

FRUITS IN KEEPING WITH REPENTANCE

The term “fruits in keeping with repentance” appears in the gospel of Luke when John the Baptist is talking to the Pharisees:

Luke 3:8-14

“Therefore bring forth fruits in keeping with repentance, and do not begin to say to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham for our father,’ for I say to you that God is able from these stones to raise up children to Abraham.

And also the axe is already laid at the root of the trees; every tree therefore that does not bear good fruit is cut down and thrown into the fire.

And the multitudes were questioning him, saying, ‘Then what shall we do?’

And he would answer and say to them, ‘Let the man who has two tunics share with him who has none; and let him who has food do likewise.’

And {some} tax-gatherers also came to be baptized, and they said to him, ‘Teacher, what shall we do?’

And he said to them, ‘Collect no more than what you have been ordered to.’

And {some} soldiers were questioning him, saying, ‘And {what about} us, what shall we do?’ And he said to them, ‘Do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse {anyone} falsely, and be content with your wages.’”

Here we can clearly see that, for there to be real repentance, there must be evidence of a change in actions that backs up the words/confession of repentance. The word used here for repentance is the Greek word *metanoia*, which means a change of mind (heart); reversal of a decision. So, if there is repentance, there should be not only an attitude adjustment, but a turning around in what one does, a lifestyle change whereby I will no longer act as I did. That’s how you measure whether your brother listens to you when approach him in accordance with Matthew 18:15.

Matthew 18:15-17

“And if your brother sins, go and reprove him in private; if he listens to you, you have won your brother.

But if he does not listen {to you,} take one or two more with you, so that by the mouth of two or three witnesses every fact may be confirmed.

And if he refuses to listen to them, tell it to the church; and if he refuses to listen even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax-gatherer.”

When you repent and are changed in that area of your life, you gradually become the new person God intended – more like God.

Ephesians 4:22-24

“that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside the old self, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit,

and that you be renewed in the spirit of your mind,

and put on the new self, which in {the likeness of} God has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth.”