

These Things We Believe Study

Mt. Zion Church Bible Study

Taken from

A Remedy for Itching Ears written by

Dr. Jesse T. Williams, Jr., Pastor

Convent Avenue Baptist Church
Harlem, New York

Lesson 4: Repentance, Grace, and Sanctification (Chapter 4)



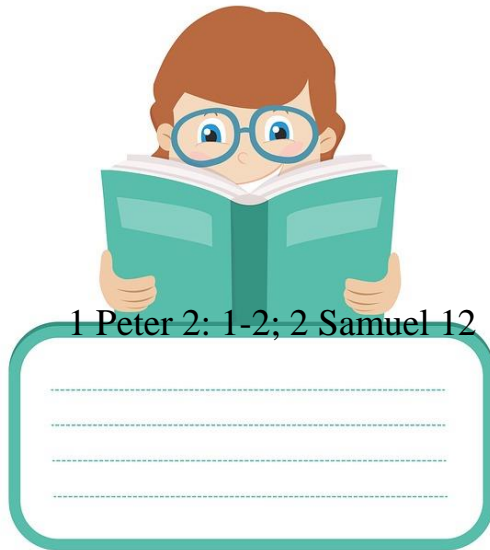
Lesson written by

Dr. Ken Patterson, Pastor

The Mt. Zion Church
Bridgeton, MO

We Have a Vision to Be Intentionally Learning!

The following lesson was designed to help students understand a few key words that often confuse believers, but when understood can be explained in simplistic terms. As students engage in the lesson, they should come to a greater knowledge of how God has provided, through Jesus Christ, an opportunity for all mankind to receive salvation eternally and every day. As believers realize that faith in Christ impact every aspect of their lives, they will be able to live in the manner God intended.



I. Repentance

Article 8 (Remixed): We believe that repentance and faith are essential for a Christian to truly live according to God's will. Repentance means that we acknowledge that we are sorry for the sins that we have committed against God, and that we are making an intentional choice to not repeat them, but to change the way we live. We are only able to do this because of our faith in Jesus Christ which empowers us and teaches us how to live for God.

The writer of our book explains the idea that repentance is a twostep process:

1. Acknowledgment
2. Change of direction

To understand the concept of repentance, one must first gain a deeper understand of the concept of Sin. The easiest way to describe sin is when we miss the mark for



living the way God expects. “Missing the mark” is an archery term. God’s standard is the “bullseye”. The word identifies to us what God desires from the behaviors and attitudes of His people. When we do not do what God expects, we have sinned. In short, we have missed the mark.

When I choose to follow my desires instead of God’s, I have missed the mark!

It is as if God tells us to go one direction and we decide to go in many directions but the direction God expects. We miss the mark because we willfully disobey God (Article 3) and decide that we know what is best for us. Thus, we do what we want to do (when you read that sentence it is almost funny).

Repentance occurs when I decide to go in the direction God has laid out for me. First (step 1), I must acknowledge that I am off track or have missed the mark. This occurs when I have a recognition of what God desires and assess where I am relative to where the expectation. I then see myself as off track. King David wrote Psalms 51 after sinning. In verse three and four he wrote:

For I know my transgressions, and my sin is always before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight; so, you are right in your verdict and justified when you judge.

Notice within David’s words there is a clear acknowledgment of wrongdoing. He knew where he was wrong. Nathan the prophet came and told him the behavior which was outside of God’s will (See 2 Samuel 12). David acknowledges the sin first.

Second (step 2), a person must decide to change their direction and go in the direction God desires. They must decide to “change the way they live”. The concept here is that a person must move beyond simply being sorry for what they have done from an emotional standpoint and they must move to a behavioral change.

Again, we see this in Psalms 51: 10-13 where David promises to live for God and to go one step further by teaching others how to turn to God.

Create in me a pure heart, O God, and renew a steadfast spirit within me. Do not cast me from your presence or take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the

joy of your salvation and grant me a willing spirit, to sustain me. Then I will teach transgressors your ways, so that sinners will turn back to you.

True repentance always requires me to change!

- How have you seen the idea of repentance described incompletely?
- How does an incomplete description create a problem for people who do wrong?

II. Sanctification

Article Ten (remixed): We believe that once we experience salvation, God begins a process in our hearts called sanctification that is intended to make us holy, just as God is holy. Although salvation is instantaneous; sanctification is a process by which God makes us holy inwardly in our hearts and outwardly in our actions. God accomplishes this process in us through the presence and power of the Holy Spirit, by teaching us in the Bible, and by communicating with us through our prayer lives.

Activity Directions: Students are to analyze Article ten and create their own definition of sanctification with the help of the teacher. By filling in the chart below, they will identify the action, process, and outcome of sanctification and will then write the definition in a sentence.

Action of Sanctification	Process of Sanctification	Outcome of Sanctification
Sanctification is:		

III. Grace (Yes, this is out of order)

Article Nine: We believe that Christians, who are in Christ, are considered to be chosen, predestined, or part of the elect by God, because Jesus Christ has given our life new meaning, new purpose, and a new destination. We are only in Christ by the grace of God, and therefore all of the new possibilities and purposes that come into our lives because of our relationship with Jesus Christ are gifts from God. God's purpose of grace is to bring us back into a right relationship with Him as it existed before sin affected humanity; it is God working on our behalf and bringing us into His will for us. It is a precious gift that we could never earn for ourselves.

The Doctrine of Grace may seem cumbersome when you read Article nine. However, the key to understanding this article is found in one of the first verses many of us learned; John 3: 16.

For God so loved the world that He gave His one and only son, that whoever believes in Him shall not perish but have everlasting life.

I am chosen by God, but I must choose to accept the requirements to be chosen; which is accepting Jesus as my savior!

When we analyze John 3: 16, there are two instances of choice implied in the verse. First, God chose to give us His son as the solution for our sin

problem. Second, mankind can choose God's solution by believing in Jesus.

As we talk about grace (God's favor shown to man that we did not earn) we can understand the willful move of God to save us. We do not initiate salvation. God initiates it because of His immense and unexplainable love for us! He gives us something we do not deserve which is an opportunity to be saved through Jesus Christ.

When we choose to say yes to Jesus as our savior, by faith, we have now matched our choice with God's choice. The result is that we are now able to call ourselves the *chosen, predestined, and elect*. We can claim only claim this title when we match our choice for salvation through Jesus with God's choice for us.

- How do I become one of God’s chosen people?
- Is there any other way to be considered on of the chosen, predestined, or elect of God?
- How many people can be in the “Chosen” group?

Conclusion: Throughout this lesson you have learned a number of unfamiliar terms. Which term was the most interesting one and why?

How will you use this lesson to help someone else?

Prayer: Lord thank you for your loving grace which allows me to be part of your family. I do not take this for granted and will work to share the message with others. In Jesus’ name Amen.