

Verb “metanoeo” & noun “metanoia” is composed of “meta” -”after” and “noeo”- “to think or perceive”: “to perceive afterward.”

### 3 Views Regarding Repentance:

The object of repentance is not the same in every context, but is nonetheless in one way or another “Godward.”

#### 1st View:

#### 2nd View:

#### 3rd View:

Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation since it is a necessary precursor to faith in Jesus Christ

Thus, a person cannot believe in Christ until he first repents. Some see this as simply recognizing his sinfulness & need of a Savior, others see it as “*repenting of every sin*” committed in the past; including turning away from sinful appetites and fleshly tendencies.

##### Strengths:

1. Emphasizes the need to “*turn from one’s sins.*”
2. Takes sin seriously as an absolute offense to God.
3. Rejects “*easy-believism*”
4. Demands a committed response by unbelievers and believers alike.

##### Weaknesses:

1. Undermines Paul’s answer to the question, “*What must I do to be saved?*” in Acts 16:30-31. His answer was “Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved” and the Gospel of John whose stated purpose was to explain salvation to the Gentiles. Repentance is never mentioned in John’s Gospel.
2. Confuses justification with progressive sanctification; between sonship & discipleship.
3. Takes “*repentance*” out of biblical context and applies to salvation (e.g., Jonah 3:9; Matt, 3:2; Luke 17:3-4; Rev. 2-3)
4. Establishes assurance of sincere salvation upon “fruit” of repentance rather than “*faith*” in the finished work of Jesus Christ.
5. Confusion regarding what “*repentance*” actually is: Recognition of sinfulness, sorrow, or full confession of past sins? One can be sorrowful without turning away from sin.
6. Accused of proclaiming that there is more than one condition for salvation.

Repentance is a condition of eternal salvation because it is *synonymous* for faith in Jesus Christ:

He who believes in Me has everlasting life” is identical to “He who repents has everlasting faith.”

##### Strengths:

1. Motivates people to consider who Jesus Christ is.
2. Motivates people to consider what they are “trusting in” for salvation, etc.
3. Takes “*repentance*” into account as a “*change of mind.*”
4. Synthesizes faith with repentance. Since repentance” means a change of mind, repentance is included in believing but is not an additional or separate condition to faith for all who trusted Christ as Savior have changed their minds regarding Him & their sin (Acts 20:21 cf. 11:21). Thus, repentance is viewed as the sinner turning from himself & his sin & in faith the sinner turns to the Savior for salvation.
5. Sin question has already been settled; it is now a “*Son question.*” Jesus died for your sins; the benefits are applied the moment you believe. Thus, “*Who do you say Jesus is?*”
6. View maintains the clarity of the Gospel.

##### Weaknesses:

1. Accused of “*easy-believism*”;
2. Accused of not taking sinfulness and sorrow from sin regarding seriously;
3. Accused of being an “*Arminian doctrine*” in view of unlimited atonement and the idea of an unbeliever having the capability of “*changing his or her mind.*”

Repentance is not a condition of eternal salvation, a synonym of faith, nor a necessary precursor to faith in Christ. The only condition for salvation is to place faith in Christ for eternal salvation. Repentance means turning from one’s sins; repentance is for all persons.

##### Strengths:

1. Repentance isn’t found in John’s Gospel yet its stated purpose is evangelistic, explaining to unbelievers how they might receive eternal life (John 20:31).
2. Repentance isn’t found in Galatians which is a defense of the Gospel. Paul repeatedly discusses faith in Christ for salvation. Surely in a book that defends salvation he would have mentioned repentance.
3. Believers in Ephesus (Acts 19:18-19) “*who had believed*” (past tense) did not give up their occult practices & books; repentance followed their faith & regeneration; they confessed, told their deeds, & burned their occultic books.
4. This view maintains clarity of the Gospel.
5. Calls on people, unbelievers and believers, individually and nationally, to repentance for following 4 reasons:
  - a. Escape temporal judgment (e.g., Ninevah; 2 Cor. 7:8-10);
  - b. For Israel to receive the Kingdom (e.g., Matt. 3:2; 4:17 whereby Jesus and John the Baptist were calling the nation Israel to turn back to the Lord so that the kingdom may come to Israel at that time.
  - c. Return to fellowship with God (1 John 1:9; Luke 15:11-32).
  - d. Motivates unbelievers to “*get right*” with God (Heb. 11:6) because sorrow for sin can promote the need for salvation & because the pleasure of sin never pays positive dividends.

##### Weaknesses:

1. Same as 2nd view except it does take sin & sinfulness seriously; sin is harmful no matter who you are. Thus, the unbeliever or believer should turn away from the pleasure of sin; the consequences are too great. Also, I don’t think the 2nd view would disagree with them regarding the above 4 reasons for repentance or the view that sin, if pursued, has terrible consequences.