

ignorance, as did your leaders. But this is how God fulfilled what he had foretold through all the prophets, saying that his Christ would suffer. Repent, then, and turn to God"

And in Acts 20:21 Paul, speaking to the elders of the church at Ephesus, says: "I have declared to both Jews and Greeks that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus."

Notice how repentance and turning to God in faith are put together in the same message by Jesus and Peter and Paul. Should this be the pattern in our proclamation of and witness concerning Christ and His salvation?

Let's begin this study with our first question:

## I. WHAT IS TRUE SAVING REPENTANCE?

In the NIV the word "repent" is used 38 times, the word "repented" is used 9 times, and the word "repentance" is used 21 times. Let's look at a sample of how these words are used.

In 2 Chronicles 6:37, Solomon, in his dedicatory prayer at the newly completed temple, says:

and if they have a change of heart in the land where they are held captive, and repent and plead with you in the land of their captivity and say, 'We have sinned, we have done wrong and acted wickedly;' and if they turn back to you with all their heart and soul in the land of their captivity where they were taken, and pray toward the land you gave their fathers, toward the city you have chosen and toward the temple I have built for y our Name; then from heaven, your dwelling place, hear their prayer and their pleas, and uphold their cause. And forgive your people, who have sinned against you.

In Jeremiah 34:15 the Lord says: "Recently you repented and did what is right in my sight: Each of you proclaimed freedom to his countrymen."

In Ezekiel 14:6 the Lord instructs the prophet: "Therefore say to the house of Israel, 'This is what the Sovereign LORD says: Repent! Turn from your idols and renounce all your detestable practices!'"

In Matthew 3:8, John the Baptizer, speaking to the Pharisees and Sadducees who were coming out to the desert region to observe him, said, "Produce fruit in