

The Formula for Spiritual Unity, Part 2

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I. Introduction.

A. Text: Matthew 3:7-12.

B. John preached the bad news that we need to repent but the good news that the kingdom is at hand.

II. The congregation. Repentance is a great biblical truth. It means insight of sin, pain and grief and a change of mind or insight, despair and change of life.

A. Repentance is a gift from God.

B. The intellectual part of repentance. Repentance begins when there is a knowledge of sin and helplessness of sin. (Psalm 51, 1 Corinthians 13)

C. The emotional part of repentance. A deep sense of sorrow is directed towards a God who is offended. (Psalm 32)

D. The volitional part of repentance. An act of the will that denounces sin must also occur. (Psalm 51, Luke 23:22)

III. The confrontation. John warned that those who did not produce the fruit of repentance would be cut down.

A. Salvation and judgment come together. (Isaiah 11, Joel 3)

B. The moment any man dies there is judgment.

C. The bottom line for the book of Proverbs is that there is going to be good for the good and bad for the bad.

D. There is no alternative than to repent. (Acts 17:30)

IV. The conflagration: fire.

A. Punishment comes in response to judgment.

B. When God gets upset there is fire. (Deuteronomy 4:24; 32:22)

C. The fire is hell. (Matthew 5:22, Psalm 1)

V. The consolation: there is an invitation for salvation by the transformation of the Spirit. (John 13, Ezekiel 36, Acts 2)

Application Questions:

1. Why is it important to understand the multiple layers of repentance?

2. Can we preach the good news without “the bad news?”

3. Where are you at in the process of repentance? How is repentance not just a moment but a lifestyle?
