

Chapter 35 Conversion (Faith and Repentance)

*What is true repentance? What is saving faith?
Can people accept Jesus as Savior and not as Lord?*

Definition: *A willing response to the gospel call, in which we sincerely repent of sins and place our trust in Christ for salvation.*

- A. True saving faith includes knowledge, approval, and personal trust
1. Knowledge alone is not enough. (Rom. 1:32; James 2:19)
 2. Knowledge and approval are not enough: (John 3:2; Acts 26:27-28)
 3. I must decide to depend on Jesus to save me personally.
 4. Saving faith: *To trust in Jesus Christ as a living person for forgiveness of sins and for eternal life with God.* Includes:
 - a) Understanding the facts of the gospel.
 - b) An approval of, or agreement of these facts – plus a conviction/desire to be saved by Christ.
 - c) A personal decision to put my trust in Christ as my Savior. (John 3:16; John 6:37; John 7:37; Matt. 11:28-30; Heb. 7:25)

BDAG Greek-English Lexicon, *pisteuō* (meaning 2, with persons): “to entrust oneself to an entity in complete confidence, believe (in), trust, with implication of total commitment to the one who is trusted.”
 5. Faith should increase as our knowledge increases: (Rom. 10:17)
- B. Faith and repentance must come together
1. Repentance defined: *A heartfelt sorrow for sin, a renouncing of it, and a sincere commitment to forsake it and walk in obedience to Christ.*
 2. Repentance includes: (note similarity to elements of saving faith)
 - a) intellectual understanding that sin is wrong
 - b) an emotional approval of the teachings of Scripture regarding sin (including a heartfelt sorrow for sin and fear that one has offended a holy God)
 - c) personal decision to turn from sin and seek forgiveness from God
 3. Scripture requires both faith and repentance for salvation: sometimes both are mentioned (Isaiah 55:6-7; 2 Cor. 7:9-10; Acts 20:21; Heb. 6:1)
- BDAG *Lexicon* on *metanoia*, “repentance”: “a ‘change of mind’ . . . Also with the nuance of remorse (as regret for shortcomings and errors) With a focus on the need of change in view of responsibility to deity repentance, turning about, conversion; as a turning away [Heb 6:1:] turning away from dead works”
4. Sometimes only faith is mentioned (John 3:16; Acts 16:31; Rom. 10:9; Eph. 2:8-9)
 5. Sometimes only repentance is mentioned (Luke 24:46-47; Acts 2:37-38; Acts 3:19; Acts 5:31; Acts 17:30; Rom. 2:4)
 6. Examples from Jesus’ encounters with people:
 - a) Rich young ruler, asking him to give up his possessions (Luke 18:18-30)
 - b) Zacchaeus, declaring that salvation had come to him that day because he had given half his goods to the poor and repaid fourfold anything he stolen (Luke 19:1-10)
 - c) Woman at the well, asking her to call her husband (John 4:16)
 - d) Nicodemus, rebuking his rabbinic unbelief and pride in his own knowledge (John 3:1-21)
 7. Faith and repentance are one act, a turning *from* sin in repentance and a turning *to* Christ in faith.
- C. Both Faith and Repentance Continue Throughout Life (Matt. 6:12; 1 Cor. 13:13; Gal. 2:20; Rev. 3:19)