

# Why Is Repentance Absent from John's Gospel

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Water of Life Bible Class

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## INTRODUCTION

### STATISTICS IN JOHN'S GOSPEL:

John's Gospel has *pisteuō* ("believe") 100 times (Majority Text; 98 times Nestle-Aland).

John's Gospel has *metanoēō* ("repent") zero times and has *metanoia* ("repentance") zero times.

### WE WILL TEST THEORIES (The response to the following two THEORIES will be the same):

**THEORY 1: REPENTANCE IS IMPLICIT IN THE WORD *BELIEVE*:**

**THEORY 2: REPENTANCE IS AN UNSTATED CONDITION FOR ETERNAL LIFE IN JOHN:**

### ANSWER 1 TO THEORIES 1 AND 2:

**JOHN, THE ONLY NT BOOK WRITTEN TO PERSUADE UNBELIEVERS OF THE MESSAGE OF LIFE DOES NOT MENTION REPENTANCE, BUT BOOKS WRITTEN TO BELIEVERS DO MENTION IT.**

<i>By Book</i>				
	<i>Metanoēō</i> ("Repent")	<i>Metanoia</i> ("Repentance")	Both	
Matthew	5	3	8	
Mark	2	2	4	
Luke	9	5	14	
Acts	5	6	11	
Romans		1	1	
2 Corinthians	1	2	3	
2 Timothy		1	1	
Hebrews		3	3	
2 Peter		1	1	
Revelation	12		12	
Totals:	34	24	58	

<i>By Book</i>				
	<i>Metanoēō</i> ("Repent")	<i>Metanoia</i> ("Repentance")	Both	
Matthew (Matthew) #3	5	3	8	
Mark (Mark) #5	2	2	4	
<b>Luke (Luke-Acts) #1</b>	<b>14</b>	<b>11</b>	<b>25</b>	
Paul (Rom, 2 Cor, 2 Tim) #4	1	4	5	
? (Hebrews) #6		3	3	
Peter (2 Peter) #7		1	1	
<b>John (Revelation) #2</b>	<b>12</b>		<b>12</b>	
Totals:	34	24	58	

## THE 12 USES OF *METANOĒ* ("REPENT") *METANOIA* ("REPENTANCE") IN REVELATION:

### *Pertaining to Believers*

1-2. Remember therefore from where you have fallen; repent and do the first works, or else I will come to you quickly and remove your lampstand from its place— unless you repent. (2:5)

3. Repent, or else I will come to you quickly and will fight against them with the sword of My mouth. (2:16)

4-6. And I gave her time to repent of her sexual immorality, and she did not repent. Indeed I will cast her into a sickbed, and those who commit adultery with her into great tribulation, unless they repent of their deeds. (2:21-22)

7. Remember therefore how you have received and heard; hold fast and repent. Therefore if you will not watch, I will come upon you as a thief, and you will not know what hour I will come upon you. (3:3)

8. As many as I love, I rebuke and chasten. Therefore be zealous and repent. (3:19)

### *Pertaining to Unbelievers*

9-10. But the rest of mankind, who were not killed by these plagues, did not repent of the works of their hands, that they should not worship demons, and idols of gold, silver, brass, stone, and wood, which can neither see nor hear nor walk. And they did not repent of their murders or their sorceries or their sexual immorality or their thefts. (9:20-21)

11. And men were scorched with great heat, and they blasphemed the name of God who has power over these plagues; and they did not repent and give Him glory. (16:9)

12. They blasphemed the God of heaven because of their pains and their sores, and did not repent of their deeds. (16:11)

## ANSWER 2 TO THEORIES 1 AND 2:

**THE NT REGULARLY LINKS ETERNAL LIFE TO BELIEVING (cf. John 3:16; 5:24; 6:47, etc). ONLY ONE PASSAGE (ACTS 11:18 LINKS METANOIA ("REPENTANCE") WITH LIFE. HOWEVER,**

1. Acts 11:18 says life, not eternal life. The OT recognized that Gentiles can receive eternal life. Otherwise, the citation of Psalm 18:49; Deut 32:43; and Isaiah 11:10 in Romans 15:8-12 would make no sense. Life in Acts 11:18 does not refer to receiving eternal life. They were (Acts 11:2-3) concerned about ceremonial uncleanness of the Gentile believers, not with whether those Gentiles had eternal life.
2. Would anyone want to make a doctrine rest solely upon the "experts" who speak in Acts 11:18? This is especially true, when alternate interpretations exist.

**ANSWER 3 TO THEORIES 1 AND 2:****JESUS GAVE THE MESSAGE OF LIFE FOR 6 MONTHS BEFORE FIRST PREACHING *REPENTANCE*:**

Matthew, Mark, and John all treat the imprisonment of John the Baptist as an important chronological marker. The following summarizes each Gospel account's contribution:

	Matthew	Mark	John
John the Baptist preached repentance <i>Compare Matt 3:2 and 4:17</i>	3:1-12	1:1-8	—
John the Baptist baptized Jesus <i>Mark 1:12 "Immediately" shows that John 1:29-36 is not when Jesus was baptized. Cf. "The next day" (John 1:35); "The next day" (John 1:43); "On the third day" (John 2:1).</i>	3:13-17	1:9-11	—
Temptation in the wilderness	4:1-11	1:12-13	—
Jesus returned to John the Baptist <i>John 1:29-34 looks back at When he baptized Jesus.</i>	—	—	1:29-36
Jesus went to a wedding in Galilee	—	—	1:43-2:12
Jesus went to Jerusalem for Passover	—	—	2:13-3:21
Jesus ministered in rural Judea	—	—	3:22
<b>John the Baptist imprisoned</b>	<b>4:12a</b>	<b>1:14a</b>	<b>(3:24)</b>
<b>Jesus went to Galilee</b>	<b>4:12b</b>	<b>1:14b</b>	<b>4:3-4, 43</b>
Jesus <b>began</b> preaching repentance <i>The Baptist could not preach This from prison, so Jesus then began preaching it.</i>	4:17	1:15	—

**TAKEAWAY:** Jesus ministered w/o preaching repentance for six months after baptism.

Did He have an incomplete message?

**ANSWER 4 TO THEORIES 1 AND 2:**

**IF REPENTANCE WAS NOT PART OF JESUS' MESSAGE BEFORE THE BAPTIST'S IMPRISONMENT, HOW SAFE IS IT TO ASSUME THAT IT WAS IMPLICIT OR UNDERSTOOD AFTERWARDS?**

## **THE CORRECT MODEL:**

Eternal life comes through faith alone in Jesus Christ alone. Believers (individually) or the nation of Israel (collectively) will have harmony with God via repentance.

Deuteronomy 30 requires Israel to repent, so they can be regathered to the Millennial Israel and the kingdom.

John the Baptist (Matt 3:2) and Jesus (Matt 4:17) linked repentance to coming of the Millennial kingdom

What about Mark 1:14-15?  
Chronology

Was this the first time these men met Jesus?

Were they already believers?

To what does the word *gospel* refer here?

How did Christendom become so confused about repentance?

## **CONCLUSION**