

WHAT IS THE GOSPEL? #5

IT'S A DIVINE SUMMONS TO REPENTANCE AND FAITH

The question before us is "What is the gospel?" In seeking to approach this question in a biblically comprehensive way, we have established the fact, that although the proclamation of Jesus Christ is **the central tenant** of the gospel, any comprehensive view of the gospel, must involve not only that **central** proclamation, Jesus Christ and Him crucified, but also the **two fundamental presuppositions**, which include the message of the Bible about God, and about sin, and then the **two necessary accompaniments** that flow out of those **central truths** of Christ Person and Work, which we shall begin to consider now. The first accompaniment is a Divine summons to repentance and faith.

In previous studies, the biblical evidence for the fact that the gospel is indeed a message about God, a message about sin, and a message about the Person and Work of Christ has been set forth; however, we have not completely presented the gospel, if the study were to stop here. We would not be complete in our presentation of the gospel simply to announce what the Scriptures have to say about God as Creator, Judge, Sustainer, Lawgiver, and Majestic Moral Governor of the universe. Neither would the study be a complete presentation of the gospel simply to announce what the Scriptures have to say concerning man is a state of sin, as to his guilt, pollution and bondage. Nor would the study be complete if the Scripture were opened up as to Who Christ is, and what He has done for sinners. Any proclamation of the gospel, that is truly biblical, must move to these two necessary accompaniments, and the first one is, the gospel is a proclamation, a summons, to repentance and faith. When God in the gospel comes to sinners, He does not simply announce these great and glorious, these lofty facts (God, sin, Person & Work of Christ) and then leave the issue hanging as though it is not a matter of great concern, as to what the hearer does, with that message. No, the gospel comes with all the glory of its objective pronouncements, and then it rivets those pronouncements to the consciences of those that receive the gospel, by a Divine summons, to repentance and to faith. There is to be a response to the gospel summons. A **summons** is a call by authority to

appear at a place named, or to attend to a duty. In this instance there is a summons by God to repent and believe.

[God comes to sinners in the gospel. A Person is speaking. This Person calls for a response to His Words. The hearer of the gospel, who is already under Divine wrath, is under Divine obligation to respond to the gospel message by repenting. Repentance is a beautiful response to this Divine Person's gracious offer to be reconciled.]

1) ESTABLISH THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GOSPEL IS A DIVINE SUMMONS TO FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

- a) The evidence from the teaching of our Lord.
- b) Examples of Apostolic Preaching.
- c) The emphasis on repentance and faith.

a) THE EVIDENCE FROM THE TEACHING OF OUR LORD.

When our Lord gave the doctrinal content of the gospel in summary form, as recorded in 24th chapter of Luke, He made it very plain that the gospel, which focused on His death and resurrection, was a gospel that must also include a summons, to repentance and faith.

Luke 24: 44 "And He said unto them, These are My words which I spoke unto you, while I was yet with you, that all things must needs be fulfilled, which are written in the law of Moses, and the Prophets, and the Psalms, concerning Me. **45** Then opened He their mind, that they might understand the Scriptures; **46** and He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; **47** and that **repentance** and remission of sins should be **preached in His Name** unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. **48** You are witnesses of these things."

The only gospel authorized by our Lord Jesus Christ as the gospel to be proclaimed among all the nations, is a gospel which moves from the facts of central proclamation, Christ must suffer, Christ must be raised, to the sounding of an equally clear and authoritative note, called in the language of this passage, repentance, unto the remission of sins. "These things" are to be preached in His Name, that is, with reference to His authority and with reference to the revelation of God, in the Person of Jesus Christ. It is not a repentance preached from Mount Sinai, but a repentance preached from Mount Calvary. A repentance that has its tap roots, not only in the law, but also in the gospel. It is a repentance that is not negated by the proclamation of the grace of God, in the gospel. A repentance that is not some how placed into the background, because it would militate against the concept of free grace -No- having proclaimed Jesus Christ crucified and risen, these who heard His commission were conscious, that they were also to proclaim, that repentance, which alone, would result in the remission of sins. No repentance, no remission. Though Christ has died and been raised from the dead, there would be no saving application of these **objective redemptive realities**, unless there was the **personal, experiential** repentance unto remission of sins. (see columns on Christ for us, HS in us)

Objective Redemptive Realities – external, things that happen outside us, once for all by **Christ for us. (no change)**

Personal Experiential – relating to, derived from experience, internal, inside us, our response to the summons, subjective, as a result of the work of the **Holy Spirit's in us. (fluctuation)**

According to our Lord, the gospel must be, not only a proclamation about Himself, in His Person & Work, but a summons, to repentance and faith.

Though repentance is the dominant note of this passage, when our Lord is preaching the gospel to Nicodemus, the summons to faith is made clear. Having announced to Nicodemus the necessity of the new birth, our Lord then preaches the gospel to Nicodemus.

John 3:14. 14 "And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; **15** that whosoever **believes** may in Him, have eternal life."

So Nicodemus is brought to understand, that the malady of sin, will find its remedy, only in the uplifted Son of Man, but not only in the **objective** uplifting, but also in the **subjective personal** involvement of faith, into and upon, the uplifted Son of Man. Our Lord teaches that the gospel must include, a summons to repentance and faith. Let's move on to:

- 1) Establish the Biblical basis for the Proposition that the Gospel is a Divine summons to Faith and Repentance. We've noted a) The Evidence From The Teaching Of Our Lord, now consider:

b) EXAMPLES OF APOSTOLIC PREACHING.

The Apostles took seriously Our Lord's directives. On the day of Pentecost, Peter is preaching and the whole substance of his evangelistic sermon is the opening up of one text, upon another, declaring the facts concerning Jesus of Nazareth. **Acts 2:14-36**. In the midst of the sermon, the conviction of the Spirit of God becomes so intense, that while Peter is preaching, they are stabbed to the heart as with a dagger, **Acts 2:37** "Now when they heard this they were pricked in their heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the Apostles, Brethren, what shall we do?" And Peter said everyone bow their head, close your eyes, we don't want to embarrass anyone, raise your hand, where did we get such a practice?

What did Peter do? They said, "What shall we do" and Peter said to them, **38** "**Repent** ye and be baptized everyone of you, in the Name of Jesus Christ unto the remission of your sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For to you is the promise (the promise of the Spirit, upon condition of repentance) and to your children, and to all that are afar off, even as many as the Lord our God shall call unto Him."

Peter gives them that little abbreviated directive, and it quiets them down, and then he doesn't rush into a decision, he went on and preached even more, **40** "And with many other words he testified and exhorted them, saying, 'Save yourselves from this crooked generation.' **41** They then that received **(ix)** his word" What word? The word that not only promised forgiveness, but demanded repentance, repentance in the concrete, "save yourselves from this crooked generation". They received not only the word of promise, but the word of

commandment, to repent, and openly to identify themselves with the visible people of God. **41** “they that received his word were baptized: and there were added unto them in that day about 3,000 souls. (and Luke writing 30 years after the event, could say) **42** and these continued steadfastly in the Apostles’ teaching and fellowship, in the breaking of bread and the prayers.” No doubt there were some apostasies and some deaths, but the overriding majority continued, steadfastly. **(i)**

Peter was true to his Lord; he held forth remission of sins, only in the context of repentance, and repentance that was concrete in those given circumstances. This is the crowd that killed Christ, and now Peter says come join us and get ready to be killed yourself. “Repent ye and be baptized” identify yourselves with this community who stand with Jesus of Nazareth, believing Him to be the Christ of God, and this generation around you that killed Him and showed its perversity, when they crucified the Lord of Glory, may do the same to you, but if you want remission of sins, its in Jesus, and if you want to be in Jesus, you’ve got to come to Him, on His terms. That’s real gospel preaching, and that’s what Peter preached. The statement, “Jesus loves you and has a beautiful plan for your life.” would ring a little hollow to this crowd. When they embraced Christ, it could possibly cost them their life.

Acts 5:30 “The God of our fathers raised up (resurrection) Jesus, Whom you slew, hanging Him on a tree. **31** Him did God exalt with His right hand (Ascension) to be a Prince and a Savior, to give (Session) **repentance** to Israel, and remission of sins. **32** And we are witnesses of these things; and so is the Holy Spirit, Whom God has given to them that obey Him.”

Christ has been exalted to the right hand of the Father, to do what? In His might and glory, as the Mediator of the New Covenant, so to send forth His Holy Spirit, that repentance will be worked in the hearts of people, to the end that they might receive remission of sins. We have this wonderful statement concerning the source of that repentance which is unto life, but the main point to be noted is not what it teaches concerning the origin of repentance as the gift of God given by the Lord as the enthroned King, but the main point to be noted is the *inseparability between remission of sins, and repentance. Remember what Peter heard the Lord tell him to preach, in **Luke 24:46** “And He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise

again from the dead the third day; **47** and that **repentance and remission of sins** should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem. **48** You are witnesses of these things.”

Peter says, “Yes, Lord, I’ve got the orders, I’ll preach repentance unto the remission of sins as part of the gospel.” Acts 5 clearly states that Christ is exalted to give repentance unto remission of sins. No repentance, no remission.

In **Acts 17:30**, the Apostle Paul stands on Mars Hill and is preaching to the Athenian Philosophers, and when he brings his sermon to a climax, what note does he sound?

17:30 “The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now **He commands** men that they should all, everywhere, **repent**: **31** inasmuch as He has appointed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness by the Man Whom He has ordained; whereof He has given assurance unto all men, in that He has raised Him from the dead.”

As Paul brings this sermon to a climax, the note that he sounds, is the note of repentance, and he fills that note with all of the pressure of Divine authority. He has been preaching to these people about the God Who is Creator, Lord of Heaven and Earth, Sustainer of the universe, Giver of life and breath, now he says this Great God, Who is Creator, this Majestic God Who is Sovereign Ruler and Governor of the universe, this God commands you (Acts 17:30) and poured into that little word ‘God’ (17:24) is everything he’s been teaching. He’s saying this God commands you to repent, because this is the God Who will summons you to judgment and the only way to be fitted for that day, is to be found a penitent, believing sinner.

This is a far cry from simply being asked, “Do you believe Jesus died for your sins? Do you believe He rose from the dead?” Just make a mental assent or agreement to some facts about Jesus, then pray to “ask Him into your heart”, and basically, if you say the right words your assured your saved. Write the date down and never doubt it. The Bible warns about saying, just speaking words, professing, with no life change to back the profession up, as opposed to a life that continues steadfast in the faith, and is an evidence that the profession, the words prayed, were not just an empty profession. **Mat. 24:13** “But he that endures to the end, the same shall be saved.” Let’s move on to:

- 1) Establish the Biblical basis for the Proposition that the Gospel is a Divine summons to Faith and Repentance. We've noted a) The Evidence From The Teaching Of Our Lord, b) Examples Of Apostolic Preaching, now consider:

c) THE EMPHASIS ON REPENTANCE AND FAITH.

Acts 13:38. 38 "Be it known unto you therefore, brethren, that through this Man is proclaimed unto you **remission of sins**: **39** and by Him every one that **believes** is justified from all things, from which you could not be justified by the law of Moses."

Remission is granted to everyone who believes.

Acts 16:31. 30 The Philippian Jailor said to Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? **31** And they said, **Believe on** the Lord Jesus, and you will be saved, you and your house."

As in Acts 13 so in Acts 16:

REMISSION is granted to everyone who BELIEVES.

In Luke 24:

REMISSION is granted to everyone who REPENTS.

Luke 24:46 "And He said unto them, Thus it is written, that the Christ should suffer, and rise again from the dead the third day; **47** and that **repentance and remission of sins** should be preached in His Name unto all the nations, beginning from Jerusalem.

Notice how Paul combines believing [faith] and repentance in Acts 20.

Paul reviews the essential substance of his gospel preaching while he was at Ephesus for about 3 years, and this is how he describes it:

Acts 20:18-21. 18 "And when they were come to him, he said unto them, You yourselves know, from the first day that I set foot in Asia, after what manner I was with you all the time, **19** serving the Lord with all lowliness of mind, and with tears, and with trials which befell me by the plots of the Jews; **20** how I shrank not from

declaring unto you anything that was profitable, and teaching you publicly, and from house to house, **21** testifying both *to Jews and to Greeks* **repentance toward God**, and **faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**.

Paul didn't have a different message for the Jews and another message for the Greeks. Some say repentance was the message for the Israelites, but faith and believe was the message for the Gentiles. No. Paul said, in vs. **21** "testifying both *to Jews and to Greeks* **repentance toward God**, and **faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ**."

Paul's proclamation of the gospel, was not complete, without this summons both to repentance and to faith.

In some places all we find is the summons to believe while in other places all we find is the summons to repent. In some places we find both together. Why? For the simple reason that in the mentality of the biblical preachers and writers, ***TRUE FAITH WAS NEVER DIVORCED FROM REPENTANCE, AND TRUE REPENTANCE WAS NEVER DIVORCED FROM FAITH.**

For instance if you take a coin, a quarter, it has G.W. on one side and an eagle on the other side. If I present you with a real American quarter you know, without having to examine it, if there is an eagle on one side, G.W. is going to be on the other side. The coin has an inseparable relationship between G.W. and the eagle. I could say, "Give me one of those coins with G.W. on it." and you would know it has the eagle on the other side. If it's the real thing, wherever you have the one, you have the other. That's the way faith and repentance are in the Bible. * They form an inseparable complex, of **a saving response to the gospel**. At times the emphasis falls on faith, but repentance is always assumed. At times the emphasis falls on repentance, but faith is always assumed, but when we have a formal statement such as we have in **Acts 20:21**, we are told that it is repentance toward God, and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ.

This has some practical implications with reference to preaching the gospel. It means that we do not have to be overly fastidious about using the terms repentance and faith every time we preach the gospel, but it does mean, if over any period of time, we have not made it plain, that ***both repentance and faith, are essential elements of a true response to the gospel**, I have robbed the gospel of one of its essential ingredients. **(Appendix xi page 29)**

Having:

1) ESTABLISHED THE BIBLICAL BASIS FOR THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GOSPEL IS A DIVINE SUMMONS TO FAITH AND REPENTANCE by considering:

- a) The Evidence From The Teaching Of Our Lord.
- b) Examples of Apostolic Preaching.
- c) The Emphasis On Repentance And Faith, We Move To:

2) EXPOUND THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GOSPEL IS A DIVINE SUMMONS TO FAITH AND REPENTANCE.

- a) What Is Repentance Unto Life?
- b) What Is Saving Faith?
- a) **WHAT IS REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE?**

The gospel is a summons to repentance. What does that mean? What is repentance unto life? The definition in the Westminster Shorter Catechism will probably never be improved upon.

Question 87 - Westminster Shorter Catechism (ii)

Q: What is repentance unto life?

A: **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, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

Repentance unto life (they knew there was a repentance unto death, the repentance of Judas) Repentance unto life (that is the repentance that is unto salvation) is a **saving grace** (they did not say a saving work, they knew that it came from King Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Father, Who gives repentance. Here we have **the origin** of repentance.)

Acts 5:30 "The God of our fathers raised up Jesus, Whom you slew, hanging Him on a tree. **31** Him did God exalt with His right hand to be a Prince and a Savior, to

give repentance to Israel, and remission of sins. **Acts 11:18.** When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then has **God** also to the Gentiles **granted repentance** unto life." (iii)

Repentance unto life is a saving grace, whereby a sinner, out of **a true sense of his sin** (presupposes a message about sin and God) and **apprehension (iv)** (not comprehension, a mental activity, but an apprehension – when you get apprehended you are laid hold of. There is a confidence or conviction that drives you to Christ. The mercy of God is found in Christ. It is a repentance in the context of the gospel, which is commonly referred to as **Evangelical Repentance**. It is not a **Legal Repentance**, or a repentance in the sense that we do something in order to earn or merit something from God. It must have this element of the apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ. If all you see is your sin and the thunders of Mount Sinai, and God's wrath and condemnation because of violations of His law, it will drive you to despair and away from God, but when you see your sin in light of the cross, you are not only brought to see the horrid nature of sin, but the wonderful door open for mercy.

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, does, with grief and hatred of his sin, **turn from it unto God**, with full purpose of, and endeavor after, new obedience.

The little phrase from the catechism definition of repentance "turn from it unto God" is almost word for word Scripture.

Acts 20:21. Paul says, "I testify to the Jews and the Greeks, repentance towards God."

In our English translations you would think that the emphasis fell upon the repentance. That is the smoothest way to translate it. In the Greek it is the "unto God, repentance" or "towards God repentance." The emphasis falls upon the object of that repentance - GOD – it is repentance that is preoccupied, with God. True conviction of sin causes a person to be preoccupied with God. Why? I've rebelled against God my Creator. I've defied the laws of God my Maker. I've provoked the wrath of God this Holy, Pure, Majestic God. I've lived indifferent to the claims of God, Who has given me life

and breath and all things. The crime of crime in my sins is that I've not brought glory to God. I've not honored God. When I understand something of the nature of my sin, and I realize that Jesus Christ came forth in the language of **1 Peter 3:18** "Because Christ also suffered for sins once, The Righteous for the unrighteous, that He might bring us to God; being put to death in the flesh, but made alive in the spirit." As a result of this, the dominant note in our repentance, has a Godward reference. It is the unto God, repentance. **THERE IS A CHANGE OF MIND ABOUT GOD**, where once I considered Him unworthy of my love, I now behold Him as the One infinitely worthy of my love. Where once I lived indifferent to His law, and thought His commandments and His precepts a hard and unreasonable thing, I find that now I am grieved at any violations of His law and seek forgiveness. I give myself to be a keeper of His holy precepts. It is the unto God repentance.

The Apostle Paul describes this in the conversion experience of the Thessalonians. **1 Thessalonians 1:9**. "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how you **turned unto God from idols**, to serve a Living and True God." **9** "For they themselves report concerning us what manner of entering in we had unto you; and how **you turned unto God from idols**" (and what was that turning? Just to come and get some goodies from God? No. Paul says they turned) "to serve a Living and True God."

You can see where the framers of the catechism got their language, "**turn from it (sin) unto God.**" In this instance the Thessalonians, upon hearing the gospel, turned from their sin, which was epitomized in their lifestyle of serving idols, to serving God.

True repentance then, involves this turning from, and this turning unto, and if that repentance is genuine, it will be perpetual, for repentance is *not the act of a moment, it is *the implantation of a principle, that will be with us, until there is no more sin, and that will not be our portion until, we are like Him and see Him as He is. There will be a dispositional mentality as opposed to a decisional mentality! **(v) (vi)**

The gospel is a summons to repentance.

Put together all that we have learned about the gospel so far. Having proclaimed that the gospel is a message about God, that He is Holy, He is the Majestic One, the Almighty Creator, the Sovereign of the Universe, having proclaimed the gospel is a message about sin, as a foul revolt against the God of Heaven, transgression of His Holy Law, the provocation of His righteous anger. The condition of the sinner is one of being under the wrath of God, judged as guilty in His court and sentenced to life in hell. Having gone on to proclaim how God in Jesus Christ has judged human sin, and it demanded all of the mystery of the incarnation [God became man and as such, could be the substitute and bear the penalty due to the sinner] and the awful mystery of the cross and the triumph of the open tomb to remedy the sinners condition, when this message about God, and sin and Christ has been presented biblically, the sinner can no more have dealings with God in Christ without reckoning with his sin, than he can live without breathing, because the great issue, of his relationship to God, in the light of sin and in the light of the cross, these have been the issues that have impinged upon the mind and the spirit, and therefore repentance is the essential accompaniment, of these glorious truths.

[For Repentance see Redemption Accomplished and Applied John Murray pages 113-116, and a Modern Exposition 1689 Samuel Waldron pages 195-204.]

We have been:

2) EXPOUNDING THE PROPOSITION THAT THE GOSPEL IS A DIVINE SUMMONS TO FAITH AND REPENTANCE. We have considered:

a) WHAT IS REPENTANCE UNTO LIFE? Now we move on to:

b) WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

WHAT IS SAVING FAITH?

What is this summons to faith? What is saving faith?

Faith is never defined in a philosophical or systematic way in the Bible. The Bible gives us something far better. It gives us rich and manifold descriptions of faith, analogies of faith.

In the words of Jesus, faith is looking to Christ.

(i) FAITH IS DEPICTED AS LOOKING TO CHRIST.

Numbers 21. 7 “And the people came to Moses, and said, We have sinned, because we have spoken against Jehovah, and against you; pray unto Jehovah, that He take away the serpents from us. And Moses prayed for the people. **8** And Jehovah said unto Moses, Make thee a fiery serpent, and set it upon a standard: and it shall come to pass, that every one that is bitten, **when he sees it, shall live.** **9** And Moses made a serpent of brass, and set it upon the standard: and it came to pass, that if a serpent had bitten any man, when **he looked unto the serpent** of brass, he lived.”

John 3:14. “And as Moses lifted up the serpent in the wilderness, even so must the Son of man be lifted up; **15** that whosoever **believes** may in Him have eternal life.”

What is believing? It is looking to Christ. It is the sin stricken soul, gazing upon Christ, as the only appointed remedy, until the virtue of His saving might, enters the soul and gives life.

(ii) FAITH IS ALSO CALLED COMING TO CHRIST.

John 6:37 “All that which the Father gives Me shall **come unto Me**; and him that **comes to Me** I will in no wise cast out. **38** For I am come down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me. **39** And this is the will of Him that sent Me, that of all that He has given Me I should lose nothing, but should raise it up at the last day. **40** For this is the will of My Father, that every one that beholds **the Son**, and **believes on Him**, should have eternal life; and I will raise Him up at the last day.”

Matthew 11:28 “**Come unto** Me all you that labor and are heavy laden, and I will give you **rest**.” Here the ministry of the Lord Jesus, in giving **rest to weary sinners**, is contingent upon this activity, “Come unto me.” It is a spiritual activity because in the context the rest is “rest unto your souls.” **Matthew 11:29** “Take My yoke upon you, and learn of Me; for I am meek and lowly in heart: and you shall find **rest unto your souls.** **30** For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light.”

(iii) FAITH IS THIRSTING AND COMING TO CHRIST.

John 7:37 “Now on the last day, the great day of the feast, Jesus stood and cried, saying, If any man **thirst**, let him **come unto Me** and drink. **38** He that **believes on Me**, as the scripture has said, from within him shall flow rivers of living water.”

What is believing? It is doing what a thirsty man does when he takes his water, it's not just looking at it and saying, “Hey, that's great water! I can tell you all of the constituent elements of that water, 2 parts Hydrogen, 1-part Oxygen, No. What is drinking? Drinking is believing that it can quench my thirst, and making it my own. [In the gospel we hold Christ to the lips of sinners and say drink, eat and live!]

(iv) FAITH IS CALLED EATING AND COMING TO CHRIST.

John 6:32 “Jesus therefore said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, It was not Moses that gave you the bread out of heaven; but My Father gives you the true bread out of heaven. **33** For the **bread of God** is that which comes down out of heaven, and **gives life** unto the world. **34** They said therefore unto Him, Lord, evermore give us this bread. **35** Jesus said unto them. **I am the bread of life:** he that **comes** to Me shall not **hunger**, and he that **believes** on Me shall never thirst.”

(v) FAITH OR BELIEVING IS ALSO CALLED RECEIVING CHRIST.

John 1:10 “He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world knew Him not. **11** He came unto His own, and they that were His own **received Him not.** **12** But as many as **received Him**, to them gave He the right to become children of God, even to them that **believe** on His Name: **13** who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.”

Faith is all of these things. As far as a formal definition John Murray has a very helpful one, in his book Redemption Accomplished and Applied on page 111.

On page 109 Murray clarifies that, “The faith of which we are now speaking is not the belief that we have been saved, but **TRUST IN CHRIST**, in order that we may be saved.” On page 110 he goes on to say that, “There are

three things that need to be said about **THE NATURE OF SAVING FAITH**. Faith is **knowledge, conviction, and trust.**"

Under **knowledge**, he says, "there is a knowledge that is indispensable to faith. In our ordinary human relations ****do we trust a person of whom we know nothing?*** The more grave the situation to be saved from, the more we want to know about that person's character and identity who we are told can save us from that grave situation. That faith which is directed to Christ, involves all the issues of life and death and time and eternity. We must know Who Christ is, what He has done, and what He is able to do."

Under **conviction**, Murray points out that, "The conviction which enters into faith is not only assent to the truth respecting Christ, but also a

recognition of the exact relationship that there is between the truth about Who Christ is, and our deeds as lost sinners. Christ sufficiency as Savior meets the desperateness and hopelessness of our sin and misery. Christ fits in perfectly to the totality of our situation in its sin, guilt condemnation, misery, and ill desert, helplessness to save ourselves from the wrath of God. [Character & Position of God. See Wrath of God note]

Finally, under **trust**, on page 111 Murray begins by saying, "Faith is knowledge passing into conviction, and conviction passing into confidence."

Murray then gives this helpful definition of saving faith. "Faith cannot stop short of an activity of the whole soul to Christ, a transference of reliance upon ourselves and all our human resources to reliance upon Christ alone for salvation. Saving faith brings the sinner, lost and dead in trespasses and sins into **direct personal contact with the Savior Himself**.

It is receiving and resting upon Him, in all the glory of His Person, and the perfection of His Work, as He is so fully and freely offered to us in the gospel."

"It is here that the most characteristic act of faith appears; it is the **engagement of person to Person, the engagement of the sinner as lost, to the Person of the Savior** able and willing to save. Faith, after all, **is not belief of propositions of truth respecting the Savior**, however essential an ingredient of faith such belief is. **Faith is trust in a Person**, the Person of Christ, the Son

of God and Savior of the lost. It is entrustment of ourselves to Him. It is not simply believing Him; it is believing in Him and on Him."

"It is to be remembered that the efficacy (power to produce intended results) of faith does not reside in itself. Faith is not something that merits the favor of God. All the efficacy, unto salvation resides in the Savior. *It is not faith that saves, but faith in Jesus Christ; strictly speaking, it is not even faith in Christ that saves, but **Christ that saves through faith.**"

"Faith unites us to Christ in the bonds of abiding attachment and entrustment and it is this union which insures that the saving power, grace, and virtue of the Savior become operative in the believer."

"The specific character of saving faith is that ***it looks away from itself** and finds its whole interest and object in Christ. ***He is the absorbing preoccupation of faith.**"

The object of saving faith is always **THE PERSON OF JESUS CHRIST**. There is one reference that speaks about the object of SF, being some aspect of the work of Christ or a proposition about His work such as "Do you believe Jesus died for you, do you believe He rose from the dead the 3rd day?"

Romans 3:25. 23 "For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God; **24** being justified freely by His grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: **25** Whom God set forth to be a propitiation, **through faith, in His blood**, to show His righteousness because of the passing over of the sins done aforetime, in the forbearance of God; **26** for the showing, I say, of His righteousness at this present season: that He might Himself be just, and The Justifier of him that has **faith in Jesus.**"

I know of no other text that explicitly states that the object of saving faith, is anything other than Jesus Christ or God. Even in this text, verse 26 still makes it plain that it is "faith in Jesus" and not faith in some proposition about Jesus. (vi) page 26

This has great implications as far as the method of evangelizing. How many tracts on personal evangelizing say once you've got the person to admit they're a sinner, then get them to admit they believe Jesus died for them, and that He rose on the 3rd day. What's made the object of SF? A proposition concerning an aspect of the work of Christ. If you'll admit you're a sinner and that Jesus Christ died for you and He rose from the dead you'll be saved. You may say. "Well, what's wrong with that?" There is one thing fundamentally wrong, it's not scriptural. We trust in Christ, not some proposition about Christ. To quote John Murray, "It is here that the most characteristic act of faith appears; it is **engagement of person to Person, the engagement of the sinner as lost to the Person of the Savior** able and willing to save. Faith, after all, * **is not belief of propositions of truth respecting the Savior**, however essential an ingredient of faith such belief is. **Faith is trust in a Person**, the Person of Christ, the Son of God and Savior of the lost."

John3:16 "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believes (in His finished work? Believes that Jesus did something for them?) whosoever believes on Him should not perish, but have eternal life."

Acts16:30-31. 30 "Sirs, what must I do to be saved? **31** And they said, **Believe on the Lord Jesus**, and you shall be saved, you and your house."

John14:6 Jesus didn't say My atonement is the way, He said, **6** "Jesus said unto him, I am the Way, and the Truth, and the Life: no one comes unto the Father, but by Me."

This is not just playing with words. **If one aspect of the work of Christ is made the object of faith, you can take that aspect of His work, and implant it in someone's mind as a **proposition**, which they say they now believe, and have no one to one dealings with the Person of Jesus Christ, as He is presented in the gospel. Faith involves the whole person engaging the whole Christ. Faith terminates upon His Person, but not His Person in detachment, so you get people to admit to believe in a few **propositional statements** about what He did for them, and then ask them if they believe Jesus died for

them. After they say yes, and then get them to pray the sinner's prayer, and then thank God He saved them. Show me where that type of gimmick is ever used when the gospel is being preached to a group or to an individual in the Bible. You'll search in vain. Not only won't you find that, you won't find anyone being assured they are saved on the basis of their decisional regeneration ritual, and then told don't ever doubt that you are saved.

Saving faith then is "Faith that cannot stop short of an activity of the whole soul to Christ, a transference of reliance upon ourselves and all our human resources [our works, our religious rituals, our church] to reliance upon Christ alone for salvation. Saving faith brings the sinner lost and dead in trespasses and sins into **direct personal contact with the Savior Himself**."

It is receiving and resting upon Him, in all the glory of His Person, and the perfection of His Work, as He is so fully and freely offered to us in the gospel."

Acts16:27 "And the jailor, being roused out of sleep and seeing the prison doors open, drew his sword and was about to kill himself, supposing that the prisoners had escaped. **28** But Paul cried with a loud voice, saying, 'Do yourself no harm: for we are all here.' **29** And he called for lights and sprang in, and, trembling for fear, fell down before Paul and Silas, **30** and brought them out and said, Sirs, what must I do to be saved? **31** And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus, and you shall be saved, you and your house. **32** And they **spoke the Word of the Lord unto him, with all** that were in his house. **33** And he took them the same hour of the night, and washed their stripes; and was baptized, he and all his, immediately. **34** And he brought them up into his house, and set food before them, and rejoiced greatly, with all his house, having **believed in God**."

Mr. Jailer, if you're ever going to get saved, you're going to have to have dealings with One Who is Lord. What did that word Lord mean to that Roman jailer? He had heard all his life that Caesar is lord, supreme despot of the Roman Empire. Mr. Jailer, if you're ever going to get saved you're going to deal with a Sovereign, Who is on a throne. One Who is Lord.

Lord points fundamentally in two directions:

- a) The Jehovahship of Jesus, speaking of His inherent dignity as God.
- b) The Supreme rule of Jesus upon a throne of power.

Who is that Lord? He is Jesus of Nazareth. You'll have to deal with the objective realities of the life, and Person and work of Jesus of Nazareth. Getting saved doesn't involve some mystical experience with no taproots in historical fact. He is the Christ, the Anointed One. He is the long promised Prophet, Priest and King. He is the One in whom all of the hopes of the people of God, for centuries, have been placed, and who is now manifested. Paul went in and opened up these truths to the Jailer and his house. **32** "And they **spoke the word of the Lord unto him, with all** that were in his house."

The mind receives whatever has been proclaimed about Christ. The affections, now renewed by the Holy Spirit runs out to Christ. The Will is brought subject to Christ and sets no bounds to the authority and claims that Christ can exercise over it.

Saving faith involves the whole person resting upon the whole Christ.

Ephesians2: 8 "For by grace have you been saved through faith; and that **not of yourselves**, it is the gift of **God; 9 not of works**, that no man should glory."

Old Adam just isn't up to cranking up that kind of faith.

Unless there is a powerful change in the prevailing disposition of the soul, there will be no faith. That's why the person who comes to faith is called a new creature.

THE 3 ANALOGIES FOR THE IMPARTATION OF SPIRITUAL LIFE in the New Testament are:

(1) Creation – 2Cor5: 17. "Wherefore if any man is in Christ, he is a **new creature**: the old things are passed away; behold, they are become new."

(2) Birth – John3: 3. "Jesus answered and said unto him, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except one be **born anew**, he cannot see the kingdom of God. **5** Jesus answered, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Except one be **born of** water and the Spirit, he cannot enter into the kingdom of God! **6** That which is born of the flesh is flesh; and that which is **born of the Spirit** is spirit. **7**

Marvel not that I said unto you, You must be **born anew**."

(3) Resurrection - Ephesians2: 1 "And you did **He make alive**, when you **were dead** through your trespasses and sins." **4** "But God, being rich in mercy, for His great love wherewith He loved us, **5** even when we **were dead** through our trespasses, **made us alive** together with Christ (by grace have you been saved), **6** and **raised us up** with Him, and made us to sit with Him in the heavenly places, in Christ Jesus."

What is the common denominator of all 3 of these phenomena?

In all 3 there is the strictest **monergism**, that is **God acts alone**. (He creates it and sustains it)

In **Creation**, you didn't have a little mass of matter out there floating around from eternity saying, "Hey God, form us into something nice will you." "In the beginning God created." Ex-nilo, out of nothing, He spoke and it was done! That's what He does when He begets spiritual life.

In **Birth**, mom and dad had everything to do with it, the child had nothing to do with it. The origin of life came from another.

In **Resurrection**, Lazarus, come forth – that is when you're alive enough to hear My voice and help yourself. That's not resurrection that's resuscitation. "You did He made alive when you were dead." **Eph2**

Do you see why faith is called the gift of God? If faith is the whole souled response to Christ, in all the glory of His Person, by nature the human eye is blinded by the god of this world and it cannot behold any beauty in Christ.

2Cor4: 4. 3 "And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled in them that perish: **4** in whom the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God, should not dawn upon them."

How did that blindness get overcome?

2Cor4: 6 “Seeing it is **God**, that **said**, **Light shall** shine out of darkness, **Who shined** in our hearts, to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.”

The first thing illuminated by that light was the glory of God in the face of Jesus Christ.

No one will ever believe on Him until they see Him with eyes given by the Spirit, but seeing Him you cannot help but believe upon Him.

Faith is the whole souled response to Christ, in all the glory of His Person and also in the sufficiency of His work. The work of Christ is nothing but a stumbling block, until our spiritual eyes have been opened.

1Cor1: 23-24. 23 “But we preach **Christ crucified**, unto Jews a stumbling block, and unto Gentiles foolishness; **24** but unto them that are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.”

CONCLUSION AND APPLICATION:

- (1) REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE INSEPARABLE.
- (2) REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE TO BE PREACHED AS A DIVINE COMMANDMENT.
- (3) REPENTANCE AND FAITH'S GENUINENESS ARE KNOWN AND DISCOVERED ONLY IN THEIR FRUIT.

(1) REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE INSEPARABLE.

Whenever a sinner turns from his sin to God, through Christ, there will always be, the workings of faith and repentance. Concerning this inseparability of faith and repentances, John Murray says, “The interdependence of faith and repentance can be readily seen, when we remember, that faith, is faith in Christ, for what? He shall save His people **in**, or **from** their sins?

Mt1:21. “And she shall bring forth a Son; and you shall call His Name JESUS; for it is He that shall save His people **from** their sins.”

If a sinner is going to trust in Christ to be saved **from** their sins, its obvious that that person wants to be saved from their sin, and what is that but repentance.”

In every exercise of faith there is an implicit repentance.

Likewise, Murray goes on to say, “But if faith is directed to salvation from sin, there must be a hatred of sin, and the desire to be saved from it. Such hatred from sin involves repentance which essentially consist in turning from sin to God. If we remember that repentance is turning from sin unto God, that turning to God implies faith, in the mercy of God, as revealed in Christ. Faith looks to the mercy of God in Christ to receive forgiveness of sin.”

It is impossible to disentangle faith and repentance. Saving faith is permeated with repentance, and repentance is permeated with faith.

The emphasis which the Scripture places upon faith as the **condition of salvation**, is not to be understood as if faith were the only condition of salvation. **Faith and repentance are the conditions of salvation.** The specific character of **repentance** is turning from sin unto God. The specific character of **faith** is to receive and rest upon Christ alone for salvation. Repentance reminds us, that if the faith **we profess** is a faith that allows us to walk in the ways of this present evil world, and in the fellowship of the works of darkness, then our so called faith is a mockery and a deception. Repentance and faith are not momentary acts, but they are an abiding attitude of trust and confidence directed to the Savior, and constant contrition. To be **indifferent to sin**, the sin that opened our Saviors wounds, to be **indifferent to what pleases our Lord**, and to profess faith in Christ, is to hold to an impoverished and soul-destroying conception of faith.

Repentance is the tear in faiths eye. The two are inseparable.

Here is a warning: *Every attempt in the history of the church, to separate the two, or to establish the priority of the one against the other, has sown the seeds of dangerous heresy.

Whenever someone insist that repentance is a separate exercise, prior to any hope of mercy, you end up with a preperationism, that causes sinners to look into their own hearts for forgiveness rather than looking to Christ.

*If someone insist that there must be faith in Christ, and the full sense of pardon, before there is any repentance, you end up with what was called Sandemanianism, (viii)

which cursed the Scottish church, and is the mother, of present day easy believes. (ix)

Repentance and faith are inseparable. That's why the Bible can say in some places believe, in other places, repent. Why? All true repentance is permeated with faith, and all true faith is permeated with repentance. They are insuperable.

(2) REPENTANCE AND FAITH ARE TO BE PREACHED AS A DIVINE COMMANDMENT.

Acts 17:30 "The times of ignorance therefore God overlooked; but now He **commands** men that they should all, everywhere **repent**."

1John 3:22 "This is His **commandment** that we should **believe** on the Name of His Son, Jesus Christ."

Even though we are fellow fallen sons and daughters of Adam, we are warranted in the Name of the God of heaven, to command fellow, sinners to turn from their sins and throw themselves upon His mercy and to promise them that if they do so, all that God has stored up in Christ, is theirs.

Once you catch the glory of standing in the Name and authority of the God of Heaven and commanding people with a tender heart to repent and believe the gospel, you can never stoop to using psychological gimmicks in evangelism. Repentance and faith are to be preached as a Divine commandment.

(3) REPENTANCE AND FAITH'S GENUINENESS ARE KNOWN AND DISCOVERED ONLY, IN THEIR FRUIT.

*Great harm has come in the church, when people have spent time trying to analyze and dissect, the irreducible elements of true faith and repentance, and turned people inward upon their own hears.

Repentance's genuineness is known and discovered only, in its fruit.

In **Acts 20** Paul is summarizing his whole missionary ministry as a preacher and an Apostle.

Acts 26:19-20 "Where upon O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision, **20** but declared both to them of Damascus first and at Jerusalem and throughout all of the Country of Judea and also to the Gentiles, that they should **repent** and turn to God (faith is implied) **doing works worthy of repentance**."

He didn't say I preached that they should repent, turn to God and then spend the rest of their lives analyzing their faith and repentance. No, he said I preached repent, turn to God, **do works**, answering to, consistent with, expressive of, that repentance. Repentance genuineness is known and discovered only, in its fruit.

Faiths genuineness is known and discovered only, in its fruit. The fruit of faith is faith.

Rm1: 17. 16 "For I am not ashamed of the gospel: for it is the power of God unto salvation to every one that believes; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek. **17** For therein is revealed a righteousness of God, **from faith, unto faith**, as it is written, but the just shall **live by faith**."

When saving faith is implanted in the heart, it is not the act of a moment, but the acquisition of a disposition, and the proof of faith is faith. The continually looking away from self, to Christ alone.

The proof of repentance is a continuing repentance. The proof that the sins I turned from at my professed conversion, were truly abandoned, and that there was true repentance, is that the disposition of repentance continues to be manifested in my life.

2Tim2: 19. "Howbeit the firm foundation of God stands, having this seal, The Lord knows them that are His: and, let every one that names the Name of the Lord **depart from unrighteousness**."

If this were understood, how could anyone dare teach this Savior-Lord dichotomy in salvation? It's impossible to accept Christ as Savior, and not as Lord. Why?

Because faith terminates upon the whole Christ Who is Lord, and if you have any dealings with Him, you have dealings with Him for Who He is. He is **THE LORD** Jesus Christ.

Any teaching that the churches problem is you have all these people who have trusted Christ as their Savior, but they have not yielded to Him as Lord and their just Carnal Christians - that teaching is not rooted in the Word of God. It is a man made accommodation, to the

preaching of a **defective gospel**, and it **produces defective views of the Christian life**, and more **defective Christianity**.

The whole idea that the problem with the church is, we are **just** converted and we need to go on to some higher experience, is rooted in defective views of conversion.

Just converted? God says His most glorious work is not making the 1st world, but bringing in the new creation, is His most glorious work. Just converted?? That's the most glorious display of the mighty power of God.

Appendix (i) page 4 - The church growth movement was just analyzed the results of the big Campus Crusade Here's Life Campaign in 3 or 4 major cities in the USA, 6 months after the campaigns. The rate of total vanishing is 97%, only 3% of those who made decisions, are found anywhere near the church and 50% of those 3%, had previous church connections. Could it be that there is a relationship between the message preached among other things and the terrible results that come?

Appendix (ii) page 8, Westminster Shorter Catechism Question 87

Q: What is repentance unto life?

A: Repentance unto life is a saving grace, (1) whereby a sinner, out of a true sense of his sin, (2) and apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ, (3) does, with grief and hatred of his sin, turn from it unto God, (4) with full purpose of, and endeavour after, new obedience. (5)

(1) Acts 11:18. When they heard these things, they held their peace, and glorified God, saying, "Then has God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life."

(2) Acts 2:37-38. Now when they heard this, they were pricked in their heart, and said unto Peter and to the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" 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 Ghost."

(3) Joel 2:13. And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the Lord your God: for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repents him of the evil.

(4) Jeremiah 31:18-19. I have surely heard Ephraim bemoaning himself thus; "You have chastised me, and I was chastised, as a bullock unaccustomed to the yoke: turn thou me, and I shall be turned; for you are the Lord my God. Surely after that I was turned, I repented; and after that I was instructed, I smote upon my thigh: I was ashamed, yea, even confounded, because I did bear the reproach of my youth."

(5) 2 Corinthians 7:11. For behold this selfsame thing, that you sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things you have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

Psalms 119:59. I thought on my ways, and turned my feet unto Your testimonies.

repuntolife.doc

Appendix (iii) page 9

REPENTANCE – LEAGAL – To do something in order to earn or merit something from God.

REPENTANCE – EVANGELICAL – is repentance done out of gratitude to God for saving us, not, that we do something in order to earn or merit something from God.

It is not a legal repentance, or a repentance in the sense that we do something in order to earn or merit something from God. **Repentance unto life** (they knew there was a repentance unto death, the repentance of Judas) Repentance unto life (that is the repentance that is unto salvation) is a **saving grace** (they did not say a saving work, they knew that it came from King Jesus, seated at the right hand of the Father, Who gives repentance. Here we have **the origin** of repentance.

Appendix (iv) page 9 "APPREHENSION of MERCY of God in Christ" - Repentance implies an apprehension of the mercy of God in Christ. A sense of danger alone will only alarm, and not lead to any action, unless some place of shelter from the danger is also pointed out. A mere sense of the odiousness of sin will afford no relief, but rather produce dismay, unless there be also provided some remedy from this odious thing, sin. **The gospel message presents Christ as the refuge from the danger**, and his blood as the means of cleansing from the pollution. When this message is brought home to the heart and life, **the sinner turns to this refuge**, and seeks the cleansing of the blood. This, too, is an element in true repentance which should ever have due importance given to it. To learn that God is merciful, gracious, long-suffering, and ready to forgive all who come to him by his Son, Jesus Christ, is a strong motive to lead the sinner to exercise true repentance by turning from sin to God in Christ.

Two observations:

One, the **motive for repentance** is not only sorrow for sin but also a sense of the **mercy of God in Christ**. We have zero **motivation to repent** unless we see the mercy of God awaiting us. Not **the slap of God** but **the embrace of God**. Repentance is not just **turning from** sin; it is also **turning to God with a bright hope in his mercy**.

The Shorter Catechism of the Westminster Assembly Explained and Proved from Scripture by Thomas Vincent.

Q. 6. What need is there of this sense of sin unto true repentance?

A. There is need of this sense of sin unto true repentance, because, without this sense of sin, sinners will not forsake sin, nor apply themselves unto the Lord Jesus for pardon and hearing. "They that be whole need not a physician, but they that are sick. I am not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." Matt. 9:12, 13.

Q. 7. What apprehensions of God's mercy are requisite in this repentance?

A. There is requisite in true repentance, that **we have apprehensions** of God's mercy, as he is both slow to anger

and of great kindness; as he is most ready to forgive, and most ready to be pacified unto repenting sinners. "And the Lord passed by before him, and proclaimed, The LORD, **The LORD God, merciful and gracious, long-suffering, and abundant in goodness and truth, keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity, and transgression, and sin**" Exod. 34:6, 7. "Or despisest thou **the riches of his goodness**, and forbearance, and long-suffering? Not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance." Rom. 2:4.

Q. 8. Can we apprehend pardoning mercy in God only through Christ?

A. We can truly apprehend pardoning mercy in God only through Christ, because God is so infinitely just and jealous, and a consuming fire unto sinners out of Christ, and He is reconcilable unto sinners only through His Son, who has given satisfaction unto His justice for sin. "All things are of God, who has reconciled us to Himself by Jesus Christ." — 2 Cor. 5:18.

Q. 9. What need is there of the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ, in order to our repentance?

A. There is need of the apprehension of God's mercy in Christ in order to our repentance, because without the apprehension of this mercy of God, and willingness through His Son to be reconciled unto us, upon conviction of and contrition for sin, we shall either **cast off** our trouble, and run more eagerly unto the commission of sin than before; or, if we cannot cast off our trouble, we will **sink under tormenting despair** and be in danger of making away with ourselves, as Judas did: whereas the apprehension of **God's mercy in Christ is an encouragement to us to forsake our sins and to turn to Him**, and a means to affect our hearts with kindly and godly sorrow for sin.

Appendix (v) page 11, I'm not asking did you make a **decision**, did you pray a prayer, did you ask Jesus into your heart, but I'm asking do you have **a fixed disposition of Christian graces and commitment**? Not a perfect disposition that is **complete** in all it's parts, **mature** and **advanced** in its degree, but a **general pattern** of repenting and believing and obeying out of love to Jesus; a **general pattern** to make restitution when wrongs have been done; a **general pattern** of hunger to pray, to read the Word without having to be pressured all the time. **A fixed disposition** of Christian graces is a pattern of **real**, though **not perfect**, **genuine**, though **not mature** graces, of regeneration, of repentance and faith.

Christian commitment? Has Jesus Christ been received as the unrivaled affection of your heart, more than mother, father, brother, sister, even peers or boyfriends or girlfriends? If acceptance or rejection by peers will cause you to turn from Jesus, if acceptance by peers is #1 then your attachment is obviously not to Christ. What happens when **the disposition** of repentance of faith and attachment to Christ are put to the test? If peer pressure, sexual drive, and the world are your

choice, and you've denied all of Christ, then do not claim to be His, until you've looked to Him for forgiveness, and turned from your sin. Don't be satisfied with anything less than **fixed dispositions of Christian commitment and Christian graces**.

Appendix (vi) page 15. To older children who have been decisioned, and then the parent comes to the realization that it was an error. – We fear, son or daughter, that you will place undue confidence in that decision you made, a week ago, 2 years ago, The Word of God is clear, the Word of God is clear, **if that decision was an expression of God's work in you**, and you truly believed on Christ, truly repented of sin, these will be the patterns of your current living. If you see the patterns encourage them, **not to focus their attention upon that decision, but upon Christ**, Who from that point on, has been The Object of their trust, and upon the Provider of the provisions of grace to do the will of God and upon the privileges of living as a Christian. Yes, we may encourage a child to pray and to call on the Lord for forgiveness, but we do not focus on that particular prayer and that particular crisis of spiritual exercise, but rather we are concerned to see in our children a disposition, of continual turning from sin, continual looking to Christ, continual trusting to Jesus, as their hope of salvation. Surely, many have truly come to Christ, during a prayer, of in the evangelistic service, but **the simple performance of these acts do not make one a Christian**. A one-time faith or profession is not saving faith, nor are strong feelings, or getting caught up in an electric emotional contagion that lasts but awhile. Faith that saves lasts, and those who have this kind of faith, are coming and believing in Christ. These alone will persevere. **Saved when praying a prayer not saved by praying a prayer**.

One of the essential qualities of true saving faith is that it is persevering faith, and its genuineness is seen, not only in the ability to articulate its proper object, namely Christ, but to manifest its continuous, vital, dynamism – we continue faith, but faith in attachment to Christ, the fruit of which is a life of obedience, communion with Christ, desire for His people, His Word, His ways, etc, (pg 16, #4 SAC) If we encourage children to pray, explain to them it wasn't the prayer or decision that saved you. It wasn't your will or your faith that saved you. Grace came, God came and regenerated you. He freed you from your bondage and slavery to sin and satan. He gave you a new heart of flesh, He took out the stony heart and circumcised your heart by a circumcision not made with hands. He gave sight to your blind eyes. You may have a faulty view of how the Trinity works and accomplishes and applies salvation. If your were saved, it was God, not you Who initiated salvation, and it was not based upon anything He saw in you, or what you would do. He didn't look down the portals of time and see that you would respond to the gospel, so therefore He saved you because of your foreseen response. No, it was grace alone, undeserved favor, not some difference He saw that separated you from others. If you were saved, it was not because of you. You can think you had a pat in it, you willed it, your "free will" or what ever. The question is, did

your experience (hand raised, prayer prayed, decision made, aisle walked, rededication, what ever your religious ritual) did your experience issue in a life of holiness and obedience? What was the fruit of your response? Is there an attachment by faith to Jesus Christ? Where there is true saving faith in Christ, there will be **(1) a love for the Person of Christ.** 1Peter 1:8 **(2) an obedience to the Words of Christ.** 1 John 5:3, 1John 2:3-4. **(3) A growing conformity to the moral character of Christ.** Romans 8:29. Do you hear Him, and follow Him? John 10:27 Right now, are you believing and repenting? It is not so much the decision, as it is the wrong assurance given to people who make the decision, and the erroneous presuppositions it is built upon. For instance, since Jesus died for everyone and made salvation possible for everyone, and everyone has the capacity to receive or reject the gospel, then if you can just get them to say the right words it will all kick in, and there is no need to worry about any fruit of obedience or holiness because you can receive Jesus as Savior and not Lord. You can be a "Carnal Christian" and lose a few rewards, but you will still be saved. This is nonsense, built upon more nonsense.

There is nothing wrong with asking God to forgive you, and to wash you and to save you, but just because you mouthed the right words, or sincerely believed them in your heart, or were manipulated into a decision, does not mean you were saved. True union with Christ issues into a life that is lived in the life giving force of that union. **It is lived "unto God."** Romans6: **10.** "For the death that He died, He died unto sin once: but the life that He lives, He lives unto God. **11** Even so reckon ye also yourselves to be dead unto sin, but **alive unto God** in Christ Jesus. **12** Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that you should obey the lusts thereof: **13** neither present your members unto sin as instruments of unrighteousness; but present yourselves unto God, as **alive from the dead**, and your members as instruments of righteousness **unto God.**"

Appendix (vii) There is a problem with syntax (the way in which words are put together to form phrases, clauses, or sentences) some say that means propitiation thru faith in His blood, His blood being the object of faith. Other exegetes, of whom I agree, believe from a linguistic and theological standpoint, it is more accurate to say, His is propitiation, in His blood, and it's through faith that we come into the virtue of that propitiatory work.

Appendix (viii) see Sandemanianism.doc & preface of ER book Lord & Christ

Appendix (ix) You can do no better than Murray who would not even treat faith and repentance in separate chapters, he put them in one chapter, and gave an eloquent structural declaration to the fact that they are inseparable.

Appendix (x) page 4 **Acts 2:42.** "Received the Word." It was an inward response not an outward decision. The outward response does not guarantee the inward change. A true inward change may be simultaneous with an outward response or decision, but to preach a defective, badly truncated gospel, and get people to make a decision and promise them they are saved and then share with the Christian community that, "We had 15 salvations at the meeting" is soul destroying. Received Jn1: 12, Mk 11:24, Acts 13:38

What should be said is, if you persevere to the end you will be saved.

Remission Mt 26:28, Mr1: 4, Lk1: 77, 2:3, 24:47, Acts 2:38, 10:43, 13:38, Rm3: 25, Hb9: 22, 10:18

To say to people, "Believe that Jesus died for you, for your sins" assumes a universal atonement and that faith is as easy as exerting your will and then when there's no evidence of saving faith, we wonder why.

Faith involves turning to God for forgiveness of sins.

Appendix (xi) page 8

THE MEANS OF JUSTIFICATION - is faith and faith alone.

THE CONDITION OF SALVATION - is faith and repentance, not faith alone.

In the initial acting's of justifying faith, evangelical repentance is always present.

The Bible never says, we are justified by repentance, but the Bible everywhere says, we are justified by faith.

The Bible never says, we are justified by repentance, but the Bible everywhere says, we are never justified without repentance.

Faith is the open hand, that receives the offered Savior and the salvation that is in Him.

Repentance is the tear in faith's eye.