

Repentance

From Experiencing God Day by Day By *Henry T. Blackaby, Richard Blackaby*

Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God, and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel." (Mark 1:14-15)

Repentance is one of the most positive of all words. John the Baptist centered his preaching on repentance (Matt. 3:2, Mark 1:4, Luke 3:3). Jesus also preached repentance, commanding His disciples to do likewise (Mark 1:14–15; Luke 24:47). The angel predicted that the Messiah would save His people from their sins (Matt. 1:21). The requirement for this salvation would be repentance.

To repent means to stop going one direction, to turn around completely, and to go the opposite way. Repentance involves a dramatic and decisive change of course. God urges us to repent when the path we are taking leads to destruction. Repentance will save us from disastrous consequences! What a wonderful word! How comforting that the Creator loves us enough to warn us of impending danger!

Our problem is that we think of repentance as something negative. When we recognize our sin, we prefer to “rededicate” our lives to God. We may even tell others we have resolved to be more faithful to God than we were before we failed Him. Yet the Bible does not speak of rededicating oneself. It speaks of repentance! Repentance indicates a decisive change, not merely a wishful resolution. We have not repented if we continue in our sin!

Repentance involves a radical change of heart and mind in which we agree with God’s evaluation of our sin and then take specific action to align ourselves with His will. A desire to change is not repentance. Repentance is always an active response to God’s word. The evidence of repentance is not words of resolve, but a changed life.