


EXERCISE:

Read the four texts and answer the related four questions.

 Luke 19:1-10

 John 4:7-30,39-42

 Luke 7:36-49

What is repentance? How do people come to believe?

Read the three stories and write down about which people the story tells something.

Tell something about these people. What do you know about their life?

Is anything said about their heart?

What is Jesus' reaction to the people from the stories?

Is He judgemental or not?

How does He talk about the sin of the people He meets?

Does Jesus choose the people or do they choose Jesus for themselves?

Which decisions do these people make?

Why do you think they made these decisions?

What are the consequences of the decisions these people took for those around them, for example family, friends, neighbours, clients?

What do you think repentance is as you read these stories?



Read the story of the sower once more, Matt 13:1–8,18–23 and apply it to your own heart.

Ask yourself four questions:

1. Is there a word from God for me personally in this text?
2. Is there a promise from the Father for my life?
3. Does Jesus ask me to do anything?
4. Decide to act upon this and ask Jesus to help you with this.

Going deeper

What is meant by repentance?



Mark 1:15

The first connection Jesus makes with the coming of the Kingdom is that peoples' eyes will be opened and they will start to believe the Good News.

Another word for eyes being opened is repentance. Jesus very clearly gives His disciples direction.

He says that you must get a new focus in your life if you want to become a disciple: a focus on God and His Kingdom. The word the Bible uses is metanoia. This means:

- 1) Having new thoughts and ideas, which means regretting having the old thoughts and focussing on new thoughts. That means starting to think as God does.
- 2) Receiving greater insight, a change of heart and hating the sins you used to commit.

If you repent of your old thoughts and start to think as God thinks, the result is that you start to live as God intended you to do so: living in His Kingdom.

What is Jesus' attitude when he meets someone who is doing everything completely wrong?



Luke 19:1-10

What is Zacchaeus' response when he hears Jesus is passing?

What is Jesus' reaction when He discovers Zacchaeus in the tree?

What do the people think of Zacchaeus?

What is Zacchaeus' reaction to Jesus' visit?

What did Jesus say to Zacchaeus?

In this story we see how Jesus looks at people who are lost. By 'lost' Jesus means people who are missing their destiny in life. The destiny of living together with God in eternity.

When Jesus says that salvation has come, he means: saving (from death) someone who is suffering, in other words, making someone who is sick better, healing them, and/or protecting or saving someone who is in danger.

Through the presence and words of Jesus, Zacchaeus is brought to a new way of thinking. He believed the words of Jesus and accepted the words in his heart.

We see in this story that people judge, yet Jesus came with an attitude of grace. Through this, Zacchaeus' thoughts and also his attitude were changed. Initially he wanted to get rich at the cost of others; after the visit he gave back that which wasn't his.

What causes repentance?



Rom 2:4

What isn't repentance?

- A goal in itself (it is part of a process of change)
- A special feeling
- A bartering tool with God: if I repent, then you must give me this and that...
- Something you can earn (you receive grace from God which cannot be earned)
- Passive (some sort of response is expected from you)

Repentance is an act of my will, in order to turn away from all sin in my life because it causes pain to my Father. We see in the stories that people repent because they see the goodness of God and want to change their old thoughts for new ones. They see the Kingdom which is better than their old life. Repentance stems from a love for God and your neighbour. Your motivation is to restore your relationship with God and others. If you live according to the law, you want to make up for sin because you have to. Your motivation is then fear of punishment and the bad consequences.

From what do repent?



1 John 2:15-17



Matt 5:27-29



Gal 5:17


Repentance

Jesus sent us the Holy Spirit in order to make us ready to walk with God the Father. There is a great difference between being sorry when we are confronted with the law and when the Holy Spirit leads us to the way of complete truth.


Living by the law > guilty feelings Living with the Holy Spirit > godly repentance

- fear of consequences concerned about broken relationships
- doesn't feel forgiven feels forgiven
- low self-image feeling of self worth increases
- continues sinning real repentance, new strength when tempted

Choosing daily






 *Rom 7:16-25*

Paul tells us very clearly that he wants to do good but that the sin in him is stronger. This leads to not always making right choices.

 *Rom 8:1-5*

Thankfully we receive life when we focus on Christ in us who has overcome all sin. It is therefore necessary to focus each day on the Spirit who now lives in us. If we allow Him to lead us, we remain in the new life and the peace!

EXERCISE:

-  Ask the Holy Spirit what He wants to show you through doing this lesson. Do you get any specific thoughts?
-  Take time to write down the thoughts you get which do not belong to the kingdom of God. Think about the desires of the flesh, your old nature.
-  Make a list too of the things which do belong in the Kingdom of God. Ask the Holy Spirit to help you with this. Repentance is thus the changing of your thinking from what does not belong in the Kingdom and then focussing on what the Holy Spirit has showed you.
-  Discuss with your mentor the first part of the lesson and the questions about the four stories. Take a look together at what you wrote about the story of the sower and what you decide to do with this.
-  Study closely while reading Acts how people came to believe, what they do with the speaker's words and which role repentance plays in the story.