



# RIGHTLY DIVIDING REPENTANCE

A detail discussion on repent, repentance, and repenting from the Bible. A support discussion on learning the right definitions of repentance for your journey on understanding Salvation.

# Rightly Dividing Repentance

Many new Christians and even some of the ole timer ones have problems understanding whether or not if they are saved or not because they do not know if they repented correctly. God does require us in the salvation process to repent of our sins. But in salvation this is not a one-time event. Living a God-fearing life requires that we be in a continuous repenting process before God. Therefore, each of us needs to understand what this repentance process is all about.

There can be a lot of confusion over this term repentance if one has not been taught correctly. So, what I want to do is I want to get rid of all confusion and I want to look at this from the Bible and find out once and for all what is repentance. In fact, in today's society there are people attacking others, all claim to be Christians and they're all saying, well, you don't preach repentance, well, you preach it too hard, well, you don't preach it enough and all they want to do is fight and argue. This is totally against the Scriptures.

I have seen in my ministry over the years that oftentimes if you want to start a good debate or a good argument, just bring up repentance. And it's sad, but there are people that love to argue about this subject. Now, I thought about titling this educational document, Repentance in All the Bible or Defining Repentance, but I finally settled on Rightly Dividing Repentance because what I'm going to take you through the entire Bible and show you repentance in all of the scriptures.

I'm not going to go to every verse, but I will go from the beginning all the way to the end and talk about repentance in the Bible. And we're going to rightly divide repentance. You say, well, why do so many people argue about this subject? Well, it's because they have different definitions of what they believe that repentance is.

I am not going to give you my opinion of what I think repentance is. I'm going to give you what the Bible says that repentance is. I'm going to show you repentance from the Bible. And guess what? I'm going to show you from the scriptures that repentance, the word repentance, has several different definitions. The problem is there are people that get in their mind that

repentance has only one definition, while other people get in their mind, no, it only means this. And that's why there's the debate. That's why there's the argument. Because they are defining it their own way rather than defining it the way the Bible does.

Every time the word repentance shows up, we have to look at the context because it doesn't always mean the same thing. I am going to show you that from the dictionary and also from the Bible.

2 Timothy 2:23, "The Bible says, but foolish and unlearning questions avoid, knowing that they do gender strifes." The word "foolish" means stubborn or stupid. The word "unlearning" means uninstructed or a non-educated person. The word "gender" means to procreate or regenerate like kind. The word "strifes" means to battle or strive forward. There's a lot of people that like to strife, strive and cause strifes and gender strifes and cause arguments, especially over this subject of repentance.

And it says, verse 24, "And the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach, patient." This is what I am going to do; I want to be apt to teach and I want to be gentle. I do not want to strive. I do not want to cause an argument. Even though a lot of times dealing with this subject of repentance, it makes people want to argue.

It says, but to be patient and apt to teach. And then verse 25, "In meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves."

There are people out there that, whether they know it or not, they're literally opposing themselves, preaching something, and they're attacking another Christian, and they both believe in repentance. They both preach repentance. But this one says, yeah, but it means this. No, it means this. And they argue over it. It's like, why? Why are you doing that? Let's not argue. Let's be apt to teach. And in meekness, let's instruct one another. And that's what I'm going to do in this educational session. I'm going to rightly divide repentance. I'm going to show you in the Bible what repentance is. And I hope we'll all end up on the same page. Because when you all believe the same thing the same way, then there's no more arguments. The last thing that Christians need to do is argue. We are so close to the rapture of the church that we need Christians out there winning souls to Jesus Christ. Less arguing, more meekness. More apt to teach. More patience. More love.

Verse 25 continues saying “instructing those that oppose themselves, if God peradventure will give them repentance, now notice this, to the acknowledging of the truth.” We need to repent so we can obtain the acknowledging to the truth. We all need to come to the truth. And if we're preaching something or teaching something that is not the truth, we need to repent and come to the truth. Verse 26, “And that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will.”

What does the devil want to do? The devil wants to get people's minds and take them captive and get them in a state of mind where they think they're right and everybody else is wrong. Then they're going to attack others rather than working together with other Christians to serve the Lord.

So, we are going to study the word repentance from the Bible and the fact that the word repentance has several different meanings. When we read the Bible, we need to read the context, first of all, to see what's it talking about. But we also need not only the context, but we also need to look at the dispensation. We need to look at the time period in which it's preached.

Let us go to the dictionary to determine what man has defined repentance as. Using the 1828 dictionary the word repent means to feel pain, sorrow, or regret. To express sorrow for something past, to change the mind in consequence of the inconvenience or injury done by past conduct. The word repentance means, sorrow for anything done or said in theology, the pain, regret, or affliction which a person feels on account of his past conduct, sorrow, or deep contrition of sins, a change of mind, or a conversion from sin to God. So, the dictionary defines repentance as a sorrow, as a changing of one's mind, or a turning from sin.

Is this right? Is this correct? Is this what the Bible defines repentance as today? Now, today there's basically four different ways that people define repentance. And it's interesting to me that they don't see that there's more than one definition of the word repentance. Some people will only take one of the definitions and say, that's what it means every time it shows up in the Bible. Other people will take one of the other definitions and say, that's what it means, and so they fight over it. No, it means three or four different things. So, it doesn't just mean one thing.

The word repentance has different meanings, and it's easy to find in the Bible, if you go to the context of the Bible, what repentance means. Some people define repentance as simply changing your mind. So, repentance is a change of mind. Other people define repentance as feeling sorrow. So,



feeling sorrow for something. Other people say repentance only means a turning or a change of direction. And it's usually a turning from something to something. So, you have a changing direction or a turning, yeah, let me put that out here too, a change direction. Now which one of these is correct? Well, there's another one. There are people out there today that say that repentance, the word repentance means quit sinning. So, these are the four different ways that I found as I looked on the internet and I have in the ministry dealt with people, and as I looked at the dictionary and read the Bible and talked to people. In their mindset, there are people out there that say repentance means this, that, or the other thing, and to them, repentance means one of these four things.

Here's the deal, it can mean all of this, but in different passages in the Bible, it's a different meaning. So, it can be one of any of these. Now, it's not usually used as the last one, but if it is used as the last one, it's not in our dispensation.

What we are going to do is take the word "repentance" and rightly divide in according to Scriptures. By that I mean, we are going to go through dispensationally the Bible and look at what repentance is. I am going to give you an example of each one of these, because people that believe only one definition from the dictionary will go to the Bible and will try to prove that definition to them of what repentance means from one of these four things. And they will give you Bible verses to prove it.

People that believe that repentance means quit sinning must look at Genesis 6:6. If they believe that repentance is quit sinning then that means the first person to repent in the Bible was God himself. So, did God quit sinning? Well, I'm so glad God quit sinning. No! No, God never sinned. God can't sin. So, repentance doesn't always mean quitting sinning, does it? Because the very first instance of repenting in the Bible was God himself repenting.

Genesis 6:6 “And it repented the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.” So, it repented the Lord that he made man on the earth. God quit sinning that he made man on the earth. No, no, that is not the definition of repentance, and that's not how the word is used here in Genesis 6:6. People say, it means only changing your mind, that's the only thing repentance means, okay. So, and the Lord changed his mind that he made man on the earth. Is that what it's saying? Well, the context is, he killed everybody.

So, if God changed his mind that he made man on the earth and said, you know, I'm changing my mind, I created man, now I'm going to uncreate man, then he would have killed everybody, wouldn't he? But he didn't kill everybody, he killed everybody but eight people, he saved some people. So, which of these definitions do you think it's talking about there? Well, the King James Bible usually defines itself, almost always. If you read the entire verse, it says, and it repented the Lord that he made man on the earth, and it **grieved** him at his heart.

What is it to grieve? To grieve is to feel sorry. God was sorry that he made man because man became so sinful. So, which of these definitions is this verse talking about, that it repented the Lord? Did the Lord quit sinning, did he change his mind, did he turn from something, no. He was sorrowful, he was sad that men chose sin and went to sin. What did God do? He felt sorrow because man had fallen into sin, but yet in his mercy and his love, what did he do? He chose to save Noah, verse eight, and “Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord” and God saved Noah and his family.

When you're reading the Bible and you come upon the word repent or repentance, remember these four definitions and ask yourself, which one is it talking about? Because it's not always that, it's not always that, it's not always that, sometimes it's that. The context of Scripture will tell us what it means. There's more than one definition of the word repentance. And if it's only quit sinning, then Jesus Christ is a sinner, and you can't read six chapters into the Bible without finding God finally quit sinning. No, repentance does not mean quit sinning in this verse.

Let us go to Hebrews 12:15-17 “15 Looking diligently lest any man fail of the grace of God; lest any root of bitterness springing up trouble you, and thereby many be defiled; 16 Lest there be any fornicator, or profane person, as Esau, who for one morsel of meat sold his

birthright. 17 For ye know how that afterward, when he would have inherited the blessing, he was rejected: for he found no place of repentance, though he sought it carefully with tears.”

There are people that say repentance means sorrow, feel sorrow, and usually that's with tears you cry. And they say it means that everywhere in the Bible you come across the word repentance, it always means you feel sorrow and you cry. Why? Well, here's a guy that looked for repentance and he cried. If he cried, then he must have felt sorrow, but he didn't find repentance.

So, what didn't he find? He didn't find a change of mind. He cried over being found out for his sin, but he couldn't really bring himself to feel sorry for what he did because he didn't feel bad selling his birthright. He felt bad that he didn't get what he should have, but he didn't feel bad over what he did wrong.

So, repentance isn't always feeling sorrow. Repentance doesn't always mean shedding a tear. But there are some people that think, well repentance means you cry. There's a way to repent without ever shedding tears. Repentance sometimes in the Bible means a change of mind. Sometimes it means feel sorrow, sometimes it means turning from one thing to another.

2 Corinthians 7:8 “For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent: for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were but for a season.”

Paul in his writings does not use the term repentance very often compared to all the other places in the Bible that it's used. I find that quite interesting that Paul didn't preach repentance very often. Now he did. He did say it. But it's not even close to as many times as Jesus said it and John the Baptist said it and even Peter said it. Jesus, Peter, John, they preached repentance much more than Paul did. Why is that? Well, we're going to look at that as we rightly divide repentance.

Verse 9, “Now I rejoice, not that you were made sorry, but that you sorrowed to repentance. For you were made sorry after a godly matter that you might receive damage by us in nothing.” Verse 10, “For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death.” It sounds like the King James Bible is defining

itself and he's talking about sorrow and repentance. And by that he means you should feel sorry for something. Now what's the context here? The context here is there was a man in Corinth that was committing a sin and some of the people in the church stuck up for him and said, that's okay, just let him do it. And Paul wrote them a letter and said, no, this guy's sinning. He needs to get right with God. Now he's saved, but his flesh needs to be offered up to Satan for the destruction of the flesh so that he may reap what he sows and pay for it in the flesh. But his spirit is saved. If he's saved, his soul is saved. Ephesians 1:13-14 "13 In whom ye also trusted, after that ye heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation: in whom also after that ye believed, ye were sealed with that holy Spirit of promise, 14 Which is the earnest of our inheritance until the redemption of the purchased possession, unto the praise of his glory."

Romans 11:29 "For the gifts and calling of God are without repentance." Let's look at our definitions. The gifts and callings of God are without quit sinning. No, that doesn't even sound like good English. That doesn't make sense, so it can't be that definition. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance, without changing your mind. All right, that kind of works. If God's given you a gift and called you to do something, you shouldn't change your mind and say, I'm not going to do it, don't be a Jonah. The gifts and callings of God are without repentance, or without feeling sorrow. Well, no, sometimes you feel sorrow for certain things. It must be number three. For the gifts and callings of God are without repentance, without turning from. If God has called you to do a job, and he's given you the gift, you should turn from that, you should follow that, and do what God says. So, you see, there's different definitions of the word repentance, and the context mandates what it means when you read it. You cannot get in your head this idea, repentance only means this one thing, and then try to read the Bible and force what you believe that the word means into that. You have to look at the context, you have to rightly divide, you have to understand.

There is more than one definition of the word repentance. Acts 20:21, we read here, here's the apostle Paul, and he says, "Testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ." Now, what is he saying? Repentance toward God, quit sinning toward God. How do you quit sinning toward God? Do you, like the Pharisees, make a big show and say, look at me, God, I'm not sinning, is that? No, that doesn't sound like the definition there. Let's try that again. Repentance toward God. Change your mind toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. Well, that doesn't, I mean, it



kind of works, but it doesn't make much sense. Feel sorrow toward God? Or does it mean turning from idols, turning toward God? Well, that makes sense if repentance is a turning. All right, so you turn to God from idols, by the way, because Paul, and I'll show you that a little later, Paul was going out preaching the idol worship. So, turn from your false gods, idols, to the true God, and then trust Jesus Christ.

There are some places in the Bible where it does look like repent means quit sinning. Look at Revelation 2, 21-22 “21 And I gave her space to repent of her fornication; and she repented not. 22 Behold, I will cast her into a bed, and them that commit adultery with her into great tribulation, except they repent of their deeds.” Except they turn from their deed of what? Fornication and adultery.

Acts 8:22 “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee.” So, they say repent of your wickedness means quit sinning. Well, it does mean turn from your wickedness to Christ. But is he saying quit sinning there, or is he saying feel sorry for it? It sounds like he's telling you to feel sorry and change your mind, because it says perhaps if the thought of thy heart may have forgiven thee. The thought, your mind, is where your thoughts come from. So don't think that way and feel sorry for what you did.

So, you have to study the Bible, you have to read the Bible, you have to look up repent, repentance, repented, repenteth. And when it shows up in the Bible, you have to remember, okay, it can mean one of these things. And very few times does it ever mean number four, if any. It means more number three, or number two, or number one. So, I don't tell people repent means quit sinning, because that will confuse someone into thinking, well, I got to do works to get saved, so that means I got to quit sinning to get saved. If salvation is by quit sinning, then salvation is a works gospel. And then we have a problem. Now we're not saved by grace through faith, we're saved by works. If we're saved by works, then we're not saved, because no one has ever lived a sinless life but Jesus Christ.

And I want to show you how to rightly divide repentance. Because all throughout the Bible, repentance is preached, but it means different things at different dispensations or different times as it's preached to different people. And I want to show you that, because otherwise, you'll end up like one of these lordship salvation people with a false gospel and a gospel of

quit sinning and thinking you're saved by your works. I want you to see we're not saved by works, we're saved by faith in the gospel.

The word repent is found 46 times in 43 verses in the King James Bible. Repented, past tense, is found 32 times in 32 verses in the King James Bible. Repenteth, E-T-H, present tense, repenteth, is found five times in five verses in our Bible. Repenting, the gerund form, I-N-G, is found only once in one verse. And then, of course, the word repentance. Repentance is found 26 times in 26 verses in our King James Bible. But is the word repentance always used to mean the same thing? If so, and it only means, like some say, quit sinning, then we have a problem, like I've already stated. In Genesis 6-6, God finally quit sinning. No, no, no, God felt sorry. To feel sorrow is one of the definitions. So, it cannot be denied that the word repentance has more than one definition. And we need to understand that.

2 Timothy 2-15 tells us to "Study to show ourselves approved unto God, work that needeth not to be ashamed, rightly dividing the word of truth." So that is, in order to rightly divide repentance, we need to look at the context and in what dispensation it is preached, by whom it is preached, and why it was preached. Why are they saying repent? What are they saying to turn from, to turn to? Why are they telling a person to change their mind from one thing to another? Why are they telling people they ought to feel sorry for something? Why are they preaching repentance? Who is preaching it and why? So, we're going to look at the Old Testament.

Now in the Old Testament, repentance shows up a bunch. But I was surprised it didn't show up as much as I thought. And oftentimes, I was very surprised, when in the Old Testament, if you'll do a Bible study on repentance or repent, and you'll use the ESWORD program that I've told you about, it's God who's repenting almost more than man's repenting.

Oftentimes it says, and God repented of what he was going to do to them. And God repented of what he was going to do to them for their sin. Because they repented and got right. Then God repented. So, God is repenting just as much as man is. But he's not quit sinning.

God doesn't quit sinning because God's never sinned. So, when the Bible says that God repented of something, it says he changed his mind. He was going to do this, now he's going to do this. For example, I believe it's the book of Jonah. And in Jonah, God was going to kill

all the people of Nineveh. And he said, “Now you go and you preach to them and give them an opportunity to get right, to repent.” And what did they do? They changed. They turned from what they were doing to doing it right. They changed direction. And what happened? God repented of what he said he was going to do to them and destroy them. He changed his mind. God repented.

## OLD TESTAMENT VERSES

Jeremiah 26.13, “Therefore now, amend your ways in your doing, or obey the voice of the Lord your God, and the Lord will repent him of the evil that he hath pronounced against you.” So, it's God saying, stop doing this, that, and the other thing, and then I'll repent. God is

saying, if you'll repent, turn from what you're doing wrong. Yeah, we could say, quit sinning, because I guess they were sinning. You know, we can make this number four possibly part of it, but it's all right there in number three. Why would we have to make our own definition of number four? But he says there, if you quit doing what you're doing, then I'll repent. I'll change my mind of chastising you, and I'll have grace on you.



Ezekiel 14. So, it's interesting to me that God's repenting in the Bible almost as much as man, because God made a covenant with Israel under this Old Testament law, and it was an if-then covenant. God says, if you do this, then I will do this. I was just reading through Leviticus, and God says, “If you will live right, if you will do right, if you'll do all these things, then I will put showers of blessings on you. And the rain will fall, and your crops will grow, and all these good things will happen to you if you do what I say and keep my law.” But if you do not do what I say and do not keep my law, then, God says, there will be people coming to your land and take you slaves. There will not be rainfall. You will suffer, you'll have persecution, you'll be besieged. And God says, so it's an if-then thing. I still don't understand how people say, well, under the law it was by faith, and it was never by works. The law was a works set up with God and man. And God said, if you will do the law, then I will bless you with these blessings. That Old Testament law was a works set up. We're not under works today, but it was about works back then. So, God is telling you, if you'll do this, if you'll do

that, well, then I'll repent of what I was going to do to you. God will change his mind from what he was going to do if they got right. Ezekiel 14:6. "Therefore say unto the house of Israel, thus said the Lord God, repent and turn yourselves from idols and turn away your faces from all your abominations." What is going on here? Well, they're following false idols. What do they need to do? They need to turn from the idols to God. And it says right there, turn yourselves from your idols. So that's what it means by repentance. It means to turn from idols.

Ezekiel 18:30 "Therefore I will judge you, O house of Israel, every one according to his ways, saith the Lord GOD. Repent, and turn yourselves from all your transgressions; so iniquity shall not be your ruin." So, turn yourself, all right? Turn from, change your direction, quit going in the way of sin, repent. Does he mean only change direction? Or when he says repent, is he saying feel sorry? Be sad for the fact that you're a sinner and feel sorry for your sins. Either way, it's all there in the word repent.

So that is the Old Testament definition of repent. And there is an element of turning from sin in the Old Testament. There is an element of stop sinning in the sense that don't do that anymore, or you won't receive the blessing, rather you'll be cursed for the evil you've done.

Now we're not under that today. We're not under the Old Testament or the New Testament. Now we're under grace.

## **NEW TESTAMENT VERSES**

The New Testament didn't start until Jesus literally died, because the Bible tells us in Hebrews that a testament starts with the death of a testate. So, even though John the Baptist is in the book of Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, in our timeline, old John was still right here, before Jesus died, still in the Old Testament. Because the Old Testament is until Jesus died, the New Testament is after Jesus' death.

So up shows this guy named John. And John starts preaching, and in Matthew chapter 3, notice what John says. Matthew 3:1 "In those days came John the Baptist preaching in the wilderness of Judea," and saying, "repent ye." The first thing John does is he shows up, he starts saying, repent. You ought to repent. And as he's there, he's going, and he's talking to them, and he says there in verse 8, "Bring forth therefore fruits, meat for repentance."

John tells them, look, you've got to repent, and then bring forth fruits, meat for repentance. So, what is he saying? Is he saying, quit sinning? Is he saying, feel sorrow? Is he saying, change your mind? Or is he saying, turning from one thing to another? Whatever he's telling them, he's telling them, bring some fruit to prove that you repented. So, it sounds like to me, he's telling them, look, feel sorry for the sin you've done, and bring some fruit to prove that you feel sorry that you're a sinner. That's what I read when I read verse 2. "And so what he's doing, he's telling them, repent." Now there's something connected to his repentance. When he preaches repentance, it's called repentance of what? A baptism of what? It's identified with baptism.

Matthew 3:11 "I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance: but he that cometh after me is mightier than I, whose shoes I am not worthy to bear: he shall baptize you with the Holy Ghost, and with fire:" I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance. But he that cometh after me is mightier than I. So, what you have John preaching here, is he's preaching what the Bible calls a baptism unto repentance. What does that mean? He's going around, literally, John the Baptist, and telling people, get dumped in water, get baptized in water unto repentance. So, he's preaching water baptism. Now people today tell you, yep, and that's the gospel for today. And to get saved, you have to be baptized in water. That's not what the Bible teaches.

We're not under the ministry of John. We're under the ministry of the apostle Paul. And we're not saved by water baptism. But before Jesus died, there was a water baptism, and people had to be baptized in water. And they had to do that in order to fulfill what God said. But what was that repentance for? That wasn't for salvation. That's not how we're saved today. What is the baptism unto repentance? Well, let's look at some more verses. Go to Mark chapter one verse four. When we look at repentance, we find out there's a reason for why they preach repentance.

Mark 1:4 "John did baptize in the wilderness, and preach the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." He preached, get water baptized to repent. All right? Water baptism to what? To turn from something? To change direction? To feel sorry, to change your mind, or to quit sinning. It says baptism of repentance for the remission of sins. So, there was a

baptism of John for a remission of sins. Well, what does that mean? It shows that these people were looking for forgiveness in John's ministry.

If a Jew was looking for forgiveness and looking for salvation, they were to come to John the Baptist and obey and be baptized in water. And they were to do that unto repentance. They were to do that to show that they were turning to something. What were they turning to through that water baptism? Well, that is found in Luke 3:1-3.

Luke 3:1-3 “1 Now in the fifteenth year of the reign of Tiberius Caesar, Pontius Pilate being governor of Judaea, and Herod being tetrarch of Galilee, and his brother Philip tetrarch of Ituraea and of the region of Trachonitis, and Lysanias the tetrarch of Abilene, 2 Annas and Caiaphas being the high priests, the word of God came unto John the son of Zacharias in the wilderness. 3 And he came into all the country about Jordan, preaching the baptism of repentance for the remission of sins;”

Now people will go to these verses today and say, and that's for us today. And water baptism is essential for salvation, and you have to be baptized in water in order to be saved. What are they missing? What are they forgetting? Well, first of all, it's still Old Testament. It's not New Testament until after Jesus died. Secondly, it's water baptism for repentance. What was water baptism for?

In the book of John 1:31, John the Baptist tells us the reason that he baptized in water. John 1:31 “And I knew him not (Jesus – The Lamb of God): but that he should be made manifest to Israel, therefore am I come baptizing with water.”

John the Baptist said, I baptize people in water to make the Messiah what? Manifest to Israel.

So, this water baptism unto repentance was for who? Israel (Jews). If you're not Israel (Jews), then this is not for you today. This was for the Jews. And what was it for? It was for Israel to make Jesus manifest to them. In other words, it was to make Jesus manifest to the Israel that he was their Messiah. And he even quotes there that he fulfilled prophecy, that he was the voice of one crying in the wilderness, making straight the way of the Lord.

So, John the Baptist's ministry of baptism unto repentance was a ministry of a Jew to Jews to say, hey, repent because your Messiah is here. That is not the gospel of salvation for us today. Our Messiah is not here. Jesus Christ is in heaven. But he came as their Messiah, and you wanted to accept him as your Messiah, you had to get baptized in this repentance. That repentance was not for us. We cannot do that repentance today. We can't go out and have a guy baptize us so that we believe that Jesus is the Messiah. That's for Israel.

Now, I believe that baptism will be in the tribulation again, just as soon as the rapture comes. But until the rapture, that's still back as part of the Old Testament, and it's not the gospel of salvation in the church age, which is the gospel of Paul, which I'll look at here in a minute. So, John the Baptist's ministry was for Israel.

After John was Jesus. Jesus had a ministry for three and a half years, and we read about it in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John. In Jesus' ministry, what did Jesus preach? Well, Jesus preached repent. Did he preach salvation, the same as is preached today by the Apostle Paul? Or did he preach something else? What did Jesus mean by repent? When Jesus went and preached repent, what did he mean? Matthew 4:17, Jesus says these words. "From that time, Jesus began to preach and to say, repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand."

So, when Jesus preached repent, he said repent, what did he mean? He meant change your mind. He meant feel sorrow for your sin. He meant turn from something to something. Why? Because of the kingdom, he said repent for the kingdom is at hand. Now what kingdom was Jesus Christ talking about? Jesus Christ came as the king of the Jews, and he came to rule over the Jews. So, the kingdom is at hand, what kingdom? The kingdom for Israel. You see, Jesus was a Jew, and he said **He came only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel**, and he came to bring in a kingdom. Well, what happened? They killed the Messiah. Israel rejected the Messiah.

He gave them chance after chance after chance, but in Acts 7, they stoned Stephen. The Bible says that God, Jesus Christ, was sitting on the right hand of the Father. He was sitting in heaven, and he stood up, and he was standing, and then he sat back down after they stoned Stephen. Then God called this guy named Paul. And then we have the church age, and then we have Jesus Christ revealing things to Paul, and then we have in the church age, God going to Gentiles and saving Gentiles. And I'll get to that in a minute.

But the repentance that Jesus preached was repent because the kingdom is coming. So, get ready, I, your king, am here. So, to feel sorry for your sin, and what is water baptism? Well, it was to get clean. Clean up the outside because the king is here. And that's what it was about. You don't go before a king dirty and stinky and smelly. If there's a king, the king wants people that come into his presence clean. So, there John the Baptist was baptizing people in water and saying, hey, this is so you'll know there's someone in your presence that desires cleanliness. And that's the king of the Jews.

Jesus' ministry, when he preached repentance, he was preaching repent because the kingdom is coming, and I am the king. That's not the gospel of salvation today. Jesus comes as the king when? At the battle of Armageddon. When Jesus returns, he comes back as king of kings and lord of lords. And then he will rule in the millennial kingdom for 1,000 years. That's when he has his kingdom.

He could have had his kingdom back here, but the Jews rejected that kingdom. So it will now be in the Millennium, after the Great Tribulation. So that's what you got to understand as we rightly divide repentance.

Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, when they preach repentance in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, that is for Israel. That is not for the church. Yet I know preachers that'll go through the Bible like a bull in a China cabinet, and they'll go to Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, and they'll tell you, now that means you got to quit sinning to get to heaven, and what are they doing? They're preaching a gospel from the Old Testament and trying to tell you you're saved by works. They're not even in the New Testament where we are in the church age. So, they're not rightly dividing repentance, are they? Unfortunately, no.

Mark 2.17 says, "When Jesus heard it, he said to them, they that are whole have no need of a physician but they that are sick. I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance." Hey sinners, turn from your sin and come to me. Yeah, quit sinning, why? Because the king is here, but that's not salvation for today. Turn from what you're doing and come to me, from you to Christ, turning to Christ. That was before Jesus died.



If someone today tells you that repentance means quit sinning and they try to tell you that today that's how you're saved, they're preaching a works gospel, they're not preaching grace. Because of the church age, salvation is by grace through faith, not by works.

You can't force that repentance into Paul Ministry because quit sinning won't work for salvation today because we're not saved by work.

Luke 5:32 But I came not to call the righteous but sinners to repentance.”

Jesus preached repentance. Now, what about Peter's ministry? Go to Acts 2. After Jesus rose again from the dead, Peter comes up, and Peter begins to preach in Acts 2. This is New Testament, this is after Jesus died, and here Peter comes preaching repentance, and look at what Peter says. Acts 2:38, “Then Peter said unto them, repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

So, Peter preaches repent and be baptized. Now, what was he saying when he said repent and be baptized? And to whom was he saying it? When Peter preached repent and be baptized, look at what he says. Verse 36, “Therefore let all **the house of Israel** know assuredly that God had made that same Jesus whom you have crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

He says, let all the house of Israel know. Verse 37, “Now when they, who, the Jews from Israel, heard this, they were pricked in their heart and said unto Peter and the rest of the apostles, men and brethren, what do we do?” What do we do? We, the Jews, have killed our Messiah. So, this repentance that he's preaching, that Peter's preaching, repent and be baptized, is feel sorrow for the fact that you killed the Messiah. Change your mind from believing that he wasn't the Messiah, to believe that he is the Messiah. And turn from unbelief to belief, and be baptized in water, Israel. Notice, this was for Israel.

Now there's still people today that say, well that's for us today. Well then why is he saying it to Israel? And why does Peter preach something else later in the book of Acts? I'll tell you why. In Acts 7, the Jews stone Stephen, and because of that, Jesus Christ says, okay, I'm going to sit back down. I was going to come down and start my kingdom, if the Jews had

accepted me, but they didn't. And so he says, that's it, I'm going to sit down, and what I'm going to do is I'm going to take salvation to the Gentiles. That's why Paul is in the Bible.

Now notice this, if you go back to what John preached, or what Jesus preached, repentance, and you try to say that that repentance is for today, you have a big problem. Because they were saying repent, for the kingdom is coming. The kingdom isn't coming for a while. There still has to be a tribulation after the rapture. So that's not for today. If you're preaching repent and be baptized, then you have a problem. Because we don't get saved by water baptism. That was for Israel. How do we get saved today? Well, according to Paul, we're saved by grace through faith.

So, Paul didn't preach the same repentance message that Peter did. Now, I can go into this, I really don't have time to preach on this. But in Matthew 3.11, Jesus said that John the Baptist baptized with water, but that Jesus would have a different baptism, baptism with the Holy Spirit.



Acts 1:4-5 "4 And, being assembled together with them, commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait for the promise of the Father, which, saith he, ye have heard of me. 5 For John truly baptized with water (baptizing the Jews because the Messiah was coming); but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Ghost not many days hence."

But then he says, Jesus speaking, but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit not many days hence. So, Jesus says, this is what it's about. It's not the water that saves us anymore, it's the baptism with the Holy Spirit.

Well in Acts, a book of transition, a change, takes place. In the book of Acts, it changes from Jews being saved, because the Jews rejected their Messiah, to God going more to the Gentiles. Yes, some Jews can get saved, but God decided to take the plan of salvation more to Gentiles. And so the Gentiles started getting saved under the preaching of Paul. But the first person to win some Gentiles to the Lord was Peter in Acts 10:30-33 "30 And Cornelius said, Four days ago I was fasting until this hour; and at the ninth hour I prayed in my house, and,

behold, a man stood before me in bright clothing, 31 And said, Cornelius, thy prayer is heard, and thine alms are had in remembrance in the sight of God. 32 Send therefore to Joppa, and call hither Simon, whose surname is Peter; he is lodged in the house of one Simon a tanner by the sea side: who, when he cometh, shall speak unto thee. 33 Immediately therefore I sent to thee; and thou hast well done that thou art come. Now therefore are we all here present before God, to hear all things that are commanded thee of God.”

Peter never said, repent and be baptized and you shall be saved. He was preaching to him about Jesus, and as soon as he believed, he got saved. And he got the Holy Spirit by believing.

Well Peter is retelling the story of how he saw this Gentile get saved, and look what he says in Acts 11:14-16 “14 Who shall tell thee words, whereby thou and all thy house shall be saved. 15 And as I began to speak, the Holy Ghost fell on them, as on us at the beginning. 16 Then remembered I the word of the Lord, how that he said, John indeed baptized with water; but ye shall be baptized with the Holy Spirit.”

What they were doing in the Old Testament, repent and be baptized in water, was for Jews. But the Holy Spirit falls on the Gentiles when they believe. So, salvation for us today isn't by repenting as far as quit sinning, it's by belief. And when we believe, we receive the Holy Spirit. So, there is some repentance preached by Paul, and I'm going to look at that here in a second. But notice, the repentance preached in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John in the early book of Acts was all to Jews, telling all these Jews, this is what you need to do, you need to repent.

And here it was, turn from the evil that you're doing and turn to Christ, and believe that he is him, and then they killed him. So now it's turn and feel sorry for killing your Messiah. So, when Paul preaches repentance, did he preach the same thing? No, Paul went to a different audience, he went to the Gentiles.

When Paul is preaching repentance in his ministry, he's not telling people, feel sorry for the fact that you killed your Messiah. Because Jesus is the Messiah of the Jews, not the Gentiles. When Paul is preaching repentance, Paul is preaching something entirely different.

What is he preaching? Well, let's go to Romans 11, see if I can put this in order. I want you to rightly divide repentance, because people will try to tell you that you have to repent to be saved, and they'll try to tell you that repent means quit sinning. If repent means quit sinning, then we have a problem, because Paul told us we're not saved by our works. And the quit sinning gospel is the gospel of works. What is this quit sinning gospel? Most of it is people going to John, Jesus, and Peter, and preaching that means quit sinning to get saved, but they're not coming to Paul. And Paul says we're not saved by works.

So what are they doing? They're not rightly dividing repentance. They're trying to take you to the repentance to the Jews, but not showing you the gospel to the Gentiles. And they're messing things up.

Romans 11:12-13 “12 Now if the fall of them be the riches of the world, and the diminishing of them of the riches of the Gentiles, how much more their fullness. 13 For I speak to you Gentiles, and as much as I am the apostle of the Gentiles.” So, the apostle Paul tells us, look, God called me to be the apostle to the Gentiles. And God gave a message to Paul, to the Gentiles, of salvation.

Guess what that message is not? The message is not, repent and be baptized, and you'll be saved. That's not what Paul preached. Paul did not tell people, well if you'll just repent and be baptized, then you'll be safe, and you'll do that for the remission of your sins. In fact, that's the opposite of what Paul preached. What Paul preached was, you're justified by faith. And you're justified by believing.

Now, I'm not saying Paul never said repent. But what I am saying is when Paul did say repent, he did not mean the same thing that it meant before him. Because back here, it was turn from the evil that you're doing, and change direction, and feel sorry for killing your Messiah. And accept him as the Messiah. No, what Paul preached was, you're justified by faith, not what you're doing. That's not how it works. And you trust what Jesus did, trust the blood atonement for salvation. So it's different. So what did Paul preach? Well, let's get to it.

Paul preached the gospel of salvation. What did Paul preach? 1 Corinthians 15, 1-4. You see, a lot of people don't understand how to rightly divide the word of truth.

So, a lot of people, they hang around in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John, in the early book of Acts, and they try to follow this gospel of repent for the remission of sins, and get baptized in water. And then they say, well, I got water baptized, so I'm saved by water. They don't read the rest of the book of Acts. And the rest of the book of Acts says, no, water baptism doesn't save you. Your repentance doesn't save you. What saves you is whether or not you've trusted the gospel. That's what you're saved. You're saved by faith, and not by works. So the gospel is 1 Corinthians 15, 1-4.

1 Corinthians 15:1-4, “1 Moreover, brethren, I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, by which also you received, and wherein you stand, by which also you are saved, if you keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless you believe it in vain. 2 For I delivered to you, first of all, that which I also received, how? 3 That Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures, that He was buried, 4 And that He rose again the third day according to the Scriptures.”

So what is the gospel? The gospel is that Christ died for our sins, was buried, and rose again the third day according to the Scriptures. And it's all about faith. It's all about trusting what Jesus did for you. And you know what's funny? The word repent isn't even there. So, if repentance saves you, and it means quit sinning, then why didn't Paul even say quit sinning and repent? He didn't. He told us the gospel of salvation. He said it's all about believing. Why is that? Why would he say such a thing? Well, let's go to Hebrews 6:1 “Therefore, leaving the principles of the doctrine of Christ, let us go on into perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works, and of faith toward God.”

What does he mean, let's leave the principles of the doctrine of Christ? Because of the early church, it was all about this repentance of Peter and of John. And you had to do that, because that was for a Jew to do, to accept Jesus as their Messiah. But now that we're saved by faith, we're not saved by believing that Jesus is our Messiah. Now that's a good thing to believe, that Jesus is the Messiah of the Jews, but that doesn't save you. You have to trust that Jesus died in your place, for your sin was buried and rose again, and when you believe that is the gospel, that's when you're saved.

What Paul preached, when he preached repentance, was not do these works and get baptized in water work. When he preached repentance, he preached change your mind and have a

certain belief, and quit believing in false doctrine, quit believing in paganism and false gods, believe in the true gospel and you're saved. So, Paul was all about the mind and getting people's minds changed in order to believe by faith from the heart.

2 Timothy 2:25 says, "In meekness instructing those that oppose themselves; if God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth;"

It doesn't say repentance for remission of sins, it doesn't say baptism of repentance. It says repentance to the acknowledging of the truth. So, turning from not having the acknowledgement of the truth, to turning to acknowledging the truth.

What is the truth? The gospel. Now, as Paul preached and off Paul went, one thing I have noticed about Paul, as he went to these Gentiles, he had to deal with them about completely different things than what Peter dealt with the Jews. Because remember, Peter started off preaching to Jews. Jesus came only to Jews. John came only to Jews. When they preached repentance, it was turn to God. Turn to the Messiah. When Peter preached repentance, Paul preached repentance, Paul was talking to a different audience, Gentiles. He was dealing with people that were idol worshippers.

Look what they turned from. 1 Thessalonians 1:9, "For they themselves showed us what manner of endearing end we had unto you, and how we turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God." So, Paul is writing to these people in Thessalonica, Greeks, and he says when you got saved, you turned to God from idols. You repented from idol worship to trusting the true God. Notice what the repentance was. It was repenting from worshipping false gods, idol worship, to, so it was from idol worship, false gods, to the true living God. That is not the same message of repentance that Peter preached. When Peter preached repentance, he says, feel sorry for the fact that you murdered your Messiah. That's what he meant by the word repent.

When John the Baptist preached repentance, he was preaching, hey, get ready, because the Messiah is coming. And get baptized in water, because here he comes. When Jesus Christ preached repentance, he said, repent, because hey, I'm coming to my kingdom, and I want you to accept me, you Jews, as your Messiah.

Notice, as we go through the scriptures and we rightly divide repentance, at different times, they mean different things by it to different audiences. And today, repent doesn't mean the same thing that it did when John and Jesus and Peter preached it. Today, repent means to turn from idols to God. To feel sorry for your sin, sure, and to change your mind, sure, from false doctrine to true doctrine, from idol worship to the true and living God. So, it does not mean quit sinning to get to heaven. It doesn't.

Acts 17:19 “And they took him, and brought him unto Areopagus, saying, May we know what this new doctrine, whereof thou speakest, is?” Verse 21, “(For all the Athenians and strangers which were there spent their time in nothing else, but either to tell, or to hear some new thing.) Paul stood up on Mars Hill and he said that he perceived that the Athenians were too superstitious. Because Paul was stirred up and was angry at all the idol worship that he saw. And he began to preach, and notice what he preaches there in verse 30, “And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to repent:”

And what is the context? Repent from worshipping your idols. That is the message of repentance that Paul preached. Paul, when he said repent, he didn't say, uh, quit sinning. He says, turn, change direction from idols to the true God, Jesus.

Change your mind from thinking those gods will save you, too trusting the true God. That was the message that Paul preached when he preached repentance. Oh, there's so much more I wanted to say.

Acts 26:15 “And I said, Who art thou, Lord? And he said, I am Jesus whom thou persecutest.” Paul telling us about how he saw Jesus on the road to Damascus in Acts 9. And then he says that he was told to preach, and he was told to preach this, verse 17, delivering thee from the people and from the Gentiles unto whom now I send thee. And so Paul was saying that God sent me to the Gentiles, and he said the message that I'm supposed to preach is verse 18, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins and an inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me.

So, the message that God gave Paul was that they should repent. They should turn from darkness to light. From Satan to God. From false idols to the true God. So that they may

receive the forgiveness of sins. It was not the forgiveness of sins through baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.

It was not the forgiveness of sins by believing that the Messiah had come in his kingdom. It was not the remission of sins by being baptized in water. It was through faith, through belief.

So, Paul preached faith, and to Paul, repentance was turning from trusting in what you do, or trusting in a false God, to trusting in the true God and faith in him. That's the message of salvation. It's not quit sinning to get saved.

Titus 3:5, notice what he says here, "Not by works of righteousness which we have done, but according to his mercy he saved us by the washing of regeneration and renewing of the Holy Spirit."

It's not by works of righteousness that we are saved. It's by faith. Paul's message of salvation is that faith saves. Faith in what? Faith in the gospel, faith in the blood atonement of Christ. When Paul went preaching repent, repent, repent, Paul's message of repentance was not, well if you'll quit sinning, then you'll get saved. You might want to apply that to back here.

John said repent and turn to Jesus. What is he saying? Do works meet for repentance, okay? That sounds like that. Jesus says repent, okay? That sounds like that.

Peter preached repent, that sounds like, that's what people want to preach today, is that that means today you quit sinning to get saved. That is not the message of the Apostle Paul. The Apostle Paul did not preach a works gospel that if you'll just quit sinning and then believe the gospel, then you'll be saved.

When Paul preached repentance, it was always turn from idols to the true God. Turn from trusting your righteousness to trust Christ's righteousness. Turn from what you do to trusting in what Jesus did for you.

So, people that preach this works gospel they go back to before Paul to get their doctrine. Now notice what Paul is. Paul is the Apostle to the Gentiles. Paul's ministry ends at the rapture. As soon as the rapture takes out the church, God goes back to dealing with the Jews.



When God goes back to dealing with the Jews, how will God deal with them? It will be the exact same message that John the Baptist, that Jesus, and that Peter preached.

It will be repent, turn from your sins, and be baptized in water. Feel sorrow for the fact that you killed your Messiah. So if people are saying quit sinning is the gospel of salvation for today, what are they actually doing? They're actually preaching the tribulation gospel for today.

And when the rapture takes place and those people are left behind, and they will be, because they define repentance as quit sinning, then you can follow them in the tribulation because they'll be right. But they are not right today because Paul never preaches quit sinning to get saved. Paul preaches believe, trust the gospel.

Turn from your righteousness to trust in Christ's righteousness. Turn from idols to God. That was the repentance that Paul preached.

I was taught in Bible school that if you get saved, then you have repented. Because you have changed direction. You have turned from going to hell to going to heaven. You have turned from being lost to being saved. And that evangelical salvation is repentance.

You need to see the gospel that Jesus revealed to Paul because repent is to turn from idols to the true God. Turn from trusting your righteousness to trusting Christ's righteousness. Turn from trusting in what you do to trusting in what Jesus did for you.

Turn to the gospel of salvation. Sure, you can feel sorry for your sin, and you probably should. But it's a change of mind from thinking you're saved by works to trusting in the finished work of Jesus Christ.

And if you're following someone that's preaching number four, you're following someone that does not rightly divide the word of truth. They're trying to define the word repent by Matthew, Mark, Luke and John and Peter's ministry. They're not looking at what repentance is biblically by rightly dividing repentance and how Paul's preaching of repentance was simply turned from idol worship to the true God Jesus Christ.

Ephesians 2:8-9 “8 For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: 9 Not of works, lest any man should boast.” But then the next verse 10 says, “For we are his workmanship, created unto good works.”

Yes, we should do good works after we're saved. But it's not the works that save us. People will take this teaching on repentance, and they will try to teach that repentance means quit sinning and then they will tell you if you quit sinning then you can get saved and if you live a sinless life then that proves you were saved. That was your fruit meat for repentance. And what are those people forgetting? The blood of Christ. Salvation by the gospel.

Salvation by faith. If a person preaches that works gospel, they are damning people to hell. And those people that believe in their works will miss the rapture.

Now they'll be doing great in the tribulation because then it's all about doing good for Jesus and not taking the mark of the beast. But I don't want to deceive people. I don't want people to get the idea that repentance means quit sinning and then them thinking and trusting in their works to get them to heaven. That's not the gospel for today. According to the Apostle Paul, when he preached repentance, he was saying turn from a false God to the true God. Turn from trusting in what you do to trusting by faith in the finished work of Jesus Christ, so you'll be justified by faith and saved by trusting in the gospel.