

The Journey of Salvation

Revelation 3:20 **Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with him, and he with me.**

Matthew 3:1-2 In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Matthew 4:17 From that time on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near."

Jeremiah 18:8(NIV) ...if that nation I warned repents of its evil, then I will relent and not inflict on it the disaster I had planned.

Jeremiah 18:8 (KJV) ...if that nation against whom I have pronounced, turn from their evil, I will repent of the evil that I thought to do unto them.

2 Corinthians 7:10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

Mark 1:15 (KJV) "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand: Repent ye and believe in the gospel."

Acts 2:38 Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit."

Acts 3:19 Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing may come from the Lord,

Acts 3:19 (KJV) Repent ye therefore, and be converted that your sins may be blotted out, when the times of refreshing shall come from the presence of the Lord.

Acts 20:21 I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

Mark 8:34 "If anyone would come after me, he must deny himself and take up his cross and follow me."

Revelation 3:20 is often taken out of context and given as directions on how to get Christ in your heart. However, both John the Baptist and Jesus began their preaching careers by calling the people to: _____

(Matthew 3:1-2, Matthew 4:17)

Compare the New International Version and the King James Version translations of Jeremiah 18:8. The word repent in the NIV is translated as _____ in the KJV.

"True repentance is not merely a feeling of remorse, such as Judas had after he betrayed the Lord. It involves the intellect, the emotions, and the will. Repentance brings the mind to realize both the holiness of God's law and one's utter failure and in ability to keep it. Godly sorrow in contrast to one's being superficially sorry for sin, often precedes the change of mind (2 Corinthians 7:10). Repentance is a deliberate, willful turning away from sin and following after God." *

In each of these verses, repentance is linked to something else. Read the verse and what it is linked to:

Mark 1:15 Repent and: _____

Acts 2:38 Repent and: _____

Acts 3:19 Repent and (KJV): _____

Acts 3:19 Repent and (NIV): _____

Acts 20:21 Turn to God in repentance

AND: _____

Genuine repentance always leads us somewhere. In these verses we are pointed to the Gospel (the "Good News" of Jesus Christ). We demonstrate obedience by being baptized. We turn to God in faith and find Jesus Christ the savior. We begin a life long process of conversion (also called *sanctification*).

From one point of view salvation is as simple as, "*Believe in the Lord, and you will be saved.*" (Acts 16:31) At the same time salvation is *an active turning and following after Jesus*. More than simple understanding, you must act on your belief and begin the *journey of salvation*

*Know What You Believe -Paul Little, Cha. 9. Pp. 112 Chariot Victor Publishing '97

The Goal of this lesson: The goal of this lesson is to open a teenagers mind to the idea that salvation is simple and yet a complex *journey*. We will awaken their minds to the need for deep repentance of sin even if we've always evaluated ourselves as being "pretty good people."

Preparation: Spend some time in prayer the day before, going over the verses and questions in your mind.

For further study, read this book: In his book, *Inside Out*, Dr. Larry Crabb says this,

"The point of living the Christian life has shifted from knowing and serving Christ till He returns to soothing, or at least learning to ignore, the ache in our soul."

"Modern Christianity says it is within our power to arrange for the relief we long for. We *can* learn to claim promises with more faith; we *can* classify sin into manageable categories and then scrupulously avoid it, thereby guaranteeing the blessing we covet; we *can* practice new forms of meditation; we *can* become more involved in church activities and Bible study. It says, *Something we can do will advance us to a level of spirituality that eliminates pain and struggle as ongoing, deeply felt realities.*

Leading the Lesson:

We begin with a short lesson in taking verses out of context. Revelation 3:20 is often used as an explanation of the indwelling of the Holy Spirit at the moment of salvation. However, in context God is talking to church people who are very pleased and self-satisfied with their wealth, fine clothes, and good medical care. The verse is preceded with a call to repentance. The real truth is that God wants to enter to dark sinful recesses of the human heart that is called "*deceitful above all things and beyond cure*" (Jer. 17:9).

Have a kid read the first set of verses and then go thru the questions for those verses. Give them time to answer. Listen to what they say and lead the discussion with additional questions of your own to lead them to the correct answers.

Note: When reading, kids will frequently stumble on words they do not know. Explain the meaning of the words so they can fully grasp the concept of the Bible verse. Sometimes you must restate the passage in your own words for them to get it.

While it is true that a person receives his (or her) salvation the instant they accept Jesus' sacrifice as the atonement for their sins the journey of salvation has just begun. The Bible says we must work out our salvation (Philippians 2:12). Some think the work must be an adherence to a specific set of Biblical standards. This is what the Pharisees were doing in Jesus' time. It was something they could feel good about actually accomplishing. The work of salvation, however, is more internal. Repentance begins with an understanding of God's holiness and our complete inability to be holy too. The more we understand the depth of our sinfulness, the more sorrowful we become. This internal sorrow is what brings forth Godly changes in our outward lives (2 Corinthians 7:10).

The word repentance is translated in the NIV as "to turn from." Turning from sin does not necessarily mean we will just immediately stop sinning. Everybody sins. But, we must not excuse our sin or try and rationalize it as being okay because "we're only human." Larry Crabb says, repentance is "a deep change of mind that admits there is life in Christ and nothing else."

Summary:

What cross do we bear? We live in sinful bodies with deeply sinful hearts. Romans 8:23, "Not only so, but we ourselves, who have the firstfruits of the Spirit, groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies." This burden will not be lifted until heaven. Even so, we are called to be *Christ's representatives* in a lost and dying world.

Take Prayer Requests

Always ask the kids for prayer request for the next week. Check how things have turned out from the previous weeks prayer concerns.

Follow up: Use my lesson, "Sin Nature and Sins" to help kids grasp the idea of their sin nature as apposed to sinful deeds.