

November 6, 2020

THE SURE WORD by Jonnie Hutchison

REPENT OR PERISH

Jesus expressed the necessity of repenting of sin when He said, "I tell you, no; but unless you repent you will all likewise perish." One who refuses to turn from the practice of sin will perish, no excuses, no alternative. This truth exposes the very nature of sin. Sin is destructive and deceptive. Sin results in spiritual separation from God (Isaiah 59:1-2). Sin deceptively hides its adverse consequences behind a cloak of temporary pleasure but ultimately brings only sorrow and regret (Hebrews 11:25; Romans 6:23). Sin enslaves the sinner, Jesus taught, "Most assuredly, I say to you, whoever commits sin is a slave of sin" (John 8:34). The continued practice of sin hardens the heart and makes it exceedingly difficult for a person to repent. The Bible describes such a hardened heart in the words, "Having eyes full of adultery and that cannot cease from sin, enticing unstable souls. They have a heart trained in covetous practices and are accursed children" (2 Peter 2:14). No wonder God pleads, "Today, if you will hear His voice, do not harden your hearts" (Hebrews 4:7b).

God commands "all men everywhere to repent" because He knows the deceptive and destructive nature of sin (Acts 17:30). Repentance stands between the sinner and salvation. Sinners in New Testament times were instructed to "...**repent** and be baptized...for the remission of sins" (Acts 2:38), and, "**Repent** therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord" (Acts 3:19).

Repentance has been defined as a change of mind which results in a change of action produced by "godly sorrow" (2 Corinthians 7:10). The penitent person will not only truly regret his sin against God but cease participating in the sin of which he has repented, otherwise there is no repentance. One must "bear fruits worthy of repentance" (Matthew 3:8). If one is committing adultery and repents of it, he or she will cease committing adultery. That is true of any sin of which one repents.

When a sinner hears the gospel, believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God, turns from his sins in genuine repentance, confesses faith in Christ and is immersed in water into the death of Jesus, the sinner is washed from his sins in the blood of the Lamb of God and raised to walk in newness of life having been added by the Lord to His church (Mark 16:16; Acts 2:38, 41, 47; Romans 6:3-5; Revelation 1:5; Acts 22:16). Yes, it is repent or perish, no excuses, no alternative!

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