



REPENTANCE

A Changed Mind, Heart and Will

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NOTE TO THE TEACHER

Display each illustration where indicated in text, laying volume aside when the story line continues beyond the picture.

Lesson #1 ZACCHAEUS

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

In order to avoid confusion, we must know the exact meaning of Bible words. This is especially true with regard to the word *repentance*.

When one *repents*, it means he has had a *change of mind*. That change of mind affects:

- (1) His thoughts (that is, his intellect)
- (2) His heart (his desires)
- (3) His will (his actions)

So that you will remember that *repentance* means to *change the mind*, it would be well to remember two verses that clearly reveal the meaning. Matthew 21:28, 29: "But what think ye? A certain man had two sons; and he came to the first and said, 'Son, go work today in my vineyard.' He (the son) answered and said, 'I will not.' But afterward he repented and went."

That is precisely the meaning of the Bible word *repent*. The son changed his mind. First, his thoughts were changed. He had thought that he would not go to work in the vineyard. His heart, however, told him that he was doing wrong by refusing to obey his father. So, after his thoughts and desires

were changed, his will was changed. And when his will was changed, he went to the vineyard. He had *repented*.

In our last series of lessons we studied *faith*. We learned that in order to be born again into the family of God, we must believe that the Lord Jesus is the Son of God and that He died for our sins. The person who believes these truths is said to have *faith*. But how did he get that faith? God gave it to him!

Just as a person exercises faith at the moment of the new birth, so he exercises *repentance* [a change of mind] at the moment of the new birth. Repentance is included in believing and cannot be separated from it. The Holy Spirit of God reveals to man that he is a sinner in rebellion against God, and that he is evil in nature. So man repents because God has gone before, showing that man what he is. Like faith, repentance is a gift of God.

It must be remembered that salvation is *all* of God. Christ Jesus died in our place. God, by the power of His Holy Spirit, gives us faith to believe in the Lord Jesus and to receive Him. And that same Holy Spirit is the One who causes us, at the moment of believing, to repent (have a change of mind, heart and actions).

Scripture to be studied: Luke 19:1-10

The aim of the lesson: To show that Zacchaeus truly believed in the Lord Jesus and received Him as his Saviour. This is proved by the fact that he repented (turned from his sin).

What your students should know: That Zacchaeus became a happy man when he turned to Jesus and away from his proud, self-centered life.

What your students should feel: A deep desire to turn to Christ and away from sin.

What your students should do:

Unsaved: Believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and turn from his/her sin.

Saved: Show friends and family how they can turn to Christ.

Lesson outline (for the teacher's and students' notebooks):

1. A desire to see Jesus (Luke 19:1-3).
2. Meeting Jesus (Luke 19:4-6).
3. Repenting of sin (Luke 19:7).
4. Proof of repentance (Luke 19:8-10).

The verse to be memorized:

The Lord Jesus said, "I say unto you, that . . . joy shall be in Heaven over one sinner that repenteth." (Luke 15:7)

THE LESSON

Heaven is a happy place! Our memory verse tells us of something that causes joy in Heaven. What is it? . . . Yes, there is joy when a sinner repents.

In your notebook, after you write the memory verse, you should write this true meaning of the word *repent*:

The Bible word *repent* means *to have a change of mind*.

When one truly believes in the Lord Jesus as Saviour, he turns to Him and away from his sin. Because he chooses Christ instead of his old sinful life, he has had a change of mind. His heart has been changed. His actions have been changed. He has repented.

Listen carefully to the lessons in this series for there is a message for *you*. The unsaved must repent [change the mind]. And there are times when born again believers must also repent.

1. A DESIRE TO SEE JESUS

Luke 19:1-3

Zacchaeus lived in Jericho—a city that was called the “City of Palm Trees.” (See Deuteronomy 34:3.) Many people passed through Jericho as they journeyed to and from Jerusalem.

One day Someone very special came to Jericho. Great crowds followed Him. He had been in and around Jericho before. On that occasion He had healed some blind men. (See Matthew 20:29-35; Mark 10:46-52; Luke 18:35-43.) So the people remembered Him and crowded around Him. Everyone wanted to see this Man—the Lord Jesus Christ. People pressed so tightly together that no one could push through to get to the Son of God. Many of the men and women must have wished that they could invite Jesus to their homes so they could talk with Him away from the crowd.



Show Illustration #1

Zacchaeus was at the outside edge of the crowd. He tried and tried to get a look at Jesus. He had heard of the great things Jesus had done. *If only I could see Him!* Zacchaeus wished. But he was not tall enough to see over the heads of the other people. He was probably the shortest man in the crowd.

Poor short Zacchaeus! What should he do? He could not push his way through the throng. The people would not let him through. They knew Zacchaeus. They knew he was rich. And they did not like him. In fact, some hated him! Zacchaeus was the chief collector of taxes. Tax collectors often took more money from the people than they should have taken. They kept the extra money for themselves and became rich. Evidently Zacchaeus had done this. So the people disliked him.

2. MEETING JESUS

Luke 19:4-6

But the short man was not satisfied to be at the edge of the crowd. He wanted to see Jesus! And there seemed to be only one way he could do it. Quickly he ran far ahead of the others to a tree by the side of the road. It was not one of the many palm trees in the city. It was a sycamore tree—a tree with sweet-tasting fruit. But Zacchaeus was not interested in eating the fruit now.



Show Illustration #2

He balanced himself on one of the big limbs and looked down the road. The multitude was coming closer. Zacchaeus was now high above everyone else. *I will surely be able to see Jesus now, he*

thought. *And no one will notice me away up in this tree.*

The crowd came closer and closer. Zacchaeus strained his eyes. There was only One he wanted to see—the Son of God. Then he saw Him. Zacchaeus never took his eyes off Jesus. When Jesus was right under the tree where Zacchaeus was, He stopped.

The crowd stopped as well. Jesus looked up into the tree. Then the crowd looked up.



Show Illustration #3

“Zacchaeus!” Jesus called.

How does He know my name? Zacchaeus wondered. He has never seen me before. How did He know I was up here?

“Hurry and come down!” Jesus ordered. “I must stay with you in your home today.”

The Lord Jesus saw me! The Lord Jesus spoke to me—Zacchaeus, the tax collector! And He wants to stay in my house!

These must have been the thoughts that raced through his mind as Zacchaeus climbed down. Then, standing before the Lord Jesus, he looked up—up into the nicest, the kindest, the best face he had ever seen.

3. REPENTING OF SIN

Luke 19:7



Show Illustration #4

When the hated tax collector and Jesus went to the home of Zacchaeus, the people exclaimed, “Jesus has gone to be a guest in the house of a sinful man!”

But the grumbling of the outsiders did not bother Zacchaeus. The most important thing to him was that Jesus was with him in his home. He was happy! Well, he was happy that the Lord Jesus was there. But being in the very presence of the holy Son of God also troubled Zacchaeus. He now realized what a wicked sinner he was. He probably thought of all the money he had wrongfully taken from the people. And something happened deep down inside Zacchaeus.

No longer did he think of himself as an important rich man. No longer did he feel that having money was the most important thing in life. No! As Zacchaeus looked into the face of the sinless Son of God, he believed in Him. He recognized how holy God is—and how sinful he, the tax collector, was. And at that moment, as he believed, he repented (changed his mind). He repented of having selfishly taken so much money for himself. He repented of having stolen from the taxpayers. His mind was changed; his heart was changed; his will was changed. How do we know?

4. PROOF OF REPENTANCE

Luke 19:8-10



Immediately Zacchaeus stood and announced (probably for all the crowd to hear): “Lord, I will now give half of my wealth to the poor. And if I have taken anything from anyone, I will now pay him back four times as much as I have taken.”

Show Illustration #5

The life of that man was completely changed. Believing in the Lord Jesus,

he repented of the wrong things he had done. His repentance [change of mind] was sincere, for he promised to do exactly the opposite of what he had been in the habit of doing. Now he would *give* to people instead of *stealing* from them.

The Lord Jesus declared, “This shows that salvation has come to this house today. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save that which was lost.”

What a happy day it was for Zacchaeus when he turned to the holy Son of God—away from his proud, self-centered life. He was happy because his mind was changed, his heart was changed, his actions were changed. He had turned to heavenly riches in Christ Jesus and away from his earthly riches. The same moment in which he believed in the Saviour, he repented.

To believe in the Lord Jesus Christ as Saviour, to repent as Zacchaeus did and to know our sins are forgiven, is worth more than all the money in the world. Have *you* turned to the Saviour? In turning, has your mind been changed? Has your

heart been changed? Has your will been changed? If not, you may repent this very moment.

If you have previously turned to the Lord Jesus and away from your sin, have you shown others how they may turn to Him? Tell your friends and family about Zacchaeus. If you tell them prayerfully, the Holy Spirit of God may prepare their hearts so that they, believing in the Son of God, will repent of their sin.

NOTE TO THE TEACHER

By now you are aware of some of the things which are involved in salvation. Faith (believing in the Saviour) is a necessary part of salvation. Repentance (changing mind, desires and will) is actually a part of faith. And all of these—salvation, faith, repentance—are the work of God in the heart of the one who believes.