

ACTS 17:29–30 REPENTANCE

“Therefore since we are God’s offspring, we should not think that the divine being is like gold or silver or stone – an image made by man’s design and skill. In the past God overlooked such ignorance, but now he commands all people everywhere to repent.” Acts 17:29-30

Repentance means to change; to turn; to change one’s mind; to turn one’s life. It is a turning away from sin and turning toward God. It is a change of mind, a forsaking of sin. It is putting sin out of one’s thoughts and behaviour. It is resolving never to think or do a thing again. (See Mt. 3:2; Lk. 13:2-3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 8:22; 26:20.) The change is turning away from lying, stealing, cheating, immorality, cursing, drunkenness, and the other so-called *glaring sins of the sinful nature*. But the change is also turning away from the *silent sins of the spirit* such as self-centredness, selfishness, envy, bitterness, pride, anger, covetousness, evil thoughts, hopelessness, laziness, jealousy, lust.

1. Repentance involves two turns. There is a negative turn away from sin and a positive turn toward God. It is a turning to God and away from sin, whether sins of thought or action.
2. Repentance is more than sorrow. Sorrow may or may not be involved in repentance. A person may repent simply because he wills and acts to change; or a person may repent because he senses an agonizing sorrow within. But the sense or feeling of sorrow is not repentance. Repentance is both the change of mind and the actual turning of one’s life away from sin and toward God. □