

“Why Repentance is Non-Negotiable for Believers as We Walk Out Our Salvation with Fear and Trembling!”

John the Baptist’s message of repentance is repeated by Jesus Christ when He began His earthly ministry. This is detailed in Matthew 4:17 which states, from that time on Jesus began to preach, **“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.”**

Since this is one of the very first subjects Jesus addressed to His followers during His earthly ministry, then I do not understand why those who claim to follow Him now do **not** heed this critical warning. For it will be Jesus Christ who will be coming back to bring salvation to the righteous—those who have **made** their garments white by getting rid of the sin that once enslaved us, and He will be unleashing His wrath on the wicked—those who refuse to repent and turn to Him, including those who have renounced (rejected) Him by worshipping the beast, his image, or receiving the *mark of the beast*!

The word “*repent*” Jesus used in Matthew 4:17 is referring to individual repentance, not national repentance. The Greek transliteration of the word “*repent*” is *metanoēō*, and involves a turning with contrition (sincere remorse) from sin to God; the repentant sinner is then in the proper condition to accept forgiveness. And, without forgiveness of our sins we will perish. In addition, God wants us to be so grieved by the spiritual, moral, and ethical decay in our society that it will compel us to take action and be the salt and the light He has called us to be.

Moreover, just like the prophets in the Old Testament, Jesus and His disciples always preached repentance first and foremost as substantiated by the following Scriptures:

“John came baptizing in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins.” ~ Mark 1:4 (NKJV)

“The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.” ~ Mark 1:15 (NKJV)

“So they went out and preached that people should repent.” ~ Mark 6:12 (NKJV)

“And he went into all the region around the Jordan, preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins, ...” ~ Luke 3:3 (NKJV)

“I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners, to repentance.” ~ Luke 5:32 (NKJV)

“I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish.” ~ Luke 13:3 (NKJV)

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“...and that **repentance** and **remission of sins** should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.” ~ Luke 24:47 (NKJV)

Then Peter said to them, “**Repent**, and let every one of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” ~Acts 2:38 (NKJV)

“**Repent** therefore and **be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...” ~ Acts 3:19 (NKJV)

Repent therefore of this your wickedness, and pray to God if perhaps the thought of your heart may be forgiven you.” ~ Acts 8:22 (NKJV)

“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to **repent**...” ~ Acts 17:30 (NKJV)

Then Paul said, “John indeed baptized with a **baptism of repentance**, saying to the people that they should believe on Him who would come after him, that is, on Christ Jesus.” ~ Acts 19:4 (NKJV)

“...testifying to Jews, and also to Greeks, **repentance toward God** and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ.” ~ Acts 20:21 (NKJV)

“...but declared first to those in Damascus and in Jerusalem, and throughout all the region of Judea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should **repent, turn to God, and do works befitting repentance.**” ~ Acts 26:20 (NKJV)

This is exactly how Jesus and His disciples carried out *The Great Commission!* Even the Apostle Paul substantiates this was the message of *the gospel of the kingdom* he preached based on Acts 20:19-21 below.

“I have done the Lord’s work humbly and with many tears. I have endured the trials that came to me from the plots of the Jews. I never shrank back from telling you what you needed to hear, either publicly or in your homes. **I have had one message for Jews and Greeks [Gentiles] alike—the necessity of repenting from sin and turning to God, and of having faith in our Lord Jesus.**” ~ Acts 20:19-21 (NLT)

Now let’s begin to discover what God’s Word says about the true meaning of being converted

What being “converted” and being “born again” truly means

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Listen to what Jesus, who is the author and finisher of our faith, says to us in Matthew 18:2-3 below. He says in order for us to enter the *Kingdom of Heaven* we must be “*converted*” and become as little children.

*“Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set him in the midst of them, and said, “Assuredly, I say to you, **unless you are converted and become as little children**, you will by **no means enter the kingdom of heaven.**” ~ Matthew 18:2-3 (NKJV)*

So, first I will convey what Jesus means when He says we must become as little children if we hope to enter the kingdom of heaven...

Little children love, trust, and fully depend on their parents correct? Therefore, as followers of Jesus’ He is saying to us to love Him, place our faith and trust in **only** Him, and fully depend on Him because He is our only hope to have eternal life and live life more abundantly above all that we could think or ask while we are still living on the earth!

Moreover, little children continually ask the question, “Why?” This is how they learn! And, it is for this reason we must never take what we hear from others, including our pastors, priests, and rabbis as being the absolute truth. Rather, we must know for ourselves what **His** truth is!

As I have said before, but bears repeating, we must know beyond a shadow of doubt why we believe what we believe and be prepared to back it up with God’s Word. In addition, we must to come to the Lord as little children do and ask the Holy Spirit to illuminate God’s Word for us. Then when we He does, we must be willing to dig for the hidden treasures to be found in His Word as we submit to the Holy Spirit who will lead us into all truth.

Now I will convey what the word “*converted*” really means that Jesus used in Matthew 18:2-3 in which He said, “*Assuredly, I say to you, unless you are converted and become as little children, you will by no means enter the kingdom of heaven.*”

According to *Strong’s Greek Lexicon Number G4762* the word “*converted*” as used in this passage of scripture is the Greek word “*strephō*” which means to turn about, to twist, i.e. turn quite around or reverse (literally or figuratively).

In addition, *Thayer’s Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament* defines the word “*converted*” as follows: 1) **to turn**, turn around 2) to turn one's self (i.e. **to turn the back to one** 2a) of one who no longer cares for another) 2b) metaph. **to turn one's self from one's course of conduct**, i.e. **to change one's mind**.

Therefore, what this word “*converted*” means as used in Matthew 18:2-3 is to repent, to change your mind concerning a matter, and to change your conduct; to do the reverse of what you are currently doing if it is **not** in line with God’s will or Word. This is substantiated by the Apostle Paul in Acts 3:19 (NKJV) which says,

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*“Repent therefore and **be converted**, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord...”*

An analogy which will drive home this point of changing our current path by repenting and returning back to God’s Word and will for our lives is when we are traveling somewhere we have never been to before and we suddenly find ourselves lost. What should we do? We would be wise to turn around and return to the point we went off course! Or, at the very least stop driving aimlessly and ask for directions.

Many of us use a GPS device to take us to our desired destination when we are traveling correct? We place the address of our final destination into the GPS device before we begin our travels. Therefore, even if we miss a turn or do not follow the instructions of the GPS device exactly, what happens? The GPS device recalculates another route for achieving our final destination, yet it does not change the final destination correct?

God is the believer’s GPS device and the acronym does not mean Global Positioning System. Rather it means God’s Providence Saves! Therefore, rely on God’s divine providence to save us when we have drifted off course and don’t know which way to turn or what we should do! Therefore, if you have found yourselves not knowing what God’s will is for your life because you have drifted from Him, then you need to stop what you are doing, humble yourself by repenting, then pray; seek His face; and ask Him for directions! Do not continue on your path until you receive further instructions from Him. Then you must obey what He tells you to do! Otherwise, you will continue to traverse down the wrong path! You must return to the narrow path and as you do, the Holy Spirit will lead you every step of the way.

Our final destination as believers in Jesus Christ is to enter the Kingdom of Heaven when we are resurrected from the dead, or raptured after the tribulation of these days, where we will remain until God creates the new heaven and the new earth based on Revelation 21. Moreover, our ultimate goal is to only “**do**” the will of our heavenly Father and fulfill our destiny that He created us for before one of our days on the earth ever came to be.

Contrary to what most believe, our final objective is not to receive eternal life when we die for we receive eternal life the moment we **repent** and turn from our sins and **accept** Jesus Christ as our Lord and Savior by placing our faith and trust in Him alone! We have eternal life by knowing both our heavenly Father and His Son whom He sent on a personal intimate basis while we are still living on the earth! This is based on John 17:3 (NKJV) which says, “*And **this IS eternal life**, that they may **KNOW** You, the only true God, and **Jesus Christ whom You have sent.**”*

Therefore, we must work out our salvation with fear and trembling in order to maintain our faith in Jesus Christ and overcome until the end of either our physical life or Jesus returns! Jesus proclaims this truth in Matthew 24:13 (NKJV), “*But he who endures to the end **shall be saved.**”*

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What is Jesus telling us we must endure? All the trials and tribulations He has promised us we shall have when we live on the earth! Jesus tells us ahead of time in Mark 13:13 (NKJV), “*And you will **be hated** by all for **My name’s sake**. But he who **endures to the end shall be saved**.*”

Furthermore, Jesus Christ is coming back for a bride without spot or blemish, and just like the early disciples had to go through many tribulations in order to enter the *kingdom of God* based on Acts 14:21-22 below, it is for this reason God will require His people to go through the tribulation period too.

*“And when they had preached the gospel to that city and made many disciples, they returned to Lystra, Iconium, and Antioch, strengthening the souls of the disciples, exhorting them to continue in the faith, and saying, “**We must through many tribulations** ¹ **enter the kingdom of God.**” ~ Acts 14:21-22 (NKJV)*

¹ According to *Strong’s Greek Lexicon Number G2347* the word “tribulation” is from the Greek word “*thlipsis*” from [G2346](#); *pressure* (literally or figuratively): - afflicted, (-tion), anguish, burdened, persecution, tribulation, trouble.

As a matter of fact, the author and finisher of our faith—Jesus Christ tells us ahead of time in Matthew 7:13-14 (NKJV) that we must “*Enter by the **narrow** ¹ gate; for **wide is the gate and broad is the way that leads to destruction, and there are many who go in by it. Because narrow is the gate and difficult is the way which leads to life, and there are few who find it.***”

¹ According to *Strong’s Greek Lexicon Number G2346* the word “narrow” is the Greek word “*thlibō*” which is akin to the base of [G5147](#); to *crowd* (literally or figuratively): - afflict, narrow, throng, **suffer tribulation**, trouble.

Why must believers go **through** trials and tribulation, including the tribulation period, while we live on the earth? The Apostle Paul tells us in Romans 5:1-5 below that we must go through tribulation because it produces perseverance, character, and hope. Hope in what? Our blessed hope is IN Jesus Christ! Our faith and salvation in Jesus Christ alone should allow us to triumph in all of our troubles and tribulations that we must **walk** through to finish the race set before us as we receive God’s grace, power and glory through the Holy Spirit which will cause us to be victorious no matter what we may face and empower us to **live** holy because the God we serve is holy!

*“Therefore, having been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ, through whom also we **have access by faith into this grace in which we stand**, and rejoice in hope of the **glory of God**. And not only that, but we also **glory in tribulations**, knowing that **tribulation** produces perseverance; and perseverance, character; and character, hope. Now hope does not disappoint, because the love of God has been poured out in our hearts by the Holy Spirit who was given to us.” ~ Romans 5:1-5 (NKJV)*

Moreover, most people in the body of Christ teach that everything Jesus addressed about the end times is for the Jewish people only, and not for the body of Christ, which is the bride of Christ, that is comprised of both Jews from the *House of Judah* and those of us who were formerly Gentiles from the *House of Israel*

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(Jacob/Joseph/Ephraim) who **believe in** and **obey** the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob, and His one and only *begotten* Son, Jesus Christ.

Furthermore, many Christians who erroneously teach and believe that we will be raptured out of here **before** the tribulation period gets underway, and the tribulation is just for the Jews from the *House of Judah* are deceived beyond belief. Do you not know that God's Word promises us that we will have trials and tribulations while we are in this world!

Many believers are sadly mistaken and are not prepared at all for what is coming due to this heresy of the pre-tribulation rapture being taught by many men and women of God throughout America and the world. Moreover, all believers in our Jewish Messiah will need to intercede and come along side each other in the days ahead like never before as the *kingdom of darkness* comes in like a flood and collides with the *Kingdom of Light*. This is true for both "*spiritual*" Israel—which is comprised of both Jews from the *House of Judah* and those of us who were formerly Gentiles from the *House of Israel* (Jacob/Joseph /Ephraim) who are true disciples of Jesus Christ and it also pertains to the "*physical*" nation of Israel, which is a literal nation on the earth!

This is the primary reason why we will see the falling away before Jesus Christ returns that the Apostle Paul talks about in 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 below. We will see the great falling away because not many have people in the body of Christ signed up to endure great persecution when they accepted Jesus Christ as their Lord and Savior and most are not willing to pay the high price required to go through the narrow gate!

*"Now, brethren, [the Apostle Paul is talking to disciples in Jesus Christ regardless of whether or not they are Jews from the House of Judah or those of us who were formerly Gentiles who have been grafted into the common wealth of Israel by our faith in Jesus Christ from the House of Israel (Jacob/Joseph/Ephraim) because spiritually speaking we are all ONE in Him!] concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ **and our gathering together to Him**, [this is one and the same event] we ask you, not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come. **LET NO ONE DECEIVE YOU BY ANY MEANS; for that Day** [the return of Jesus Christ called the *Day of the Lord*] **will NOT come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin** [the Antichrist] **IS REVEALED, the son of perdition, who opposes and exalts himself above all that is called God or that is worshiped, so that he SITS AS GOD IN THE TEMPLE OF GOD, showing himself that he is God.**" ~ 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 (NKJV)*

The truth is Jesus Christ will NOT be coming back until we see the Antichrist who will claim he is God sitting in the temple of God and all the other signs Jesus told us in advance to watch taking place on the Global scene!

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Yet, many men and women of God are saying that Jesus can come back at any time which is NOT true based on just 2 Thessalonians 2:1-4 alone! In addition, Jesus Himself tells us in advance that we will be here on the earth until after the tribulation of these days. See my writing dated April 7, 2014 under the 2014 Prophetic Word titled, “***“Signs In The Heavens—Is God Trying To Tell Us Great And Mighty Things We Do Not Know In Order To Prepare His People For The Season Ahead?”***” In this writing I elaborate on the fact that according to God’s Word we shall be on the earth until Jesus Christ returns.

Therefore, most who “profess” they are saved with their mouths, rather than their hearts, will fall away from the faith when they find out they were deceived into thinking we would not have to go through the tribulation period and face great persecution, perhaps even martyrdom, for His Namesake like the early disciples did! Tell the early disciples that they did NOT go through the tribulation period during their time! History always repeats itself and God will call to account those things He has done in the past!

And, know this indisputable truth: The only way we will accomplish enduring persecution for His Namesake and overcoming until the very end is by cultivating an intimate personal relationship with both our heavenly Father and His one and only *begotten* Son Jesus Christ whom He sent while we are still living on the earth! It will be too late to know them once we are dead!

And, as we abide in God, and His Holy Spirit abides in us, we will do the will of our heavenly Father while we are on the earth by obeying His voice and His Word! Therefore, we definitely play a role in reaching our final destination!

And, just like a GPS device, the Holy Spirit will help us get back on the narrow path that leads to life eternal if we have drifted off course as long as we keep abiding in God’s presence and in His Word. A GPS device will only work if it is plugged into an electrical source, and the same concept applies to those who remain plugged into God who is our source for everything!

Now let’s get back to the true meaning of the word “converted” which means to repent!

John the Baptist prepared the way for the first coming of Jesus Christ and proclaimed, “*Repent, for the kingdom of heaven has come near.*” Then John defines what repent means when he confronts the religious leaders of that day in Matthew 3:7-12 below. How do we prove we have repented of our sins and turned to God? We prove it by the way we live our lives and it will be evidenced by the “*fruit*” we produce for His Kingdom in the here and now.

*“But when he saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees coming to his baptism, he said to them, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come? **THEREFORE BEAR FRUITS WORTHY OF REPENTANCE** and do not think to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father.’ For I say to you that God is able to raise up children to Abraham from*

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these stones. And **even now** the ax is laid to the root of the trees. **Therefore every tree which does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.** I indeed baptize you with water unto repentance, but He who is coming after me is mightier than I, whose sandals I am not worthy to carry. He (Jesus) will **baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire.** His winnowing fan is in His hand, and He will thoroughly clean out His threshing floor, and gather His wheat into the barn (this is talking about the gathering together of His faithful remnant—the rapture which will happen after the tribulation of these days); **but He will burn up the chaff with unquenchable fire.**” ~ Matthew 3:7-12 (NKJV)

Again, all the early disciples preached the need to repent and stop sinning including John the Baptist and Jesus Himself! Therefore, if we do sin, we are to confess our sins, ask for forgiveness and then God will forgive our sins as long as we have forgiven the sins of others who have trespassed against us!

However, if we do **not** repent, confess our sins, and ask for His forgiveness and then stop sinning, when the books are opened up on judgment Day we will be judged according to what is written in the books. This is based on the following scriptures below.

*“But I say to you that for every **idle word** men may speak, **they will give account of it in the day of judgment.**”* ~ Matthew 12:36 (NKJV)

*“He who rejects Me, and does **not receive My words**, has **that which judges him**—the word that I have spoken will judge him in the last day.”* ~ John 12:48 (NKJV)

*“For God will bring **every work into judgment**, including **every secret thing**, Whether good or evil.”* ~ Ecclesiastes 12:14 (NKJV)

*“For we must **all appear before the judgment seat of Christ**, that each one may **receive the things done in the body**, according **to what he has done**, whether good or bad.”* ~ 2 Corinthians 5:10 (NKJV)

Furthermore, based on what the Apostle Paul says in Hebrews 8:12 that God will be merciful concerning our unrighteousness, our sins, and our lawless deeds, this is true up to a point. Yahweh, our heavenly Father will extend His mercy **until** His cup of iniquity reaches the point where it is over flowing. And, it has reached that point!

One thing I do know which is this—God has been patient and long-suffering waiting for His people to sincerely repent of our wicked ways and it has been the prayers of the faithful remnant which has been holding God’s wrath at bay. However, He is tired of our lip service and the day of reckoning for what we have sown is at hand.

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I am sending this word the Lord has placed on my heart out to you as one final warning to get right with God now. Ask God to examine your heart and show you how you are grieving His Spirit. He is waiting for you with open arms and wants nothing more for you to repent and turn to Him, the lover and creator of your soul.