

The Order of Salvation: Conversion (Repentance & Faith)

Introduction: The Bread and Butter of Ministry

Acts 20:21 (p.929)

"It is impossible to disentangle faith and repentance." (John Murray)

1. You must turn to God

"Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand" (Matthew 4:17)

Repentance is a Change of Worship

"Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, doth, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience." (WSC 87)

Knowledge

- By God's Word

"And the Lord sent Nathan to David." (2 Samuel 12:1)

Regret

- For sin

Against you, **you only**, have I sinned

and done what is evil in your sight (Psalm 51:4)

- That is godly

"For **godly grief** produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death." (2 Cor. 7:11)

Volitional turning

- Away from sin and to God

"For they themselves report concerning us the kind of reception we had among you, and how **you turned to God from idols** to serve the living and true God." (1 Thessalonians 1:9)

"Repenting means exchanging our idols for God. Before it's a change in behaviour, it must be a change in worship" (Lawrence, p.51)

- A total change

"Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewal of your mind**, that by testing you may discern what is the will of God, what is good and acceptable and perfect." (Romans 12:1-2)

Implications

Repentance is Celebrated

"As there is no sin so small, but it deserves damnation; so there is no sin so great, that it can bring damnation upon those who truly repent" (WCF 15.4)

In heaven (Luke 15:7), among the angels (Luke 15:10), and by the Father (Luke 15:24)

Repentance is continual

"When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, 'Repent' (Mt 4:17), he willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance." (Martin Luther, *95 Theses*)

"If anyone would come after me, let him deny himself and **take up his cross daily** and follow me." (Luke 9:23)

Repentance is costly

- For our life

"So therefore, any one of you who does not renounce all that he has cannot be my disciple." (Luke 14:33)

- For our relationships

"he that scandalises his brother, or the Church of Christ, ought to be willing, by a private or public confession and sorrow for his sin, to declare his repentance to those that are offended" (WCF 17.6)

2. You must believe in Jesus

"believe in the gospel" (Mark 1:15)

What is Faith?

"It is by God's grace that a person is able to believe but faith is an activity on the part of the person and of them alone. In faith we receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation." (Murray, p.106)

Knowledge

- The basic facts of the Christian faith

"Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, **the Lord is one.**" (Deuteronomy 6:4)

"I delivered to you as of first importance what I also received: that **Christ died for our sins** in accordance with the Scriptures, that he was buried, that **he was raised on the third day** in accordance with the Scriptures" (1 Corinthians 15:3-4)

Assent

- Rooted in evidence

"it seemed good to me also, having followed all things closely for some time past, to write an orderly account for you, most excellent Theophilus, **that you may have certainty** concerning the things you have been taught." (Luke 1:1-4; c.f. John 20:30-31 & 2 Peter 1:16-21)

"You believe that God is one; you do well. **Even the demons believe**—and shudder!" (James 2:19)

Trust

- Faith is an instrument

"accepting, receiving and resting upon Christ alone" (WCF 14.2)

A Profession

- Of new allegiance

"because, if you confess with your mouth that **Jesus is Lord** and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved" Romans 10:9

Implications

Faith is Assurance

“For faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the conviction of things not seen (Hebrews 11:1)

Faith is lifelong

- It is not a once off event

“for we walk by faith, not by sight” (2 Corinthians 5:7)

- It continually seeks God for his mercy

“I have been crucified with Christ. It is no longer I who live, but Christ who lives in me. And the life I now live in the flesh I **live by faith in the Son of God**, who loved me and gave himself for me” (Galatians 2:20)

- It changes the way we disciple

Faith is patient

- Waiting for his promise to be fulfilled

“But according to his promise we are waiting for new heavens and a new earth in which righteousness dwells” (2 Peter 3:13)