

The Augsburg Confession *Talking About Faith with Family and Friends*



Article XII: Of Repentance

Discussion: We are hurt every day by sin in the behaviors of others. How do we react to people who hurt us? Does our understanding of sin and repentance make a difference in how we respond? Talk with a few people about their understanding of what faith in Jesus Christ means to them. Consider sharing your discussion comments with me so I can post them anonymously in our daily email in a few days.

"Of Repentance they (our Lutheran churches) teach that for those who have fallen after Baptism there is remission of sins whenever they are converted and that the Church ought to impart absolution to those thus returning to repentance. Now, repentance consists properly of these two parts: One is contrition, that is, terrors smiting the conscience through the knowledge of sin; the other is faith, which is born of the Gospel, or of absolution, and believes that for Christ's sake, sins are forgiven, comforts the conscience, and delivers it from terrors. Then good works are bound to follow, which are the fruits of repentance.

They condemn the Anabaptists, who deny that those once justified can lose the Holy Ghost. Also those who contend that some may attain to such perfection in this life that they cannot sin.

The Novatians also are condemned, who would not absolve such as had fallen after Baptism, though they returned to repentance.

They also are rejected who do not teach that remission of sins comes through faith but command us to merit grace through satisfactions of our own."

Importance: Repentance is how Christians live their lives on a daily basis. Repentance is recognizing our sinful or flawed nature and that one sin or our sinful condition deserves damnation. The second part of repentance is our **faith** in Jesus Christ. This is where Luther and the Roman Catholic Church had a major division because none of our efforts or decisions can bring us to repent of one sin or any sins.

Repentance is the result of the Holy Spirit calling one to faith and complete forgiveness is granted without any conditions. Repentance leads to a changed life because of the grace of Jesus Christ and good works (fruits of repentance) follow. The emphasis in the Lutheran Church and most Protestant churches is the importance of faith - a faith that believes all sins were forgiven and forgotten on the cross!