

Convent Avenue Baptist Church  
Wednesday Bible Study 3/31/10  
Pastor Jesse Williams

*The Articles of Faith; What we believe...*

**Article VIII. Repentance and Faith**

Ezekiel 14:6, Ezekiel 18:27-32, Matthew 3:1-2, Mark 1:14-15, Luke 15:7  
Luke 24:45-49, Acts 2:37-42, 2 Corinthians 7:10, 2 Peter 3:8-9, 1 John 1:8-10

This doctrinal teaching shows us that when we are born-again or regenerated, part of the results that happen in our lives is that we are moved to repentance and faith. Repentance means literally to turn away from our sins because we are sorrowful that we have rebelled against God. Faith is our belief and trust in God and God's word. As stated in this article, repentance and faith are not only *sacred*, because the Holy Spirit works to bring them alive in our hearts and souls. But repentance and faith are also *inseparable*. That is, when a person is truly born-again, repentance and faith will be hand in hand and a true believer will exhibit evidence of both in their lives.

The reason why this doctrinal truth is important to emphasize is because there are those in the world who would be attracted to Jesus as a miracle-worker, but yet don't want to deal with the guilt that comes with confessing their sins and making the decision to turn from them. So, people will believe that God through Jesus Christ can bless them, sustain them, heal them, guide them, provide for them, etc... But not everyone wants to admit to their sins, confess them and then turn from them. It is as if some want the "goodies" and benefits that Jesus can give them through faith, but they don't want to repent and deal with the sin that disrupts their relationship with Jesus. That mindset has caused the world to develop a warped understanding of God that has been referred to as "cheap grace". It is as if the sacrifice that Jesus made through His death burial and resurrection is an option that a person may take or leave. But in the meantime they want all of the benefits that can come from faith.

If we want God to truly bless us, then it begins with our own souls being converted by God. That conversion begins with repenting from our sins and then continues by accepting the invitation of God to receive salvation through Jesus Christ by faith. The two are inseparable! God's plan of salvation is primarily concerned with our souls and then the blessings move outward to work on our life circumstances as well. The faith that enables us to believe that God is a healer, liberator, provider, guider, etc...is the same faith that also causes us to turn to Jesus Christ as our Savior because we are sorry for the sins that we have committed and confessed. The church of Jesus Christ has to be careful to not proclaim a *lop-sided* gospel. That is, a message that ignores the reality of sin and salvation while only telling people about what's in it for them. Some ways we can do this are;

**1) When we testify, tell what God has delivered us from, not just what He gave us**

**2) Be humble enough to repent when we are wrong, even when it may be known by others**

**3) Emphasize a *relationship* with Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord when we witness**