

Repentance

Chapter 6

Audio Lesson: New Testament #24



Objective: To understand the kind of heart that can receive God's mercy and to learn what Jesus taught about repentance.



“God, be merciful to me a sinner.” . . . “Everyone who exalts himself will be humbled, and he who humbles himself will be exalted.”

—Luke 18:13-14

“The Son of Man came to seek and to save what was lost.”

—Luke 19:10

Jesus told a great parable that tells of repentance and of the refusal to repent. He showed us a picture of true repentance through His encounter with a tax collector. The parable describes a Pharisee and a publican—a tax collector—praying at the temple. The Pharisee was focused only on himself and his own righteousness, while the tax collector humbled himself and begged for God's mercy. Jesus said that only the tax collector was justified in God's sight. Only the sinner who repents is forgiven.

Jesus encountered a repentant tax collector named Zacchaeus when He travelled through Jericho. After spending the day with Zacchaeus, the tax collector showed what repentance looks like. He changed his ways and promised to pay back everyone he had defrauded. Because Zacchaeus' acts of repentance demonstrated what had happened in his heart, Jesus said salvation had come to his house.



1. True or false? According to the Bible, those who spend all of their time planning for this life without thinking of eternity are fools.
2. True or false? The story of Jesus and the ten healed lepers—one who thanked Jesus and nine who did not—teaches us that our gratitude is not very important to God.
3. True or false? We know we are pleasing to God if we are satisfied with our own righteousness.
4. True or false? Humility is an essential attitude in our relationships with God and others.

Unless otherwise noted, choose one answer for each question.

5. In the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector, what did the Pharisee ask for?
 - a. Salvation
 - b. A closer relationship with God
 - c. More wealth and status
 - d. Nothing—he only spoke of himself.
6. What did the tax collector ask for?
 - a. Righteousness
 - b. Success in his business
 - c. Mercy
 - d. The opportunity to become a Pharisee
7. To whom did Jesus tell the parable of the Pharisee and the tax collector?
 - a. Those who were confident of their own righteousness
 - b. Those who needed to be more righteous
 - c. The leper who thanked Him
 - d. Only His disciples
8. Who can be justified—cleansed of sin?
 - a. Anyone who does enough good works
 - b. Those whom the church accepts into its fellowship
 - c. All who humble themselves with a repentant heart and ask for God's mercy
 - d. No one can ever be completely justified and cleansed from all sin.
9. Why were people angry that Jesus went to Zacchaeus' house?
 - a. Because Zacchaeus was a dishonest tax collector
 - b. Because they wanted Jesus to hurry to Jerusalem
 - c. Because Zacchaeus was plotting evil against Jewish leaders
 - d. Because Jesus had promised to spend the day with the religious leaders and then changed His mind

10. What does repentance mean? (*choose all that apply*)

- a. To change one's mind
- b. To change one's heart
- c. To change one's behavior
- d. To add Jesus to one's other beliefs
- e. To turn around and go a different direction in life
- f. To live in perfect righteousness and never sin again



Is there anything you have learned from Jesus' teachings that causes you to realize a need to repent? What do you need to repent for? How would your life change if you repented the way God wants you to?



Thank God for His mercy that justifies us and cleanses us of sin through Jesus and does not depend on us. Ask God for the courage and faith to repent of anything God does not want in your life. Ask God to help you leave behind whatever does not fit with His will and to fill your life with everything that does fit with His will for you.



Going Deeper

1. Compare and contrast the two men in the parable of Jesus about the Pharisee and the publican, as recorded in Luke 18: 9-14. _____

2. Compare and contrast the two prayers prayed by these two men. _____

3. What were the two pronouncements of Jesus regarding these two men and these two prayers?

4. Explain any possible connection between this incident and the day Jesus spent with Zacchaeus, as recorded in the next chapter. _____

5. Compare and contrast the interview of Jesus with Zacchaeus to His interview with the rich young ruler, as recorded in Luke 18: 18-25. What did these two men have in common, and in what solemn ways were they different? _____

6. In what ways could the second half of the 10th verse of Luke 19 be the key verse to the Gospel of Luke, or of any and all of the four Gospels? _____

7. The Pharisee asked for nothing and the publican was declared “justified” by Jesus because he asked for “mercy.” What is mercy, and why is it found 366 times in the Bible? What does the word “justified” mean, and where else is it found in the Bible? _____
