forgiveness for your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." **Acts 2:38 (NLT2)**

In describing this translation there is this comment: "The goal of any Bible translation is to convey the meaning and content of the ancient Hebrew, Aramaic, and Greek texts as accurately as possible to contemporary readers. The challenge for our translators was to create a text that would communicate as clearly and powerfully to today's readers as the original text did to readers and listeners in the ancient biblical world."

Notice, in the communicating of the meaning of Acts 2:38 they say that one has the forgiveness of sins, and then he is baptized to show that he does have forgiveness of sins. This is how they communicate the meaning of Acts 22:16: "What are you waiting for? Get up and be baptized. Have your sins washed away by calling on the name of the Lord." **Acts 22:16 (NLT2)** When one investigates this version very carefully, he will find that it is not a translation but the proclamation of a theology foreign to the Holy Spirit's giving of God's word.

To proclaim that the gospel includes "repent of sins" corrupts the message intended for those outside of Christ. When Jesus charged the apostles: "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations," (Luke 24:47) he was **not** saying: ". . . . 'There is forgiveness of sins for all who repent.'" **Luke 24:47 (NLT2)** The Scriptures do not say change your mind toward sin,

but rather, "change your mind toward God". (Acts 20:21)

Of course, there is a change in one's life in regards to sin when he turns to God. These changes are not listed in the Scriptures. Each one who changes his mind and turns to God can be quite different than someone else. My change may be different than yours in regards to an issue I have with God in my old relationship to him. Saul, who later became the apostle Paul, had to change his mind about Jesus being God. After the first sermon was preached concerning Jesus being Lord and Christ, 3,000 (Acts 2:41) had changed their mind about Jesus and made him their Lord. In that audience which heard Peter preach were devout men from every nation under heaven. (Acts 2:5) No one knows the extent to which these 3000 individuals had a change towards God. Just like you do not know what change I made, and if you are a Christian, I don't know yours!

It is not recorded what changes in their mind took place, but God knows and that is his business, not ours. When they confessed that Jesus is the Christ, the son of God and were immersed that day, they were added by God to his saved people. (Acts 2:47) There were so many of them being immersed that one may have stood in line waiting his turn. But they were not standing in line to tell somebody their sins!

It is a blessing to come out of the water rejoicing like the man from Ethiopia. The Scriptures do not reveal the things about which he was rejoicing, but God knew! God does not say when one rejoices: "Here is your list of things of which you must rejoice!" The Ethiopian eunuch had gone to Jerusalem to worship his Creator, but it was not until he was on his way home to Ethiopia, when he heard that the one of whom he was reading of in Isaiah was Jesus, the Christ, the Savior, who died for his sins.

Chapter 17

"Repent": The Worst Translation in the New Testament.

John Albert Broadus (1827-1895) was a founding faculty member and the second president of The Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He preached to Robert E. Lee's army during the Civil War. Charles Spurgeon deemed him the "greatest of living preachers." A. H. Newman described Broadus as "perhaps the greatest man the Baptists have produced." He wrote the enduring classic, *A Treatise on the Preparation and Delivery of Sermons*.

Archibald Thomas (A. T.) Robertson (1863-1934) became the son-in-law of John Broadus. In 1885 Robertson moved from Wake Forest to Louisville to attend the Southern Baptist Theological Seminary. He received a Th.M. in 1888 and worked as a teaching assistant for John Broadus. In 1890, Robertson became an associate professor at the seminary. He married Broadus's daughter, Ella Broadus on November 27, 1894. When Broadus died in 1895, Robertson became Southern's professor of New Testament Interpretation, a position he held for thirty-nine years.

Robertson published 45 books including *Harmony of the Gospels* and *Word Pictures in the New*

Testament. This body of literature reflects a general bent toward language study over theological reflection. His work *A Grammar of the Greek New Testament in the Light of Historical Research*, published in 1914, was the capstone of his career. It drew accolades from all corners of the globe and was used by diverse figures in their work including Robertson's seminary contemporaries, professors in secular institutions, and the Pope.⁴⁷

"Repent (μετανοείτε [*metanoείτε*]). Broadus used to say that this is the worst translation in the New Testament. The trouble is that the English word "repent"

**Broadus used to say
that this is the worst
translation in the
New Testament.**

means "to be sorry again" from the Latin *repenitet* (impersonal). John did not call on the people to be sorry, but to change (think afterwards) their mental attitudes (μετανοείτε [*metanoείτε*]) and conduct. The Vulgate has it "do penance" and Wycliff has followed that. The Old Syriac has it better: "Turn ye." The French (Geneva) has it "Amendez vous." This is John's great word (Bruce) **and it has been hopelessly mistranslated.**"⁴⁸

⁴⁷ John A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, (Valley Forge, PA: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1886), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 35-36.

⁴⁸ Robertson, A. T. (1933). *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Mt 3:2). Nashville, TN: Broadman Press.

But great difficulty has been found in translating this Greek word into other languages. The Syriac versions, unable to give the precise meaning, fall back upon 'turn,' the same word as in Hebrew. The Latin versions give 'exercise penitence' (*paenitentiam agere*). But this Latin word, penitence, apparently connected by etymology with *pain*, signifies grief or distress, and is rarely extended to a change of purpose, thus corresponding to the Hebrew word which we render 'repent,' but *not* corresponding to the terms employed in Old Testament and New Testament exhortations. Hence **a subtle and pernicious error, pervading the whole sphere of Latin Christianity**, by which the exhortation of New Testament is understood to be an exhortation to *grief* over sin, as the primary and principal idea of the term. One step further, and penitence was contracted into *penance*, and associated with medieval ideas unknown to New Testament, and the English Versions made by Romanists, now represent John, and Jesus, and Peter, as saying (*paenitentiam agite*), 'do penance.' From a late Latin

compound (*repaenitere*) comes our English word 'repent,' which inherits the fault of the Latin, making grief the prominent element, and change of purpose secondary, if expressed at all, Thus our English word corresponds exactly to the *second* Greek word (*metamelesthai*), and to the Hebrew word rendered 'repent,' but sadly fails to translate the exhortation of the New Testament. It is therefore necessary constantly to repeat the explanation that the New Testament word in itself denotes simply *change of purpose* as to sin, leaving us to understand from the nature of things, the accompanying grief and the consequent reformation.⁴⁹

Unfortunately, Jerome in about 400AD , the translator of the Vulgate, translated *metanoēō* in the imperative as “do penance.”⁵⁰

In opposition to the Church's interpretation of *metanoia* as comprising contrition, confession, and penances, Martin Luther objected that it

⁴⁹ John A. Broadus, *Commentary on the Gospel of Matthew*, (Valley Forge, PA: The American Baptist Publication Society, 1886), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 36.

⁵⁰ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., “3210. μετανοέω,” in *The Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary – Lambda-Omicron*, (Springfield, MO: Complete Biblical Library, 1991), WORDsearch CROSS e-book,

retained its classical sense of "a change of mind." Metanoia is a concept of fundamental character for Luther, as it marks the ground of the first of his 95 *theses*.⁵¹

The Greek Orthodox Church in America teaches that "The Greek term for repentance, *metanoia*, denotes a change of mind, a reorientation, a fundamental transformation of outlook, of man's vision of the world and of himself, and a new way of loving others and God. In the words of a second-century text, *The Shepherd of Hermas*, it implies "great understanding," or discernment."⁵²

In his 1881 *The Great Meaning of the Word Metanoia*, Treadwell Walden, former minister of St. Paul's Church, Boston, asserts that metanoia conveys the essence of the Christian gospel. Walden holds that the meaning of the Greek *metanoia* is very different from the meaning of the English "repentance". **He describes the translation of *metanoia* as repentance as "an extraordinary mistranslation."**⁵³

⁵¹ *Luther's Works, Vol. 48, Letters* (May 30, 1518 Letter to John von Staupitz), 65-70.

⁵² "Repentance and Confession", The Greek Orthodox Church in America

⁵³ Treadwell Walden, *The Great Meaning of the Word Metanoia: Lost in the Old Version, Unrecovered in the New*. (Thomas Whittaker, 1896), 1, 3-4, 8-9.

"In *Repentance: A Cosmic Shift of Mind and Heart*, Edward J. Anton observes that in most dictionaries and in the minds of most Christians the primary meaning of "repent" is to look back on past behavior with sorrow, self-reproach, or contrition, sometimes with an amendment of life. But **neither Jesus nor John the Baptist says to look back in sorrow. For St Paul, 'metanoia is a transfiguration for your brain' that opens a new future.**"⁵⁴

But while thus μετανοεῖν and μετάνοια gradually advanced in depth and fulness of meaning, till they became the fixed and recognized words to express **that mighty change in mind, heart, and life wrought by the Spirit of God**⁵⁵

The words "repent" and "repentance" are not translations of the original language in which God inspired the Scriptures. It is like the word for baptism, which in most versions, the Greek words were never translated.

⁵⁴ Anton, Edward J. *Repentance: A Cosmic Shift of Mind and Heart* (Discipleship Publications, 2005) 31-32.

⁵⁵ Richard Trench, *Trench's Synonyms of the New Testament*, Eleventh ed. (London: Kegan Paul, Trench, Trubner & Co., 1890), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 260.

Chapter 18

History of Indulgences in the Catholic Church.

The corruption of change of mind to "repent of sins" degraded into penance and indulgences for sins. Doing penance for sins committed, became a staple of the Catholic Church. It began long before the translations of the Scriptures into the vernaculars of the various nations. Recently, I had an opportunity to visit with one who had been a member of the Catholic Church in another city in Kansas. I asked this person what acts of penance were mandated by the one who took the confession. There were several given. If one so desires, he can investigate this in his own community to see how one may be absolved from his sin. Also, a rudimentary scan of the Internet will furnish many specifics. The Catholic sites will emphasize the necessity of the sacrament in the life of a Catholic.

"Two perversions of Scripture were the largest factors in developing the theory of meritorious penance. The first was the false interpretation of John 20:23, "Whosoever sins ye forgive they are forgiven, and whosoever sins ye retain they are retained." The passage was interpreted to mean that Christ conferred upon the Apostles and the Church judicial authority to forgive sins. . . .The second factor was the Vulgate's translation of the New Testament for the word "repent," *poenitentiam agite*, "do penance," as if repentance were a meritorious external exercise, and not a change of

disposition, which is the plain meaning of the Greek word μετανοέω, “to change your mind.” The Rheims Version translates the word “do penance,” though not uniformly, thereby utterly confusing the English reader who involuntarily puts into the New Testament word the Church’s sacramental invention.”⁵⁶

There is so much about the forgiveness of sins in the dogmas of the Catholic church, based upon its teaching of penance, that much time and space could be consumed. However, a few words concerning its practice of indulgences will certify the false teaching of "repent of sins". This runaway practice of indulgences can be noted in the very next paragraph where it speaks of "plenary absolution". Plenary absolution removes all punishment due to sin.

"The first known case occurred about 1016 when the archbishop of Arles gave an indulgence of a year to those participating in the erection of a church building. The Crusades furnished the popes the occasion to issue indulgences on a magnificent scale. Urban II,'s indulgence, 1095, granting **plenary absolution** to all taking the journey to

⁵⁶ Long, M. T. (2016). Sermon on the Mount/Plain, Comparison. In J. D. Barry, D. Bomar, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, D. Mangum, C. Sinclair Wolcott, ... W. Widder (Eds.), *The Lexham Bible Dictionary*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

Jerusalem was the first of a long series of such papal franchises. That journey, Urban said, **should be taken as a substitute for all penance.** Granted at first to warriors fighting against the infidel in the Holy Land, they were extended so as to include those who fought against . . .all enemies whatsoever of the papacy, . . . In these cases such expressions are used as “remission and indulgence of penances,” “relaxation or remission from the imposed penance,” “the relaxation of the imposed satisfaction,” and also “a lightening or remission of sins.”⁵⁷

Indulgences for building bridges and roads were common in England.”⁵⁸

The practice of dispensing indulgences grew enormously. Innocent III. dispensed five during his pontificate. Less than one hundred years later, Nicolas IV., in his reign of two years, 1288–1290, dispensed no less than four hundred. By that time they had become a regular item of the papal exchequer.

⁵⁷ *re laxatio, remissio, indulgentia de injuncta poenitentia*, etc. See Brieger for these expressions, and Brieger and Lea for numerous examples of papal indulgences of this sort.

⁵⁸ See Jusseraud, *Engl. Wayfaring Life in the M. Ages*, London, 1890, pp. 41 sqq., for many cases of indulgence for building bridges.

"These statements of the Schoolmen received explicit papal confirmation at the hands of Clement VI. in 1343. This pontiff not only declared that this "heap of treasure,"—*cumulus thesauri*,—consisting of the merits of "the blessed mother of God and the saints," is at the disposal of the successors of Peter, but he made, if possible, the more astounding assertion that the more this storehouse is drawn upon, the more it grows.⁵⁹ Like the wood of the true cross, it has the power of infinite self-expansion. It is, however, fair to say that the papal briefs granting this saving grace almost invariably gave it on condition of contrition and confession of the recipient."⁶⁰

Is it possible that what God gave to the inspired apostle Paul: "Are we to continue in sin that grace may abound?" (Romans 6:1) could be the fabric for the dressing of indulgences? In the source above it was spoken of as "a bank account" - the "fund of merits". There is so much in this account "to pay for all the *sins* of the living"!

⁵⁹. See Friedberg, *Corp. Jur. can.*, II. 1304 sq

⁶⁰ *Vere poenitentibu et confessis* was the common formula.

Chapter 19

The Difference between "Repent of Sins" and "Change of Mind".

Now that we have seen that the word used by God, and God having the Holy Spirit to inspire the writers of the New Testament Scriptures for the listeners to hear and read, means "change of mind", a contrast will be made between God's word and what men have to say. From the survey of 2016 mentioned above, quotations will be given of how this question was answered: "when you tell someone to repent of sins, what are you telling them to do? what does the word repent mean?". The resource of the one who gave the answer will not be identified, however, at random, churches across the United States were chosen in the survey, which had in their website as a part of one becoming a Christian that they must "repent of sins". In their replies, many would not or could not, answer the question with a simple answer. If one were to ask the same responders what is the meaning of the word "baptism", they would answer "immersion". Some who had "repent of sins" in their steps of salvation did answer "change of mind". Their answers were short, while the others gave many passages of Scripture with the word repent in them, without answering the question.

The translation by Hugo McCord will be used in the **Change of Mind** column.

<u>Change of Mind</u>	<u>Repent of Sins</u>
<p>Change your hearts, and be immersed, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ into the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. Acts 2:38</p>	<p>"Thanks for the question. Repenting is the act of a person changing directions. When a person comes to Jesus they change from living in one direction to living in the direction of Jesus; this is repentance. "</p>
<p>God exalted him, the Prince and Savior, to his right hand, to bring a change of heart to Israel, and forgiveness of sins. Acts 5:31</p>	<p>Are you ready to believe in Jesus as the Son of God, repent of your sins (that is: turn away from your sins), confess Jesus as Lord, be baptized into Christ, and live as a child of God?"</p>
<p>After they heard these things, they were quiet, and then praised God, saying, "Then God has given to the Gentiles a change of heart that leads to life." Acts 11:18</p>	<p>"Repentance is deciding and committing to chang-ing from our sins and transgressions", "is a turn-ing away from sin that requires change of heart (thinking)", "what sins are therefore remitted?", "Sin is what we are repenting of"</p>

<p>Now he orders all men everywhere to change their hearts, for he has appointed a day in which he will judge the righteousness of the world by that man whom he has appointed, Acts 17:30</p>	<p>Repentance is more than just feeling sorry or shame for the things we have done that are outside of God's will that we see revealed in scripture and lived out in the life of Jesus. To repent means to change direction, to go the other way, to turn 180 degrees in your life.</p>
<p>preaching, both to Jews and Greeks, a change of heart toward God and faith toward Jesus our Lord. Acts 20:21</p>	<p>They must believe what they have heard (Romans 10:9-10, 1 Corinthians 15:1-11). The message of the gospel will convict a person of their sins if they believe it. This state of belief causes the believer to repent of their sins. Sins are transgressions of God's laws (1 John 3:4). All have sinned (Romans 3:23). Repentance is a deliberate change of allegiance from Satan and self to God.</p>
<p>King Agrippa, I obeyed the heavenly vision, and I began</p>	<p>"Jerry, I am not sure what you are needing so allow me to begin with these passages</p>

<p>calling on those in Damascus, and then those in Jerusalem and all Judea, and among the Gentiles, to change their hearts and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with a change of heart.</p> <p>Acts 26:19-20</p>	<p>that are directly focused on repentance of sins. Please know that I am giving you the main verse and the context must be considered as well. May God bless you thru your study!" Mark 2:17, Lk 3:3, 15:10, 24:47, Acts 2:38, 3:19, Acts 5:31, 2 Cor. 12:21 Heb. 6:6.</p>
<p>Quotations are from : McCord, Hugo. <i>The Everlasting Gospel</i> Freed-Hardeman U. Kindle Ed</p>	

Report of Email Research **of Repent of Sins,** *Doug DeWindt*

1. Total Candidates = **100**
2. Percentage of Responses = **38% (38/100)**
3. Percentage of Candidates that used "repent of sins" in "our beliefs" = **81% (81/100)**
4. Percentage of Responses that used "repent of sins" = **70% (26/38)**
5. First reply was "Change of Mind/Heart" = **38% (14/38)**
6. First reply was "180 degrees/Turn around"= **32% (12/38)**

7. First reply was "Other" = **24% (9/38)**
8. Unique Responses (named/record #) = **#5, #21, #27**
9. Negative Responses (named/record #) = **#13, #18**

My Observations:

I believe this research has truly taught me some valuable lessons. On a basic level, the research helped me delve into the meaning of "repent". I spent long hours reading Mr. Jerry's emails, following discussions between church leadership all across the nation, and finding out what the Lord's church believes about the subject of repentance. I also spent a good deal reading scripture and commentary to support the scripture. I essentially have come away understanding that repentance was preached as a lesson of a change of mind/heart towards God and about salvation, rather than repeated statements of restitution or penance. Furthermore, I believe this lesson has taught me about how to appropriately approach topics of theology with other brethren. It taught me that love, compassion, honesty, and non-volatile words are the way to get people to respond earnestly; to never seek to trick or scold a brother, but just to converse with them. Finally it really helped improve my information-gathering techniques and taught me how to use Alpha5 database software, which had been previously unknown to me. Doug DeWindt, Aug, 10, 2016

Chapter 20

God Uses Both the Noun and the Verb.

The usage of a noun and verb in Greek in a sentence is much the same as in English. "Although Greek nouns may be analyzed much like English nouns, their classification is more precise."⁶¹ "A noun is a word that refers to a thing (*book*), a person (*Betty Crocker*), an animal (*cat*), a place (*Omaha*), a quality (*softness*), an idea (*justice*), or an action (*yodeling*)"⁶².

The usage of the noun in the koine Greek is like the use of the noun in American English. Its meaning has to do with a person place or thing. In the New Testament Scriptures, when one changes his mind towards God then he comes into the place of now being with God. This is his condition, his place. "His life is hidden with Christ in God." (Colossians 3:3)

Jesus said: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly". Life in this passage of Scripture is a place, a condition, a state in which one enters when he is in Christ Jesus.

⁶¹ Thoralf Gilbrant, ed., *Greek Grammar Index*, (Springfield, IL: World Library Press, Inc., 1994), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Chapter 5. Nouns".

⁶² <https://www.merriam-webster.com/dictionary/noun>

The apostles were thrown into prison because they were preaching what God was doing in the name of Jesus, and of his resurrection. "But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them out, and said,²⁰ 'Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people all the words of this Life.' And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach." (Acts 5:19-21) They proclaimed "to the people all the words of this Life."

It is interesting to see how the translators of the English Standard Translation capitalized the word life in this passage. This emphasizes that the new condition of which one is in, is Life. God mandated that Paul preach to the "Gentiles, to change their hearts and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with *a change of heart* (noun – place)."⁶³

This place is all-consuming. It is where the whole man "love(s) the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind." (Matthew 22:37)

This condition is the whole, there is nothing lacking. The Scriptures render the meaning of it this way: "God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give **repentance (NOUN - condition or**

⁶³ McCord, Hugo. The Everlasting Gospel (Kindle Locations 6477-6479). Freed-Hardeman University. Kindle Edition

state) to Israel and forgiveness of sins." (Acts 5:31)
"When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted **repentance (NOUN - condition or state)** that leads to life.'" (Acts 11:18)

The old is dead and the new is alive. "For the death he died he died to sin, once for all, but the life he lives he lives to God."¹¹ So you also must consider yourselves dead to sin and alive to God in Christ Jesus." (Romans 6:10-11) This Life is complete.

The two Greek words in the New Testament for which translators have used repent and repentance are: μετανοέω (verb) and μετάνοια (noun). Like in any language the difference in their usage, that is, between the noun and verb, is significant. The TDNT pointed out this fact in regards to the usage of the words in the writings of the apostle Paul. "Paul uses the verb only once, the noun 4 times (once in Past.)."⁶⁴ When God had the Holy Spirit to inspire the apostle Paul to write Scriptures, he had him use the noun.

μετάνοια (*metanoia*). noun. fem. **change of mind, repentance.** *In the NT, primarily refers to a comprehensive change of one's orientation toward following God.* This is the noun equivalent of the

⁶⁴ Gerhard Kittel, ed. and Geoffrey W. Bromiley, trans., *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament – Volume IV*, (Grand Rapids, Michigan: WM. B. Eerdmans Publishing Company, 1964), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, 999.

verb μετανοέω (*metanoēō*) “to change one’s mind.”⁶⁵

"As the word μετανοια, which we translate repentance, signifies literally a change of mind, it may be here referred to a change of religious views, etc. And as repentance signifies a change of life and conduct, from evil to good, so the word μετανοια may be used here to signify a change from a false religion to the true one; from idolatry, to the worship of the true God."⁶⁶

The words for repent and repentance in the New Testament are not translated. They should be translated: "change of mind" and "change of mind". Both the verb and the nouns are found in the following verses of Scripture. "King Agrippa, I obeyed the heavenly vision,²⁰ and I began calling on those in Damascus, and then those in Jerusalem and all Judea, and among the Gentiles, **to change their hearts** (verb) and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with **a change of heart (NOUN - condition or state)**". Acts 26:19 – 20 (TEG)

Paul in his preaching of the gospel of Christ exhorted the listeners to change their hearts and turn to God. After that, his teaching them to do all things as Jesus commanded is expressed by doing deeds.

⁶⁵ DiFransico, L. (2014). Repentance. D. Mangum, D. R. Brown, R. Klippenstein, & R. Hurst (Eds.), *Lexham Theological Wordbook*. Bellingham, WA: Lexham Press.

⁶⁶ Adam Clarke, *Adam Clarke's Commentary*, (New York: Abingdon-Cokesbury Press, 1826), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "Acts".

They were in the condition of, or state of, "a change of heart". Their hearts had been changed by listening to the gospel, believing it and obeying it. Now they are in Christ Jesus – a new place. Their hearts have been changed.

Now they are in Christ Jesus – a new place. Their hearts have been changed.

Alexander Campbell in his translation of the New Testament rendered the above passage thus: "From that time, king Agrippa! I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision: but declared, first to them at Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and through all the country of Judea; and then to the Gentiles, that they should **reform, and return to God, performing deeds worthy of reformation.**"⁶⁷

"In the original language of the New Testament, repentance (μετανοέω, *metanoëo*, vb.; μετάνοια, *metanoia*, noun) means a radical turning point in life. Today, we would liken it to doing a U-turn with our life."⁶⁸

⁶⁷ Campbell, Alexander. The Living Oracles (Kindle Locations 3819-3821). Kindle Edition.

⁶⁸ Bowland, T. A. (1999). *Make Disciples: Reaching the Postmodern World for Christ* (pp. 226–227). Joplin, MO: College Press Publishing.

Chapter 21

God Has Granted Change of Mind that Leads to Life

The following passages in Acts all make sense when we understand that now those who are being addressed are in Christ Jesus. They have changed their minds, obeyed the gospel, and are in the state or condition of those who have changed minds. Along with Paul's statement in Acts chapter 26, along with the following, emphasize how poor is the word repentance, and that God gives NOW a place for the ones who have turned to him.

"Repent (Verb) therefore, and turn back, that your sins may be blotted out,²⁰ **that times of refreshing** may come from the presence of the Lord, and that he may send the Christ appointed for you, Jesus, **"Acts 3:19-20**

"God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give **repentance (NOUN - condition or state)** to Israel and forgiveness of sins." **Acts 5:31**

"When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, 'Then to the Gentiles also God has granted **repentance (NOUN - condition or state)** that leads to life.'" **Acts 11:18**

"testifying both to Jews and to Greeks of **repentance (NOUN - condition or state)** toward God and of faith in our Lord Jesus Christ." Acts 20:21

"It must be also an entrance into a state, and that state the Kingdom of God, or present Church of God."⁶⁹

God says in his word "For you have died, and **your life is hidden with Christ in God**. When Christ who is your life appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Colossians 3:3-4) The Christian's life is hidden with Christ.

Men fear death most. Turning to the Author of Life, and being crucified with him and raised to life with him means that "you have died, (and) your life is hidden with Christ in God. When **Christ who is your life** appears, then you also will appear with him in glory." (Col. 3:3-4) This is where the one resides who has the change of heart. This is his condition, his state. So the command of God to preach the message of **this life** continues to be central.

They are also in a race! This race is not a sprint, but a condition they're in until their spirits leave their bodies. "Therefore, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us also lay aside every weight, and sin which clings so closely, and let us run (**verb**) with endurance **the race** (**noun**) that is set before us, (Hebrews 12:1)

Christians are also soldiers in "God's Army". "I

⁶⁹ M. F. Sadler, *Church Doctrine Bible Truth*, Pg 55, London: George Bell and Sons, York Street, Covent Garden. 1888

have thought it necessary to send to you Epaphroditus my brother and fellow worker and **fellow soldier**".(Philippians 2:25) "Share in suffering as **a good soldier of Christ Jesus**." ⁴ **No soldier gets entangled in civilian pursuits**, since his aim is to please the one who enlisted him." (2 Tim. 2:3-4)

This list could be extended to include many things in which the *μετάνοια* (noun) exist. Again, they are the changed in heart. They are the saved, those whose lives are hid with Christ in God.

One of the most common mistakes made about the meaning of repent or repentance is that it somehow has included in its meaning, "repent of sins". **The word sin is not inherent in the Greek word or in repent itself.** If it were, then we have God repenting of sin. God has never sinned, so when he "changes his mind" *REPENTS* - then it is not sin about which he changes his mind. Jonah 3:7-10 "Let them not feed or drink water, 8 but let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and let them **call out mightily to God**. Let everyone **turn** from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. 9 Who knows? God may **turn** and **relent** and **turn** from his fierce anger, so that we may not perish. 10 When God saw what they did, how they **turned** from their evil way, God **relented** (*repented* – ASV, KJV, RSV) of the disaster he said he would do to them, and he did not do it." Again, sin is not a part of the meaning of repent, it is not inhered in the word.

Chapter 22

What it Means to Have a Change of Mind.

Changing one's mind involves the whole person. Jesus said: "And you shall love the Lord your God with all your **heart** and with all your **soul** and with all your **mind** and with all your **strength**." Mark 12:30-31. Changing one's mind and turning to God is the changing of heart, soul, mind and strength from false god's (whatever they may be in one's life) to the true and living God.

The point is, when one turns to God, it is a major life change, one changes his mind about who is going to be the one he will follow as the director or master of his life.

Where, before confessing Jesus as Lord, and making him the master

when one turns to God, it is a major life change

of his life, he had another god guiding him. This is what change of mind is all about: Who am I going to choose to be the guide or master of my life! Paul puts it this way: "And you were dead in the trespasses and sins in which **you once walked, following the course of this world, following the prince of the power of the air, the spirit that is now at work in the sons of disobedience**— among whom we all once lived in the passions of our flesh, carrying out the desires of the body and the mind, and were by nature children of wrath, like the rest of

mankind. But God, being rich in mercy, because of the great love with which he loved us, even when we were dead in our trespasses, **made us alive together with Christ— by grace you have been saved— and raised us up with him and seated us with him** in the heavenly places in Christ Jesus." (*Ephesians 2:1-6*)

Change of mind, causes a change of direction. One who has been going towards hell, **following the prince of the power of the air**, then changes his mind about God and the god of this world, then turns around and turns to the Creator. He has changed his mind about the direction he has been walking and is no longer going with the evil one, but has turned to go with God. The translated

***then changes his mind
about God and the god
of this world, then
turns around and turns
to the Creator.***

word from the New Testament Greek is to have a change of mind or/and a change of heart. Now, after that turning, one is on the narrow way that leads to life. This is a radical change from going down the broad way to a turn around and going up the narrow way. And **on this narrow way is where one finds life!**

The change of mind leads to life. Whereas, instead of one being **dead** in the trespasses and sins in

which he once walked, he is now **alive together with Christ**. The angel who came to let the apostles out of prison told them to "speak to the people all **the words of this Life**." Jesus is the way, the truth and the LIFE! ". . . and you killed **the Author of life**, whom God raised from the dead. To this we are witnesses." Their need was: " **Change your minds** therefore, and **turn** back, that your sins may be blotted out". (Acts 3:15,19)

There will be a time when those who are alive in Christ, and those who are dead in their sins - all will be judged by Christ. Acts 17:30-31 "The times of ignorance God overlooked, but now **he commands all people everywhere to *change their minds* because he has fixed a day on which he will judge the world in righteousness by a man whom he has appointed**; and of this he has given assurance to all by **raising him from the dead**."

Notice, how again and again we are taken to the gospel. Those proclaiming the message keep bringing to our attention the resurrection of the Christ!

Chapter 23

Now Under the New Covenant.

The new covenant, for which the blood of Christ was shed, did not begin until the day of Pentecost, which was 10 days just after Jesus ascended into heaven. Just before he made that ascension he instructed the apostles "that repentance and forgiveness of sins should be proclaimed in his name to all nations, beginning from Jerusalem."⁴⁸

You are witnesses of these things.⁴⁹ And behold, I am sending the promise of my Father upon you. But stay in the city until you are clothed with power from on high." (Luke 24:47-49)

When Jesus said that repentance should be proclaimed to all, he used the noun. Remember we just learned that the apostles were to preach life, which they did. And this is what Jesus was telling the apostles to do beginning from Jerusalem. Repentance (noun – condition or state). Life was to be proclaimed.

There was no preaching of a repentance and forgiveness of sins in the name of Christ until the

***no preaching of a
repentance and
forgiveness of sins in
the name of Christ until
the beginning.***

beginning. The beginning was to be in Jerusalem after the apostles had been clothed with power from on high. Jesus gives the time and the

place where the gospel was to be first preached.

God had several of the Old Testament prophets to predict this in their writings of his word. (Isaiah 2:2 – 3, Jeremiah 31:31 – 34, Micah 4:1 – 3) All that came before the beginning in Jerusalem was under the old law, the Old Testament. What John the Baptist and Jesus did in their proclamations during the lifetime of Jesus were under the old law.

For example, "the baptism of John" was no longer in effect. It is not the one baptism of the New Testament. John records that Jesus baptized more than John. (John 4:1 – 2) Both of them were preaching the same message and doing the same work of getting the children of Israel ready for "the beginning".

In Acts 19 the apostle Paul was back in Ephesus and it was in that place where he found some disciples and he asked them "Did you receive the Holy Spirit when you believed?" They answered they had not heard if there is a Holy Spirit. Immediately Paul knew that they had a problem with their baptism, because Jesus said the disciples were to be baptized in the name of the Father, Son and the Holy Spirit. (Matt. 28:19) So Paul asked them "into what then were you baptized?" Paul explained to them that the baptism of John was no longer in effect and as a result they were then baptized into the name of Jesus.

What is the point in all of this? Simply that the message which was heard and obeyed as a result of

the preaching during the lifetime of Jesus and John was different than that which was to be proclaimed from the beginning at Jerusalem! Those in Ephesus, who have now been baptized in the name of Jesus, had not heard the gospel. There were things about Jesus that were proclaimed, but not those which were to begin at Jerusalem.

Several things are very apparent when they were baptized in the baptism of John. They were not baptized into the death of Jesus or buried with him in baptism or raised to walk in newness of life. (Romans 6:2 – 4) The baptism of John was under the old law and before the beginning of the new on Pentecost. Now it has changed. Christ is the mediator of the new covenant, and under this covenant one is to be baptized by the authority of Jesus or in the name of Jesus. Their sins had not been washed away in the blood of Christ. (Acts 22:16)

The change of mind was different, because under the new covenant it is proclaimed that Jesus is both Lord and Christ! In order to be saved one must confess that Jesus is Lord and believe in his heart that God raised Jesus from the dead. It would have been impossible for one to have done this under the baptism of John where Jesus had not yet died to be raised or to be confessed as Lord. He could not have had a change of heart concerning something that had not yet happened or which was not proclaimed to be heard.

Chapter 24

"Repent therefore of this your wickedness" (Acts 8:22)

Since I have stated a number of times already in this book "repent of sins" is nowhere found in the Scriptures, it may seem that this Acts passage contradicts that statement.

"Repent therefore this is your wickedness" (NKJV) is quite different than "repent of sins". Quoting from the New King James Version I shall give the proper translation instead of repent, then make some further comments on this passage and its context.

"Then they laid hands on them, and they received the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ And when Simon saw that through the laying on of the apostles' hands the Holy Spirit was given, **he offered them money,** ¹⁹ saying, **"Give me this power also, that anyone on whom I lay hands may receive the Holy Spirit."**

²⁰ But Peter said to him, "Your money perish with you, because **you thought** that the gift of God could be purchased with money! ²¹ You have neither part nor portion in this matter, for **your heart** is not right in the sight of God. ²² ~~Repent~~ **Change your mind** therefore of this your wickedness, and pray God if perhaps the **thought of your heart** may be forgiven you. ²³ For I see that you are poisoned by bitterness and bound by iniquity." ²⁴ Then Simon answered

and said, "**Pray to the Lord for me**, that none of the things which you have spoken may come upon me." Acts 8:17-24

First, notice that Peter said your **heart** is not right with God because you **thought** you could buy this power. He therefore said, change your mind and pray in regards to this wickedness. Several

***Several times, he
speaks to Simon about
his heart and
thoughts***

times, he speaks to Simon about his heart and thoughts.

Next, Simon was a Christian. "Then Simon himself also believed; and when he was baptized he continued with Philip, and was amazed, seeing the miracles and signs which were done." (Acts 8:13 NKJV)

This sin was singular. Before he became a Christian, along with all others in the New Testament, he did not hear in Phillip's preaching of the gospel message "repent of your sins". Simon offered money to the apostles to buy the power, that on whomever he laid his hands, they would receive the Holy Spirit. He thought with money he could buy the power of the gift of God.

Back early in 2018, upon reading an article in a religious journal, in which was stated: "repent of

sins (Acts 17:30)". I wrote the author of the article and asked this question: "I would appreciate it very much if you would give me the passage and also what the word repent means?"

This was his answer: "Through a simple English concordance you can find out who is to repent and of what they are to repent. For starters, you may consider Acts 8:22 and go from there."

My reply was: "I have searched diligently, and have not found a passage that says: 'repent of sins'. I would appreciate it very much if you would give me the passage and also what the word repent means? You noted in your article that baptized is immersed."

I waited for three months before asking this question again, and then he sent me this reply: "Brother Jerry, since Acts 8:22 apparently is beyond your ability to comprehend, I have nothing further to say beyond what I said to you in my previous response."

Brother Jerry, since Acts 8:22 apparently is beyond your ability to comprehend, I have nothing further to say

Five months later, after reading this in an article he wrote about that time, (this is what he said in that article) "**spiritually dead people can “repent”**"

(i.e., change their minds).\" I wrote the following to him: \"Again, when you use the word 'repent', is this what you mean?\"

I further wrote to him: \"There is a doctrine taught by many religious people and churches that one must 'repent of sins' to be right with God. The phrase 'repent of sins' is not found in the translations of the Scriptures. Yet there are those who keep telling one outside of Christ that they must 'repent of sins'. If this doctrine were in the Scriptures, one should be able to produce the book, chapter and verse. It's just not there!

In this same email I said to him, \"It seemed to me all along that you had a very sincere relationship with God. That is the reason (*referring back to the very first, original question*) I asked for you to give me your meaning of the word 'repent'\".

I have not heard from him for almost seven months.

Chapter 25

Marriage, Divorce, and Remarriage and "Repent of Sin".

From the Spiritual Sword of April, 1972 is the following "5. Aliens are commanded to **repent of their sins**. The Athenian idolaters were told that God commands all men everywhere to **repent** (Acts 17:30-1). If aliens are not accountable to any of God's laws then they could not **repent** for transgressing these laws. Aliens cannot **repent** of general sins without having committed specific sins. The murderers of Christ were commanded to **repent** (Acts 2:38). **They were guilty of the specific sin of crucifying Jesus** (vs. 23, 36) and were accountable to God. They had not violated the civil laws of the Roman empire, but the moral laws of God."⁷⁰

Nowhere does God have the Holy Spirit inspire the writers of the New Testament to write: "repent of their sins". Beginning from the day of Pentecost on, when the New Testament came in force, there is no passage telling one that is not a Christian (or even a Christian) to "repent of sins".

In the book of Acts, the Holy Spirit did not inspire Luke to use the word sin from 13:38 – 22:16. An assumption is made in this article that God was

⁷⁰ Calvin Warpula, Spiritual Sword, April, 1972, Vol. 3 No. 3 *THE LAW OF CHRIST IS ADDRESSED TO ALL MEN* Minister Berclair Church of Christ, Memphis, Tennessee

telling the Athenians to "repent of their sins." "God has overlooked the times of ignorance. Now he orders all men everywhere to change their hearts, 31for he has appointed a day in which he will judge the righteousness of the world by that man whom he has appointed, of which he has given assurance to everyone by raising him from the dead." *Acts 17:30-31* (TEG)

As one can observe, there is no mention of sins in the context of this passage. It is the assumption of those who use "repent of sins" that there is something about, whatever it may be, that they put in the meaning of repent some magical formula, forgiveness. There is no forgiveness in one changing his mind. In the accounts of Paul being approached by Jesus on the road to Damascus, it was for three days he had changed his mind before Ananias came to him and told him what to do to have his sins washed away, he did not know that Jesus tells everyone who is outside of Christ: "For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ." (Galatians 3:27)

Were they **"guilty of the specific sin of crucifying Jesus"**? Look at the audience of those who were listening to Peter: "Now there were **dwelling in Jerusalem Jews, devout men from every nation under heaven** Parthians and Medes and Elamites and residents of Mesopotamia, Judea and Cappadocia, Pontus and Asia, ¹⁰ Phrygia and

Pamphylia, Egypt and the parts of Libya belonging to Cyrene, and visitors from Rome, ¹¹ both Jews and proselytes, Cretans and Arabians—we **hear them telling in our own tongues the mighty works of God.**” Acts 2:5-11

Jesus was crucified on the day of preparation for the Passover. God did not reveal the nationality of those who were at the Passover when Jesus was crucified. It is now 50 days later when Peter is proclaiming Christ to these "from every nation". What Peter told them is this: "God has made him both Lord and Christ this Jesus whom you crucified." His whole sermon was addressing one thing, and that is, Jesus is the Christ, the son of the living God. That was what they heard, and to what God calls them to "change your minds" (and be immersed for the forgiveness of their sins). It is possible that some, or even many, of those who were at the Passover fifty days earlier were now at Pentecost. God did not reveal this matter or what was in the heart of each one present. But as he reveals to us in Acts 17:30, he commands all men everywhere to change their minds. The one who was doing the preaching had within the proclamation that of which they should change their minds, or as McCord translates, "change your hearts". The context of Peter's sermon was not "their sins".

This dogma of "repent of sins" is clothed with penance and restitution to the point of

it distorting what God says is the result of our obedience to the gospel. This doctrine is put forth as authoritative without any scriptural grounds. It is a doctrine which is formally stated and authoritatively proclaimed by the *Spiritual Sword*, its authors and the church which publishes that periodical. This dogma was not preached by the apostles. Nowhere recorded in the preaching of the gospel is there "repent of sins." Nowhere!

This is what God says about our sins: "For I will be merciful toward their iniquities, and I will remember their sins no more." (Hebrews 8:12) This is the new covenant made with those who have changed their minds, believed that Jesus was raised from the dead, confessed Jesus as Lord, and obeyed the gospel by being buried with Christ in immersion.

But those who distort the gospel say: "The sin of breaking the marriage vow may be

forgiven if it is repented of and if the guilty person sins 'no more.' If the man repents, his innocent companion should forgive him, and in that case no divorce would occur. But we spoke of a case where the divorce has occurred. Where that takes place and the innocent party has married another, there is no chance for the guilty party unless he **repents of his**

sins and turns to God in the gospel way and then lives in absolute celibacy the rest of his days."⁷¹

Therefore the false teaching of repent of sins causes people to think that, they have not really changed their minds and turned to God when they are still living with their spouse and family and children. There are preachers who teach that if you have been divorced without the biblical scriptural reason, then when you are baptized, you really have not done right because you have not left your spouse - you still live with the person to whom you are now married. (Mark 10:11-12 ¹¹ And he said to them, "Whoever divorces his wife and marries another commits adultery against her, ¹² and if she divorces her husband and marries another, she commits adultery.") So in regards to marriage and divorce then the issue is that a person really has not the forgiveness of sins when they obey the gospel unless they have "repented of their sins". In other words, God has not forgiven them.

Would you say there is a difference between telling someone to change your mind and repent of sins? This is the real issue of what God is bringing forth to us in his use of *metavoew* the Greek word that is translated repent. There is quite a difference between saying to a person change your mind and

⁷¹ G. C. Brewer, *CONTENDING FOR THE FAITH* (Gospel Advocate Company, Nashville, Tennessee) pages 61, 62 quoted by Calvin Warpula in *Spiritual Sword*, April, 1972

"repent of sins".

In the first place, there is no verse of Scripture in God's word that says "repent of sins". The word sin is not even used in the context where *metanoew* is found. Then why translate the Greek word, which is change of mind, into repent? Probably, the major reason for that is, penance and restitution is a doctrine of the ecclesiastical hierarchy of both, some Protestant churches - and the Catholic Church.

King James would not allow the translation of the Greek word for baptism which is immersion. When the King James translators rendered *baptiso* into the English language they were told by King James they were to use another word, so that it would satisfy all churches of that day.

If I understand what is being said here, it is this: the one who is going to obey the gospel must "repent of his sins" and then "live in absolute ??sinlessness?? the rest of his days". After searching digitally through the 48 pages of the Spiritual Sword in which the above statement is found, not one of the more than a dozen authors gave a meaning of "repent". Even though this word is not a translation, it's usage by biblical scholars in translating the Scriptures use it, but there is no meaning of sin inherent in the word. One should ask: "What are you telling me to do when you tell me to repent?"

Chapter 26

The Gospel of Christ.

God tells us he has only one gospel. In great detail the gospel message, as recorded in Acts, has been summarized above. Jesus, the mediator of the new covenant, has poured out this in Galatians 1:6 – 9: "I (*Paul*) am astonished that you are so quickly deserting him who called you in the grace of Christ and **are turning to a different gospel—**⁷ **not that there is another one, but there are some who trouble you and want to distort the gospel of Christ.**⁸ But even if we or an angel from heaven should preach to you a gospel contrary to the one we preached to you, let him be accursed.⁹ As we have said before, so now I say again: **If anyone is preaching to you a gospel contrary to the one you received, let him be accursed.**¹⁰ For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ." (Galatians 1:6-10)

I have 36 translations of the Scriptures in my digital library. (I mentioned a non-translation earlier.) Anyone who uses such a library knows that the search engine can instantaneously find a word or phrase. Many times, to check myself, I have searched the phrase "repent of sins". As yet the search yields zero occurrences. In other words, it is

not found in these translations, not in the Old or New Testament. "Repent of sins" is not in the original text of the Scriptures! It is not what was proclaimed by the apostles and other inspired messengers of the gospel, therefore there is no record of it in God's word. It is not a part of the gospel of Christ!

In the first letter to the Corinthians Paul was inspired by the Holy Spirit to write these words: "Now I would remind you, brothers, of the gospel I preached to you, which you received, in which you stand, ² and by which you are being saved, if you hold fast to the word I preached to you—unless you believed in vain. ³ For I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures, ⁴ that he was buried, that he was raised on the third day in accordance with the Scriptures," (1 Corinthians 15:1-4)

Here in verse three the gospel which was preached is that which Paul received. He writes "that Christ died for our sins in accordance with the Scriptures." Nowhere in the giving of the gospel does God say "repent of sins". In this passage it is Christ who died for our sins. It says nothing there at all about an action that I'm doing to take care of my sins. I didn't die for my sins.

***I didn't die
for my sins.***

Sins are remitted or forgiven in the death of Christ. Jesus shed his blood in his death. It is the blood of Christ that washes away our sins. ["In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace," (Eph. 1:7) "Jesus Christ . . . who loves us and has freed us from our sins by his blood". (Rev. 1:5)] In the New Testament Scriptures it is revealed that one is immersed to wash away his sins, calling on the name of Christ. (Acts 22:16) It is not the water in which one is immersed that cleanses him from his sins, but it is the blood of Christ when he unites with him in his death. To satisfy the justice of the Father, Jesus took our place of death.

"Do you not know that all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴ We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life." (Romans 6:3 – 4) When does the newness of life begin, before or after the burial? When Christians were baptized into Jesus' death they arose to walk in a new life! There is nothing said here about "repent of sins". Whatever repent means, is an action on man's part, not on the part of God. The blood of Jesus is that which cleanses man of his sin.

***When does the newness
of life begin, before or
after the burial?***

The Holy Spirit goes on to reveal: "For if we have been united with him in **a death like his**, we shall certainly be united with him in a resurrection like his. ⁶ We know that our **old self was crucified with him** in order that the body of sin might be brought to nothing, so that we would no longer be enslaved to sin. ⁷ **For one who has died has been set free from sin.**" (Romans 6:5-7) There is no "repent of sins" in the good news. Jesus is the one who died for

***There is
no
"repent
of sins"
in the
good
news.***

our sins and when one is united with him "in a death like his" the body of sin is brought to nothing. The old self has been crucified with him. He is now walking in "newness of life"! And that is what we all want, and that is what Jesus commanded: "speak all the words of this **life**"! And also, "they did not cease teaching and preaching that the Christ is Jesus." (Acts 5: 20, 42)

Then in the letter to the Roman Christians these words were written: "But what does it say? "The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart" (that is, **the word of faith that we proclaim**); ⁹ because, **if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.** ¹⁰ For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved. ¹¹

For the Scripture says, "Everyone who believes in him will not be put to shame."¹² For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek; for the same Lord is Lord of all, **bestowing his riches on all who call on him.**¹³ For "everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved."¹⁴ How then will they call on him in whom they have not believed? And how are they to believe in him of whom they have never heard? And how are they to hear without someone preaching?¹⁵ And how are they to preach unless they are sent? As it is written, "How beautiful are the feet of those who preach the good news!"¹⁶ **But they have not all obeyed the gospel.** For Isaiah says, "Lord, who has believed what he has heard from us?"¹⁷ **So faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ."** (Romans 10:8-17)

God has sent those who are to preach the good news. It is impossible for one to believe something they've never heard. Thus, the necessity of messengers to proclaim the gospel of Christ. Those that hear the gospel must confess with their mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in their heart that God raised him from the dead. Then finally they are to obey the gospel, that is, they are to be buried with Christ and raised to newness of life. This is what Paul said he and the Christians at Rome did. (Romans 6:3 – 4) Nowhere in all the proclamations of the gospel is anyone told to "repent of sins".

Since the phrase "repent of sins" is not found in the translations of the Scriptures which were written in Hebrew, Aramaic and Greek, then where is the authority to say that one must "repent of sins"? Those who say the Scriptures are their only authority must give the book, chapter and verse for such a proclamation.

Chapter 27

"Repent of Sins" and the Abundant Life in Christ.

Jesus said: "I came that they may have life and have it abundantly." (John 10:10) The theme in the book of Acts is Life, the life that one can have in Jesus Christ. Elsewhere, this life is alluded to many times, especially in the epistles.

The real action one needs to take in his life is to determine that he is going to follow the living God and not a god he has made up in his own mind. Then when he becomes a Christian, starting out as a babe in Christ, he will learn of more of which he needs to change his mind. It is possible for one to have a change of mind in regards to who he will follow, but has not yet learned of many things that he has been doing as sin in the sight of God, or things he should do as a child of God such as taking the Lord's supper. The Scriptures speak of those being born into the family as being new babes. The babes need to learn different things about their lives of which God does not approve, and then change their mind about those things.

The babes need to learn what God desires for them to do and not to do. The last passage in

***do deeds
worthy of the
change of mind.***

Acts where change of mind is found reads "to **do deeds worthy of the change of mind.**"

“Have you been thinking all along that we have been defending ourselves to you? It is in the sight of God that we have been speaking in Christ, and all for your upbuilding, beloved. 20 For I fear that perhaps when I come I may find you not as I wish, and that you may find me not as you wish—**that perhaps there may be quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder.** 21 I fear that when I come again my God may humble me before you, and I may have to mourn over many of those **who sinned earlier and have not repented of the impurity, sexual immorality, and sensuality that they have practiced.**” (2 Corinthians 12:19-21)

The Christians at Corinth still have quarreling, jealousy, anger, hostility, slander, gossip, conceit, and disorder in their lives. Paul wrote that they had not changed their minds about these things. In other words they didn't know how they should behave in the house of God (1 Tim. 3:15), because they are just babes in Christ. So now **they needed to change their minds about these behaviors as well.** Paul said he feared that maybe they had not changed their minds of the impurity, sexual morality and sensuality that they had practiced. **The word “practiced” is very descriptive** because it indicates something one does continually. It is not a one time act, but something that he keeps on doing. **This is where change of mind fits into God’s scheme of**

things. One needs to change his mind about this way of life, turnaround, and go the opposite direction, that is, **away from this practice** towards the way God wants him to live.

To the Christians at Colossae, God said they need to change their minds about past lifestyles. He said they may have some things they need to put to death.

Colossians 3:5-10 “**Put to death therefore what is earthly in you:** sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry. 6 On account of these the wrath of God is coming. 7 In these you too once walked, when you were living in them. 8 **But now you must put them all away:** anger, wrath, malice, slander, and obscene talk from your mouth. 9 Do not lie to one another, seeing that you have put off the old self with its practices 10 and have put on the new self, which is being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator.”

There are Christians who need to put to death certain old ways of living. The very expression of putting them to death means this is a very absolute and final condition. And so one changes his mind and makes a radical turn towards God and away from his old life of following Satan. Notice the emphasis at the end of the above passage of

Scripture where it says that "being renewed in knowledge after the image of its creator." And so it is that one is renewing his mind, **practicing to become like God.**

The whole significance is a change of mind, a change of direction. **And after one changes his direction he may find other things in his life that need to be changed. But that does not mean he's not a Christian because he sins.** In 1 John God declares if we say we don't sin the truth is not in us.

The point is, we sin, and then we confess our sin.

A distinction needs to be made between a change of mind and confessing.

A distinction needs to be made between a change of mind and confessing.

When one is striving to live the abundant life he then has things in his life that has not yet been changed. As we have read, Paul writes about the Christians at Corinth who still need to change their minds concerning their sexual immoralities, sensuality, gossiping, and other things. He was telling those Christians at Corinth they needed to change their minds of those things. They had not yet done this. They had changed the direction they were going, now going toward God and away from the evil one, but they had not yet changed their minds about some specific sins. Remember God said this in Colossians 3:7 – 8: **“In these you too once**

walked, when you were living in them. But now you must put them all away". In what were those Christians in Colossae once living? - "sexual immorality, impurity, passion, evil desire, and covetousness, which is idolatry." Colossians 3:5.

What does this have to do with new sins we commit as children of God? We have changed the direction in which we were going, but we step off the path, so to speak, and need to get back on the path. We are still in Christ Jesus, so therefore it is not a matter of turning around or changing direction, but getting back on that way that leads to life. We are going in the right direction toward God, so changing direction would mean to go the way that leads to death. What then is the Christian to do? He needs to

confess that sin! "If we say we have fellowship with him while we **walk in darkness**, we lie and do not practice the

What then is the Christian to do? He needs to confess that sin!

truth. 7 But if we **walk in the light**, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus his Son cleanses us from all sin. 8 **If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.** 9 **If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** 10 If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his

word is not in us.” 1 John 1:6-10. This is what God tells Christians to do.

Notice again how direction is highlighted in this passage. It speaks of two walks: one in darkness and the other in light. The ones who are walking in the light have the blood of Jesus, God's son, to cleanse them from all sin. We know we sin and need to be forgiven of those sins. What are we to do? Repent? No! We are to confess our sins and God is faithful to forgive us and turn us from all unrighteousness! Let us keep in mind that the one to whom we answer to is God. “If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us.” God says we sin. We say we sin. Those sins must be confessed in order for God to forgive us. Confessing sins is different from "repenting" - changing our minds!

Here is the message God gave to Paul to proclaim everywhere: 1) change of mind 2) turn to God, and 3) perform deeds in keeping with that change of mind.

(Acts 26:19-20)

Oftentimes messages like this are proclaimed: 1) repent of sins, 2) turn to God, and 3) keep on repenting of sins. Can you see anything wrong with this message? If so, what is the discrepancy from what is revealed in the scriptures?

God tells us to confess our sins. In other words, if I lie, I need to confess that I have lied. It is not a matter of repenting of that particular sin. I know I have sinned, there is nothing about which I need to change my mind concerning lying. Why, because it is not a practice with me, I do not consider it to be right to lie, but when I did lie that time, I sinned. I had stopped practicing lying a long time ago, but this time I may have been deceived by Satan and may have called this a little “white” lie and say it’s “alright”. So as a Christian I need to confess to God the sin which I have committed

As we walk along day by day, and if we sin, then we need to confess that sin to God. He will forgive! Even though the babe in Christ does not know of other things he needs to change in his life, he is still a Christian. If someone is telling people to repent of their sins in order to come into Christ Jesus, just how many of those sins do they really know? Can you think of people who had to be taught after they became Christians about a certain thing and then they changed it? Therefore, the message to those who are lost should be about their change of direction, their change of mind - a change from their gods to the true and living God. This is the message preached in the New Testament.

In the church in Corinth a man was living with his father's wife. This man was a Christian. When he

was immersed in Christ his sins were washed away. We know he was a Christian because of what Paul is inspired to write in 5:12 that we are to judge those who are in Christ, in the church, not those out of the Lord.

“It is actually reported that there is sexual immorality among you, and of a kind that is not tolerated even among pagans, for a man has his father’s wife. 2 And you are arrogant! Ought you not rather to mourn? Let him who has done this be removed from among you. . . . 4 When you are assembled in the name of the Lord Jesus and my spirit is present, with the power of our Lord Jesus, 5 you are to deliver this man to Satan for the destruction of the flesh, so that his spirit may be saved in the day of the Lord. . . . I am writing to you not to associate with anyone who bears the name of brother if he is guilty of sexual immorality or greed, or is an idolater, reviler, drunkard, or swindler—not even to eat with such a one. 12 For what have I to do with judging outsiders? Is it not those inside the church whom you are to judge?” 1 Corinthians 5:1-12

This man is a brother, a Christian, he had decided to follow God. But there was something else that needed to be changed in his life. He is to be judged by the church and the church is not to eat with him. What he knew about this sin we are not told. He

may be like the man and woman who were living together unmarried many years ago. The young woman did not know that she was living in sexual immorality. When as a babe in Christ, she learned that this was a sin, she stopped living with him, he then obeyed the gospel, and later they were married, had children, and were faithful to the Lord.

They changed their mind about this living together unmarried which is so common among many people in the world today. The world sees nothing wrong with this relationship. They do not understand that God calls this sexual immorality. “Now concerning the matters about which you wrote: 'It is good for a man not to have sexual relations with a woman.' 2 But because of the temptation to sexual immorality, each man should have his own wife and each woman her own husband.” 1 Corinthians 7:1-2.

In Paul's second letter to the Corinthians, he told them to forgive the brother whom they delivered to Satan and not to cause him to have much grief now that he has changed. He changed his mind about living with his father's wife. We do not know, but he probably confessed this sin to the church. “For such a one, this punishment by the majority is enough, 7 so you should rather turn to forgive and comfort him, or he may be overwhelmed by excessive sorrow. 8 So I beg you to reaffirm your love for him.” 2 Corinthians 2:6-8.

One may say, “What about Peter’s question? “Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, 4 and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, saying, ‘I repent,’ you must forgive him.” Luke 17:3-4. In this case the brother has not changed his mind about what he has done or what he is doing. It is necessary for one to rebuke him, to point out his sin to the place where he changes his mind, and says “I change my mind”. It took like possibly a shepherd of the congregation to seek him out, to rebuke him, and when he says "I change my mind" then we must forgive him.

Along with Peter, how many times? “Then Peter came up and said to him, ‘Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?’ 22 Jesus said to him, ‘I do not say to you seven times, but seventy times seven.’” Matthew 18:21-22 Also. God directs us in Colossians 3:12-13: “Put on then, as God’s chosen ones, holy and beloved, compassionate hearts, kindness, humility, meekness, and patience, 13 bearing with one another and, if one has a complaint against another, forgiving each other; as the Lord has forgiven you, so you also must forgive.”

Understanding what *repentance* is can really help us understand what is written in the book of Hebrews chapter 6, “Therefore **let us leave the elementary**

doctrine of Christ and go on to maturity, NOT laying again a foundation of repentance (noun - condition or state) **from dead works and of faith toward God . . .** 4 For it is impossible, in the case of those who have once been enlightened, who have tasted the heavenly gift, and have shared in the Holy Spirit, 5 and have tasted the goodness of the word of God and the powers of the age to come, 6 **and then have fallen away, to restore them again to repentance** (noun - condition or state), **since they are crucifying once again the Son of God** to their own harm and holding him up to contempt.” Hebrews 6:1, 4-6

God says it's impossible for some to come back to the state of their lives, hidden with Christ in God, in other words they just can't change their minds to go back towards him. They have made up their minds to walk away, to go the other direction, to follow again the evil one. They have decided that the things which are right in their own eyes are what they're going to do, the direction they are going to take. “You shall not do according to all that we are doing here today, **everyone doing whatever is right in his own eyes.**” (Deuteronomy 12:8) This state is something that is impossible for them; they just can't change their minds and get back to God.

Putting God's meaning to this condition brings into proper focus what the condition is. It changes our

understanding to help us to see that confession is what we need to do as we may sin on a daily basis. **It also brings into view the grace of God.** We know some about grace, but look how intensified it becomes when we get down on our knees and say to God “forgive me, forgive me of this sin!” There is no such thing as "repent of sins"!

Is it impossible for one to confess? As a Christian, he knows he has sins he needs to confess. He confesses those sins, and continues on that narrow, hard way to heaven. He hasn't changed his mind about God, or doing God's will. All of us sin and therefore all need to confess their sins. Knowing the real meaning of *repentance* helps us to understand what is written in the book of Hebrews about those that cannot come to that condition. Doesn't this understanding of the condition of change of mind and confession really fit the mold, the pattern of the New Testament?

Chapter 28

Change Your Mind toward God.

It can now be plainly seen that the Scriptures have accurately recorded the message which was to be preached, was for those hearing, the message to change their mind in accordance to what they heard. The issue was not the sins of those who were listening, but the issue then and now is who is my god. Is my god the one who created the universe and all the things in it, or is it someone or something which I have made up in my own mind?

In the NT ἐπιστρέφω occurs 39 times. This is the Greek word for turn, and it means to "turn 16, be converted 6, return 6, turn about 4. and turn again 3 times".⁷² "For this people's heart has grown dull, and with their ears they can barely hear, and their eyes they have closed; lest they should see with their eyes and hear with their ears and understand with their heart and **turn**, and I would heal them." (Acts 28:27) One is to change his mind towards God and turn that he might be healed.

Lystra is a city of Lycaonia, which is in the province of Galatia. It was in this city where the inhabitants wanted to make a sacrifice to Paul and Barnabas

⁷² James Strong, *Strong's Talking Greek & Hebrew Dictionary*, (Austin, TX: WORDsearch Corp., 2007), WORDsearch CROSS e-book, Under: "1994".

because they thought they were Greek gods. Paul exhorted them "that you should **turn from** these vain things **to** a living God, who made the heaven and the earth and the sea and all that is in them." (Acts 14:15)

Some years later God had the Holy Spirit inspire Paul to write to these Christians of Lystra : "But now that **you have come to know God**, or rather to be known by God, **how can you turn back again** to the weak and worthless elementary principles of the world, whose slaves you want to be once more?" (Galatians 4:9)

God is concerned that after having turned to him, our minds may be turned back to following the god of this world. Peter was inspired to say it this way: "For it would have been better for them never to have known the way of righteousness than after knowing it **to turn back from** the holy commandment delivered to them. What the true proverb says has happened to them: 'The dog **returns to** its own vomit, and the sow, after washing herself, **returns to** wallow in the mire.'" (2 Peter 2:21 - 22) God says it would have been better for them never to have known the way of life.

No one could know him to which they were to turn until they heard the message about him. When one comes to know that Jesus is the Lord and Christ and

the Father is the one in whom we live and have our being, then if one wants life, **he turns** to them.

Life is what most want and need. Notice all the commercials on television that include in their blurbs the word life. Jesus came that we might have life. He said, "I am the way, the truth, and the life." And it is through Jesus that we may come to the Father.

"But during the night an angel of the Lord opened the prison doors and brought them (the apostles) out, and said, ²⁰ 'Go and stand in the temple and speak to the people **all the words of this Life.**' ²¹

And when they heard this, they entered the temple at daybreak and began to teach." (Acts 5:19-21)
The message was life! And the life is only in God.

For three years Jesus prepared the apostles so they would be ready to proclaim this good news. Ten days after Jesus ascended into heaven, the apostles received power to take the gospel to all the world. They were instructed to start in the city of Jerusalem, and go throughout Judea and Samaria, and to all the earth. They were to proclaim a message of a change of mind and the remission of sins. (Luke 24:47)

Why is a change of mind so important? If one will not have a change of mind and turn to God he

cannot have his "sins . . . blotted out, that so there may come seasons of refreshing from the presence of the Lord". (Acts 3:19) As God's word says: "Change your hearts, and be immersed, each one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ into the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. 39The promise is to you and to your children and to all who are far away, as many as the Lord our God may call." (Acts 2:38 – 39 TEG) When those who were listening to Peter heard that God had made Jesus both Lord and Christ "they were cut to the heart".

Even though it is fifty days after the resurrection of Jesus, and on that Pentecost the people there were from many nations, their hearts were open to the proclamation of the good news of salvation in Jesus Christ. They had asked "What shall we do?" They were told to change their minds and be immersed for the forgiveness of their sins. It is very probable that some hearing this message were those who had cried out when Pilate asked what should be done with Jesus, they said "Crucify him, Crucify him!" God does not reveal how many of those listening to Peter have this mindset. It is not revealed what Peter said in speaking "many other words", but 3000 were immersed that day into Jesus Christ. Peter made it known that what he was speaking was really from the Holy Spirit. ". . . having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, he has poured

out this that you yourselves are seeing and hearing."
(Acts 2:33) The message was from God, and it was
God who was changing their minds!

Today, this very hour, the message is still the same.
When one hears the gospel of Christ, he is to change
his mind, and turn to God. This means that he is
now desiring to have Christ, the son of God, to be
his Lord and Master.

The issue is: Who is my God? In my futile past and
striving to direct my own way as controlled by
Satan, will I have a change of mind and turn to the
one and only true God and become obedient to him?
Will I now submit to his love and authority, and
confess that I believe that Jesus is the Christ, the son
of the living God? Will I now be "buried therefore
with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as
Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the
Father, (I) too might walk in newness of life."?
(Romans 6:4)

"King Agrippa, I obeyed the heavenly vision, 20and
I began calling on those in Damascus, and then
those in Jerusalem and all Judea, and among the
Gentiles, to change their hearts and to turn to God,
doing deeds in keeping with a change of heart."
(Acts 26:19 – 20 TEG)

"While he was speaking, Festus spoke with a loud voice, 'You are out of your mind, Paul. Much learning is driving you insane.' 25Paul replied, I am not insane, most noble Festus, but I am declaring true and sensible words. 26The king knows about these things, to whom I speak boldly. I am persuaded that none of these things has escaped his notice, for this has not been done in a corner. 27King Agrippa, do you believe the prophets? I know that you believe. 28Agrippa said, "In a short time are you persuading me to become a Christian?" 29Paul replied, I would to God, whether in a short or a long time, not only you, but also everyone who hears me today, that you would become what I am, except these bonds." (Acts 26:26 – 29 TEG)

The apostle Paul was in chains for his proclaiming the death and resurrection of Jesus, the Christ. After his own change of heart in regards to Jesus and his immersion into Christ, he began in that very city of Damascus, where he was immersed, preaching the life that is in Christ. He preached that all should "change their hearts and to turn to God, doing deeds in keeping with a change of heart."

Oh! How difficult it is to have a change of mind! But the one who has created us and all things about us has declared through his messenger, Paul, that all are to have "a change of heart toward (Him) and faith toward Jesus our Lord." (Acts 20:21 TEG)

Jesus, the Lord, is the one the Father sent into this world to be the Savior. To have faith in him is to believe the one who sent him, the only true and living God. Jesus said: "But I will warn you whom to fear: fear him who, after he has killed, has authority to cast into hell. Yes, I tell you, fear him!" Fear God. (Luke 12:5) Just three verses later he says: "everyone who acknowledges me before men, the Son of Man also will acknowledge before the angels of God."

Jesus said in another place: "No one can come to me unless the Father who sent me draws him. And I will raise him up on the last day. (John 6:44) Then in verse 63 he said: "it is the Spirit who gives **life**; the flesh is no help at all. **The words that I have spoken to you are spirit and life!**" (John 6:63)

It is Jesus whom one must believe, and do as he has directed, in order to have life. A change of mind and faith in Jesus! He is the Christ, the son of the living God, and Lord. God has said "faith comes from hearing, and hearing through the word of Christ." (Romans 10:17)

Jesus is the one to hear and believe! And Jesus said: "he who rejects me and does not receive my words has a judge; **the word that I have spoken will judge him on the last day.**"⁴⁹ For I have not spoken

on my own authority, but the Father who sent me has himself given me a commandment—what to say and what to speak." John (12:48 - 49)

The grace, mercy, and love of God can be seen in this place, where Jesus said, his words will be that which will judge us on the judgment day! Not only that, he very clearly says that these words came from the Father, the Father told him what to say and what to speak. Everyone should be glad to know just how they'll be judged. Jesus is the mediator of the New Testament and one can go and read exactly what he said, which came from God the Father.

Life is what all of us desire. Life is found in Jesus Christ because he said he was the Life.

Thank you Father for Life!!!