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FIRST PRINCIPLES.

In addition to believing the gospel, men are required to *repent* in order to become the followers of Jesus. By many this command is not only misunderstood, but misplaced. Some teach that a person must repent before he believes. One remark of the Saviour is frequently quoted to prove this position—"Repent ye and believe the gospel." This language was addressed to those who believed in God and believed the prophets, though their teachers had lead them to misunderstand much of their writings. More than this, John, the Saviour, the Twelve and the Seventy gave a reason why they should report, namely: "The kingdom of heaven is at hand;" which they must believe before forsaking their errors and turning to the Lord.

Paul says, "God commandeth all men everywhere to *repent* BECAUSE He hath

appointed a day in which he will judge the world in righteousness, by that man whom he hath ordained."—Acts xix. 30. The repentance which Jesus and the Apostles commanded, included sorrow for sin and forsaking it. The men of Nineveh became sorry for their sins at the proclamation of Jonah and turned away from them. See Jonah iii. 8. Jesus says, Matt. xii., they "repented at the preaching of Jonah." This teaches us what repentance is.

How can a man be a Christian without repentance? To tell a man that he is a Christian by faith *alone* will only confuse his mind! Under such teaching men are lead to think that there is some miraculous power belonging to faith; and suffer distress anguish and grief in consequence of not seeing the commands of the gospel clearly.

Repentance is something more than a great noise about religion—more than the fear produced by a description of "hell fire"—something more than sorrow for sins committed *because of the penalty*. Unless an individual be sorry for sin because it is sin—because it is opposed to the government of God—opposed to the will of Jesus—opposed to the teaching of the Holy Spirit, he does not understand all about repentance. An esteemed young friend who had been addicted to reading novels, and whose mind was perplexed about repentance, gave an answer which had meaning in it, to the following question, "what do you think of novels?" With emphasis, she replied, "*I hate them, sir.*" I shall never forget the answer. I knew the Bible had taken the place of the