Repentance
Matthew 21:28-31

Longer passages are not quoted in the study sheet, but they can be read in the accompanying transcript.

Someone said, “You cannot repent too _______ because you don’t know how soon it will be too _______.” We’re now in the third part of our series on ________ the gospel. Two weeks ago we studied about ________ the gospel. Last week we explored what it means to ________ in Jesus Christ. Today we’re looking at the importance of repentance in responding to the ________ of God. As always, the Bible will be our ________ because we know the Bible gives us God’s true teaching. We want to _______ and _________ God, so we’re going to take the time to hear what He actually says about this and every other topic.

The New Testament ________ the great love that Jesus showed to sinners. The Pharisees criticized the Lord Jesus Christ for ________ with tax-collectors and sinners. In those days, the Pharisees, though a small group, had bullied the Jewish society into following their ________ traditions. They had no _________ in their hearts for anyone but those who followed their dictates. But Jesus followed a truer, better ________ that showed the love and compassion of God for all.

Jesus touched the ________ and told the story of the Prodigal Son. Jesus cared about ________ soul. The Lord said, “For the Son of Man has come to _______ and to _______ that which was lost” (Luke 19:10). Let’s be clear, just because Jesus ________ sinners didn’t mean that He tolerated their sin. Jesus told the man that he healed on the Sabbath Day, “do not sin ________, so that nothing worse happens to you” (John 5:14). The Lord Jesus doesn’t _________ us where He _________ us. He ________ us up out of sin and transforms our lives. Oh, thanks be to God.


The New Testament word “repentance” comes from the Greek word metanoia: “meta” means “after”; and “noia” means “thought.” Repentance then is an afterthought. People use an afterthought to ________ their ways, to ________ their thinking. An afterthought yields to us a ________ way of thinking, different from our former thoughts. Considering the destructive ________ of sin and the loving grace of God, penitent people have a change of heart and mind that leads to a change of life and behavior.

The Lord Jesus was, and still is, in the _________ business, but salvation includes transforming the life of those who follow Him. That transformation included what _______ would do for us in His grace and forgiveness, and what _____ must do. God ________ His people to believe and repent. The Lord Jesus ________ repentance to the Jews of His day. After his baptism and
temptation, Jesus ________ His ministry preaching throughout Galilee. Matthew 4:17 says, “From that time Jesus began to preach and say, ‘Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at _______.’”

When the Pharisees grumbled at Jesus for eating with tax-collectors and sinners, Jesus replied, “It’s not those who are _______ who need a physician, but those who are _______. I have not come to _______ the righteous but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:31-32).

When Jesus sent the twelve out into the towns and villages of Galilee, He called for those cities to _________. Read in Matthew 11:20-24 what Jesus said when some of the towns rejected Him.

Jesus was serious. Jesus ________ sinners, but He ________ them to repent. Repentance is not ________. If we wish to ________ God and be right with Him, we ________ repent. Read what Jesus said in Luke 13:2-5. If we wish to please the Lord, we too must repent.

Read what the apostle Paul told the pagan philosophers on Mars’ Hill in Athens in Acts 17:30-31. God won’t do your repenting for you, as some people suppose. God ________ you and everyone to repent.

Peter likewise ________ men to repent and be baptized for the remission of their sins on the Day of Pentecost in Acts 2:38. The apostle Peter wrote, “The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not ________ for any to perish but for all to come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). God doesn’t want anyone to be ________; but when people refuse to repent, they sadly ________ their sins over God. When people say no to God, they _________. On the other hand, the Lord God celebrates when people change their lives and ________ Him.

Read in Luke 15:4-7 the parable the Lord Jesus told to respond to the Pharisees who were grumbling because He ate with sinners. When a person turns his life around and leaves his sin, the God of Heaven _________.

Some people think repentance is a punishment, but actually it’s ________ for our souls. Some ________ about all the things they have to give up, but the heart that loves God finds new and wonderful ________ in righteous living. He trades the _____, destructive habits for a _____ and real joy in Christ. You don’t give up _____ pleasure to become a Christian. You give up the ________, sinful pleasures that end up enslaving and destroying you. But you take on new, ________ joys that are indescribable and everlasting. Jesus said, “The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy; I came that they may have ________, and have it abundantly” (John 10:10). Oh, we have an abundant life in Christ that keeps getting ________ and _________.

Repentance is ________ than ceasing to sin. While repentance requires a person to ________ doing evil, it also turns his ________ to the Lord. A penitent person learns to despise the ________ he did in the past, yes; but repentance also ________ in the heart a hunger and thirst for
righteousness. A penitent person wants to ________ God everyday and completely. The Ephesians made known their repentance by ________ from paganism and superstition, “bringing their books (of magic) together and _________ them in the sight of all” (Acts 19:19). I wonder if there are some sinful things in our lives that also need to be ________. They may be books, movies, or songs. We need to _______ our hearts of evil thoughts, ugly ways, and selfish intents.

When a person repents, he must also _______ his life with the Lord and His teaching. Read the illustration the Lord Jesus gave in Matthew 12:43-45. When a person is forgiven of sin but _______ to fill his life with the Lord, he becomes vulnerable to terrible sins coming back into his heart. One may cease to do evil, but real repentance means one lovingly fills his life with the Lord’s ________.

When a person repents, he’ll be truly ________ for his sin against God. He’s sorry that he hurt and grieved God by his transgression of God's _______. He’s also sorry when he realizes that Jesus _________ on the cross for his sin. The Bible says, “He Himself bore our sins in His body on the cross, so that we might die to sin and live to righteousness; for by His wounds you were healed” (1 Peter 2:24). It was our sins, our lust, and our selfishness that _______ Jesus to the cross. Repentance means that we’ve taken _________ how grievous sin is to God and how destructive it is.

Sin _________ us from God. Thankfully, God is willing to _________ when we repent. But once we come to God, we can no longer _________ in sin. Paul once asked, “What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin so that grace may increase? May it never be! How shall we who died to sin still live in it?” (Romans 6:1-2). Because we love God, we can’t _________ grieving God with our sins.

A penitent person is also sorry for his sins against other ________. He realizes that his sins have caused other people to ________. We hurt others with what we _______ and _______. When we sin, we _______ others to sin. Jesus said that one who sets a _________ _______ before a little one sins grievously (Matthew 18:6-9). The penitent person also mourns because of the _______ that his sin has caused against himself. Solomon said, "His own iniquities will _________ the wicked, and he will be held with the cords of his sin" (Proverbs 5:22). Every person who sins eventually has to _________ the consequences of his sin. The sinner’s life unalterably ________ in misery and regret.

A person who loves God, however, wants something _____________. He wants an opportunity to _________ his life and live a clean and righteous life. After his sin with Bathsheba, David _________ for something better than his selfish, lustful, and hurtful ways. David prayed, “Create in me a _______ heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me” (Psalm 51:10). Hungering
to do what is good and right ________ the heart of a penitent man. This sorrow for sin and hunger for righteousness means that he will ______ what is evil and ______ what is good. Romans 12:9 says, “Abhor what is evil; cling to what is good.” This doesn’t say hate evil ________; it says hate what is evil.

If I love God, I will hate what is evil and hurtful. I can love a ________ while hating the evil that he does. I can love a ________ while hating the evil a drunk does to his ________ while he’s drunk. Christians call people to change their behavior because they _______ them, and they know how sinful behavior will cause them ________. We don’t speak out against sin because we are _________ of people. We speak out against sin because we hate the _______ and the _______ of sin. Christians love their enemies and ________ for them.

Paul describes how a Christian should ________ with those caught up in sin. Read 2 Timothy 2:24-26. God is truly in the ________ business, and so are we. But people can be so __________ by the devil that they think they’re all right spiritually when they’re actually lost.

So, we ask, why are we talking about repentance? Why are we _________ people to repent? We’re speaking this way because we love you and we want God’s _________ for you. You can’t be right with God __________ repenting of your sins and turning to Him. Sin can __________ your heart and cause you to be lost. Romans 6:23 says, “the wages of sin is ________.” We want you to know Christ and the _______ of forgiveness and eternal life.

Don’t let sin harden your heart and _____ you of eternal life. Don’t stiffen your neck and ________ to change your ways. You’re grieving God and just ________ yourself. Like the prodigal, come back ________ to God, and do it today. God won’t ______ you to repent, but He does lovingly ________ to you to repent. You need to know, however, that if there’s no repentance, neither is there any _________. The Lord promises forgiveness to penitent people who change their lives, but there’s no promise for the person who time after time refuses to ________ God. One day there will be an end to God’s _________ and a day of reckoning. Read Isaiah 55:6-7. If we ________ our repentance even one more day, we have a day more to repent of, and a day less to repent in.

Repentance is a change of heart that ________ to a change of life. We repent __________ we love the Lord and we believe in Him. Faith, love, and repentance ________ in the heart. I hope your heart looks at that old way of sin as something to be _________. I hope that you hunger for righteousness. If you believe and love the Lord and have repented of your sins, ________ Christ and be _________ in His name. Baptism is an immersion in water in the ________ of Jesus Christ. When you’re baptized, God will ________ away your sins; He’ll give you the gift of the Holy Spirit according to Acts 2:38 and 22:16. Oh, obey the Lord today!