

Agape House of Worship
Midweek Service & Bible Study

Elementary Principles of Christ
Principle #1 - Repentance from Dead Works

Date: Wednesday, July 15, 2020
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Hebrews 6:1-3 - "Therefore, leaving the discussion of the elementary principles of Christ, let us go on to perfection, not laying again the foundation of repentance from dead works and of faith toward God, 2 of the doctrine of baptisms, of laying on of hands, of resurrection of the dead, and of eternal judgment. 3 And this we will do if God permits." NKJV

Hebrews 6:1 - Therefore let us move beyond the elementary teachings about Christ and be taken forward to maturity, not laying again the foundation of repentance from acts that lead to death, and of faith in God, NIV

The Six Elementary Principles of Christ

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| 1. Repentance from dead works | 4. Laying on of hands |
| 2. Faith toward God | 5. Resurrection of the dead |
| 3. The doctrine of baptisms | 6. Eternal judgment |

Elementary – Basic - Foundational. These are essential components to spiritual progress and maturity. They are the core foundation upon which spiritual maturity is built. Many believers who want higher truths and deeper revelations are not able to receive them because the basic foundations listed in Hebrews 6 have not been established in their lives. God withholds some spiritual insights from us until our structure is sound enough to handle them. These teachings will enable you to build your own proper foundation and encourage you as you grow in Christ.

- The principles go from the starting point of the Christian faith to the end of it
- The Christian faith does not terminate with time, it goes until eternity
- The foundation of the Christian faith is Jesus Christ

Principle #1 - Repentance from Dead Works

What are dead works?

- Anything not done in faith, or that does not originate from Christ. Romans 14:23 - "... everything that does not come from faith is sin." Faith alone gives life to what we do.
- Dead works are the works of our hands, they are the works of flesh. Galatians 5:19-21
- Dead works are works of self-righteousness, and they are called "dead" works because they lead to death.
- Twice the book of Proverbs says, "There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death. (Proverbs 16:25, Proverbs 14:12)

Isaiah 53:6 - All we like sheep have gone astray; We have turned, every one, to his own way; And the Lord has laid on Him the iniquity of us all.

What is Repentance?

Repentance is not an emotion or just being remorseful or sorry. It is not an act of weeping and wailing for our wrongdoing. Repentance is not willful self-affliction, self-punishment, or penance. It is not equal to public shaming.

Repentance is a decision and it comes from the will. You can repent without any obvious emotion, but you cannot repent without a change of your will. The full meaning of repentance can be derived from both its the Hebrew and Greek words:

- The Greek word for repentance is "metanoia" which means to change your mind or change the way you think.
- The Hebrew word for repentance is "teshuvah" which means to return or to turn around (180-degree turn)

The Foundation of Repentance

Repentance is the foundation upon which faith is built. Faith comes only after repentance. Part of the reason why many Christians struggle with faith is because they struggle with repentance. Repentance is the first of the foundation stone of faith in Jesus Christ. Without true repentance you can never have true faith.

- Lack of repentance leads to a wobbly edifice of a Christian life built on a weak foundation. Psalm 11:3
- Most of our problems come from the fact that we have never really repented.
- If you have repented, you live your life to glorify Jesus not to please yourself. Dead work are works of flesh.

An Example of Repentance: From the Story of the Prodigal Son - Luke 15:11-32

Luke 15:17-19 - *“But when he came to himself, he said, ‘How many of my father’s hired servants have bread enough and to spare, and I perish with hunger! 18 I will arise and go to my father, and will say to him, ‘Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you, 19 and I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Make me like one of your hired servants.’”*

- Came to himself – moment of truth
- Changed his mind. He made a decision to turn around
- Went back - I will arise and go to my father

How Important is the Message of Repentance?

The Message of John the Baptist – repentance prepared the way for the coming of the messiah

Matthew 3:1-3 - *In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea 2 and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.” 3 This is he who was spoken of through the prophet Isaiah: “A voice of one calling in the wilderness, ‘Prepare the way for the Lord, make straight paths for him.’”*

The Message of Jesus: You cannot truly believe unless you have repented

Mark 1:14-15 - *“After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. 15 “The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”*

Jesus’s Instruction to the Disciples: Repentance is the condition for forgiveness

Luke 24:46-47 - *He told them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, 47 and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.*

Peter’s Message on the Day of Pentecost: repent and be baptized

Acts 2:37-38 - *When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, “Brothers, what shall we do?” 38 Peter replied, “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.*

Repentance Universal Requirement: God commands it

Acts 17:30-31 - *In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent. 31 For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. He has given proof of this to everyone by raising him from the dead.”*

Acts 20:20-21 - *how I kept back nothing that was helpful, but proclaimed it to you, and taught you publicly and from house to house, 21 testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.(NKJV)*

Repentance Starts with God: repentance requires the grace of God

Psalms 80:3 - *Turn us again to yourself, O God. Make your face shine down upon us. Only then will we be saved.....7 Turn us again to yourself, O God of Heaven’s Armies. Make your face shine down upon us. Only then will we be saved....19 Turn us again to yourself, O Lord God of Heaven’s Armies. Make your face shine down upon us. Only then will we be saved.*

Lamentations 5:21 - *Turn us back to You, O Lord, and we will be restored; Renew our days as of old (NKJV)*

Alternative to Repentance: unless you repent, you too will all perish

Luke 13:3-5 - *I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish. 4 Or those eighteen who died when the tower in Siloam fell on them—do you think they were more guilty than all the others living in Jerusalem? 5 I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*