

The Commands of Christ #3: Repent and Believe

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

Repent:

In Hebrew: to return (to God)

In Greek: to have a change of heart/mind

How do I repent?

1. I turn toward God, not away.

Because he is gracious and forgiving; his love never fails.

John 6:37 [Jesus said] All those the Father gives me will come to me, and whoever comes to me I will never drive away.

Psalms 100:5 For the Lord is good and his love endures forever; his faithfulness continues through all generations.

I receive His truth, His forgiveness, His tenderness, His help

2. I change what I believe

I stop believing trash and believe the truth

Our emotions, and other people can help us see honestly what we are believing.

What am I believing about myself, who God is, and what God has done?

What is the truth?

Romans 12:2 Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is--his good, pleasing and perfect will.

3. I surrender to a new life and a new heart (Christ's)

I can't live the right life; I let Christ have control; I ask for and trust in the power of the Holy Spirit

Galatians 2:20 I have been crucified with Christ and I no longer live, but Christ lives in me. The life I now live in the body, I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave himself for me.

Ephesians 5:18 Do not get drunk on wine, which leads to debauchery. Instead, be filled with the Spirit,

What leads us to repentance:

-God's kindness (Romans 2:4)

-Sorrow (the right kind)

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

A simple model of repentance:

I am aware of my sin. I am saddened by the pain and brokenness it brings into this world. I admit it does not bring life. It is not from God or his way. It is not who I was made to be. I see my need. I realize I cannot clean myself up or change on my own.

I accept God's loves for me. I believe that Christ died for my sins. I give thanks to Him for forgiving me, not counting this against me.

I receive the power of His resurrected life. I believe that Jesus Christ rose from the dead. I thank God for giving me Christ's life to live in me. I believe that at my core I am new. I commit myself to His ways. I will walk in righteousness, as I am righteous in Christ. I ask the Holy Spirit to fill me and empower me. I believe He is.

When my heart changes my entire life is changed.

Matthew 12:33-35 Make a tree good and its fruit will be good, or make a tree bad and its fruit will be bad, for a tree is recognized by its fruit. You brood of vipers, how can you who are evil say anything good? For the mouth speaks what the heart is full of. A good man brings good things out of the good stored up in him, and an evil man brings evil things out of the evil stored up in him.

The Christian life, properly understood, is not complex nor difficult. As a matter of fact, the Christian life is very simple. It is so simple that we stumble over the very simplicity of it, and yet it is so difficult that no one can live it! This paradox occurs because the Christian life is a supernatural life. The only one who can help us live this abundant life is the Lord Jesus Christ who empowers us with His Holy Spirit.
-Bill Bright