

APPLYING TRUTH TO LIFE

*Grace Gatherings*

THEOLOGY NIGHTS | MAY 22, 2024

GRACE CHURCH  
WILLIAMSBURG



# Question 17

Define the role of repentance in **beginning** and **continuing** in the Christian life. Explain the importance of repentance for biblical counseling.

# Question 17

What biblical repentance is **NOT**:

- ✘ It is not limited to **changing** your mind.
- ✘ It is not limited to **stopping** some form or expression of sin in your life.
- ✘ It is not limited to **being sorry** for your sins.
- ✘ It is not limited to **repeating** a prayer or to saying a prayer or saying Jesus is God.
- ✘ It is not limited to **believing** facts about God and Jesus.
- ✘ It is not limited to something **you decided** to do.

# Question 17

What biblical repentance **IS**:

- ✓ Mark 1:15; Acts 20:21; Hebrews 6:1 = Faith/repentance (both/and)
- ✓ You cannot turn **from** sin without turning **to** Christ.
- ✓ “Repentance is at the heart of the gospel call.” *(John MacArthur)*

“It is entirely biblical for the church to make repentance the chief feature of its message to the unsaved world. After all, the gospel calls people to come to the One who can deliver them from *sin*. People who don’t feel guilt and want to be delivered from the power of and penalty of sin wouldn’t even want a deliverer.”  
*(John MacArthur)*

# Question 17

## I. **Converting** to Christ

- Luke 5:32; 13:3-5
- Jesus summarizes the gospel message to be preached: Luke 24:47.
- Peter and Paul were obedient to Jesus' command: Acts 2:38; 3:19, 26; 8:21-22; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20 = repentance/faith/change of lifestyle.



# Question 17

## I. **Converting** to Christ

- Biblical repentance is **turning away from sin**.
- Biblical faith is **turning to Christ**.
- The Bible **always** keeps these two aspects of salvation **inseparable**.
- This teaches us that **believing** in Christ and **living** for Christ are two sides of the same coin of **salvation**. Scripture does not teach that you trust in Christ for salvation and *later* make Jesus Lord of your life.

# Question 17

## I. **Converting** to Christ

- The error of “**accepting** Christ.”
- “Ironically, people [sinners] who ought to be concerned about whether Christ will accept them are being told by Christians that it is the sinner’s prerogative to ‘accept Christ.’ This **modified gospel** depicts conversion as a ‘decision for Christ’ rather than a **life-transforming change of heart** involving genuine faith, repentance, surrender, and rebirth unto newness of life.” *(John MacArthur)*

# Question 17

## I. **Converting** to Christ

- Where does this unbiblical teaching about repentance being simply a change of mind, or a feeling of being sorry, lead the church?
- It leads us into **aberrant** views and actions such as:
  - unholy “believers”/carnal Christians
  - easy-believism
  - second works of grace
  - a “gospel” that soothes rather than confronts sinful people



# Question 17

## I. **Converting** to Christ

- Repentance is a **gift** of God in the same way that faith is God's gift:

Acts 5:31; 11:18; 2 Timothy 2:25



# Question 17

## II. **Continuing** in Christ

- At **conversion**, repentant faith represents two sides of the same coin, and they must be seen as **happening together** and **at the same time**.
- This is important because as Christians **live out** true repentant faith (a continuing turning from sin to obey the Lord), that inner faith will always nurture a repentant heart and holy desires which can strengthen a believer to **persevere in godly living**:

James 1:21-25; 2:14-26; 3:13-18; Ephesians 4:17-24



# Question 17

## II. Continuing in Christ

- In other words, repentant faith desires to **put off sin** and to **put on righteousness**. True biblical repentance continues to operate in a believer's life as he/she **strives** to *“take no part in the unfruitful works of darkness,”* but instead to *“walk as children of the light...to discern what is pleasing to the Lord.”* (Eph. 5:8-10)



# Question 17

A theology of sin leads a biblical counselor to understand the three contexts of sin from which people suffer: the sin of living in a broken world, the sin they personally commit, and the sin others do to them.

Our **discipleship** of following, trusting, and obeying Jesus involves us in a shared effort of turning away from seeking to please self, and of turning toward seeking to please Christ in every aspect of our lives.



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