

SYSTEMATIC THEOLOGY

Video Lecture Series

by Robert D. McCurley, ThM

STUDY GUIDE

Module 5:
**SOTERIOLOGY—
THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION**

Lecture 5:
**THE DOCTRINE OF
REPENTANCE**



The John Knox Institute
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Module 5

Soteriology—the Doctrine of Salvation

1. Introduction to Soteriology
2. The Doctrine of Union with Christ
3. The Doctrines of Effectual Calling & Regeneration
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Module 5:

SOTERIOLOGY—THE DOCTRINE OF SALVATION

Lecture 5:

The Doctrine of Repentance

Introduction

Unconverted men travel down the road of life, following their own sinful ways, while feeling certain that all is well. They believe that the route they have chosen will lead them to a desirable destination. But they could not be more wrong. They are lost, not following the map provided in God's Word. They walk in the ways of sin, and the eternal misery of hell lies at the end of their journey. The preaching of the gospel exposes their misdirection. It alerts them to their grave mistake. The gospel serves as a bold sign pointing them in the opposite direction. Repentance includes turning from the sinful course we were on, and turning toward the Lord. It is therefore a change of spiritual direction, beginning in the heart and mind, and leading to a person's actions. It senses the alarm of their error, and flees from that path, and turns toward the Lord.

Theme: *The doctrine of Repentance.*

I. Scriptural Basis

"In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, and saying, Repent ye: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. For this is he that was spoken of by the prophet Esaias, saying, The voice of one crying in the wilderness, Prepare ye the way of the Lord, make his paths straight." (Matthew 3:1–3)

1. John the Baptist served as a hinge between the Old Testament and the New Testament.
 - a. The dominant theme of his preaching ministry was Repentance.
2. Repentance clears the way and makes the path straight between God and the repentant person.
3. Repentance is connected to forgiveness.
4. Confession of sin is another element of Repentance.
5. True Repentance always bears fruit and comes with evidence.

6. Repentance and faith are also the main messages of Jesus and his disciples in the New Testament.
7. Repentance is indispensable to the doctrine of Salvation.

Questions:

1. Meditate on Matthew chapter 3, verses 1 to 8. What are the messages of John the Baptist? What implications does this have for you?

2. How do we know that Repentance was the main message in Jesus' earthly ministry?

3. How do we see that the call to Repentance is the main message throughout the New Testament?

II. Doctrinal Overview

As summarized in The Westminster Confession of Faith, chapter 15, paragraphs 1 and 2: "Repentance unto life is an evangelical grace, the doctrine whereof is to be preached by every minister of the gospel, as well as that of faith in Christ. By it"—that is, by repentance—"a sinner; out of the sight and sense not only of the danger, but also of the filthiness and odiousness of his sins, as contrary to the holy nature and righteous law of God; and upon the apprehension of His mercy in Christ to such as are penitent, so grieves for, and hates his sins, as to turn from them all unto God, purposing and endeavouring to walk with Him in all the ways of His commandments."

1. Repentance defined.
2. Repentance affects all faculties of the soul.
3. Repentance is a gift rather than a work or a contribution.
4. Components of gospel Repentance:

- a. A sight of sin.
 - b. Sorrow for sin.
 - c. Confession of sin.
 - d. Shame for sin.
 - e. Hatred of sin.
 - f. Repentance is God-centered.
 - g. Repentance includes turning from sin to God.
5. Counterfeit repentance.
- a. Godly sorrow versus worldly sorrow.
 - b. A terror for sin with a change of heart.
 - c. Motivated by self-love.
 - d. Temporary repentance.
 - e. Blame-shifting.
 - f. External appearance without coming from the heart.

Questions

1. What does *The Westminster Confession of Faith* teach us about Repentance?

2. Why do we say that Repentance must include an apprehension of the mercy of God that is found in Christ? What are the motivations for repentance?

3. How does Repentance affect all the faculties of the soul?

4. Can a person's act of Repentance save him? What is the right position of Repentance in the order of salvation? How does this help us see Repentance biblically?

5. What are the main components of gospel Repentance? Please explain each component and give Scripture references.

6. Read and meditate on 2 Corinthians 7, verses 8 to 11. How does Paul explain the two types of Repentance?

7. What are the features of counterfeit Repentance? Please give some examples of counterfeit Repentance from the Bible.

III. Polemical Exposition

1. *There is an utter neglect of the call to Repentance in the church today.*
2. *There can be an underestimation of the value of Repentance.*
3. *We must reject the Roman Catholic doctrine of the sacrament of Penance.*

Questions:

1. What implications does the doctrine of Repentance have on preaching the gospel?

2. What hope is there for those who repent of their sins before the Lord? How does this influence the message of preaching?

3. What is the sacrament of Penance in Roman Catholic doctrine Why must we resist this error?

IV. Practical Exposition

1. We should seek to repent of specific sins.
2. There is a place for public Repentance.
3. There is also corporate Repentance.
4. There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repents.

Questions:

1. Why is it necessary to repent for specific sins? What are the biblical foundations for this? How does it guide us personally?

2. Why would public Repentance be necessary, and when should it be done?

3. What different scenarios can corporate Repentance refer to? How would corporate Repentance be practiced?

4. Meditate on Luke 15, verse 10. How do these words of the Lord Jesus influence the way we respond to learning about the repentance of an individual sinner?

V. Self-Reflection

1. There is an excellent book, *The Doctrine of Repentance*, by the Puritan, Thomas Watson. Please try to obtain this little book and read it carefully and prayerfully, asking the Lord to bless your soul as you read.

2. Is it possible to force someone to repent? What should we be reminded of whenever we share the message of Repentance?
