



What's Our Responsibility in Salvation and Transformation?

[Mark 1:14-15](#)

Second in a 4-part series titled: *Transformed*

Pastor Matt Friend – January 7 & 10, 2021

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Introduction

Can you recall a story from recent history where someone's life was saved by the heroic actions of another? In most instances, all glory for the rescue goes to the hero—the rescuer. However, the one being rescued usually has a responsibility to: grab a rope, lift their arms, or look up.

That's what we're discussing today, but in respect to our eternal salvation and daily transformation.

How do we receive salvation and transformation? What's our responsibility in both? What must we do to be saved, and what must we do be transformed daily—even years after we've started following Jesus?

If I could summarize today's message, it would be simply this: Our responsibility in salvation and transformation are identical. That's why today's big idea is...

**We're transformed by turning and trusting Jesus
in the same way
we're saved by turning and trusting Jesus.**

Making Sense of Mark 1:14-15

After John was put in prison, Jesus went into Galilee, proclaiming the good news of God. "The time has come," he said. "The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!" (Mark 1:14-15)

This John's nickname was "John the Baptizer," also translated "John the Baptist." It doesn't refer to his denomination. He wasn't a part of a Baptist church, for there was no such thing as the organized Baptist Church then. John was simply famous for taking the baptism ritual and applying it to the New Covenant. John *the Baptizer* and Jesus were cousins and close friends.



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Around Jesus' 30th birthday, John was put in prison and later martyred for preaching God's Word. Jesus launched his public ministry at this time.

How did Mark summarize Jesus' public ministry? Jesus "proclaimed the good news of God." This word for *good news* is often translated *gospel*. What is the good news/gospel?

Broadly speaking, the good news is: God creates. Sin breaks. Jesus saves. Jesus transforms. God restores.

Though God created us, we committed cosmic treason against him. How bad was our sin? Its seriousness can be seen by what it did to Jesus on the cross.

Thankfully, though, Jesus came to rescue us! Last week we saw that salvation gives us grace... *access to God himself*. We now have union, communion, and intimacy with Christ!

More specifically, the gospel is the good news that the living God—who demands perfection of all humankind—sent His Son Jesus Christ into the world: to live a sinless life; to suffer and die on the cross as a substitute for our sins (absorbing the judgment we rightfully deserve); to rise again; to ascend back into heaven; and to grant forgiveness, righteousness, his Spirit, and eternal life.

In our upcoming [Member Statement of Faith](#) revision, our Elder Board has summarized salvations blessings as follows:

Christians are born again, made alive in Christ as new creations complete with a new nature. The saving work of Christ reconciles and justifies believers, declaring them holy, blameless, and not guilty in God's sight, giving them peace with and full access to God. Christians are "in Christ" and are given the very righteousness of Christ, resulting in a right-standing before God to be experienced and enjoyed forever. Though we were once His enemies, God the Father adopts gospel-believers into His family to enjoy a relationship as His beloved children. We believe that all who are born again are kept eternally secure in the hands of our



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Father by the sealing of the Holy Spirit and intercession of Christ. God preserves gospel-believers with ongoing faith until their salvation is fully realized in His presence. The work of salvation produces a people who are unified in the Spirit and interdependent upon one another as family and friends.

Not only does Jesus save us, he also wants to transform us. For the last two millennia, different words for this have been used: Christian growth, sanctification, experiential theology, practical divinity, Christian ethics, piety, and discipleship. Essentially, we start following Jesus and then we learn to be better Jesus followers.

A great illustration of Christian transformation can be seen in marriage. Sarah and I have been married for twenty years. We're not "more married" today than we were on July 1, 2000, but we are certainly more in love. I'm still learning how to be a husband and she's still learning how to be a wife. That's the growth process I'm talking about today, except applied to the Christian life.

So, according to Mark 1:15, what did Jesus say is our response to the good news? He calls us to repent and believe... to turn and trust!

It's important that we see these two ideas—repentance and belief, turning and trusting—not as separate entities, but as two perspectives of the same action. They are two sides of the same coin. Sometimes God's Word mentions *repentance* by itself. At other times, it refers to *belief/faith* by itself. It's not that they are two steps to salvation, but two perspectives of the same reaction and responsibility.

So, Christian, what was our responsibility in salvation?

#1 – We turned from our sin and self-dependence. ([Matthew 3:1-2; 7:21-23; 9:12-13; Mark 1:15; 6:12; Luke 24:45-47; Acts 14:15; 20:21; 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10](#))

Another name for turning is the word Jesus used: "repent." Repentance is a change of heart and mind that results in a change of the will. No one has ever genuinely come to Jesus who did not first turn from their sin and self-dependence.



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Repentance doesn't mean that we cleaned up our lives and then came to Jesus. Not at all. But at the moment of our salvation, we had a change of heart and mind that resulted in a change of the will. Though we didn't fully understand it, we were willing to give up any sin for Jesus.

"It is impossible to disentangle faith and repentance. Saving faith is permeated with repentance and repentance is permeated with faith." –John Murray

Side note: Even though our minds can't comprehend it, it's important to remember that even repentance itself is a gift from God bestowed upon a believer. ([Acts 5:31](#); [11:18](#); [2 Timothy 2:25](#))

#2 – We trusted Jesus for salvation. ([Ezekiel 18:23, 32; 33:11](#); [Mark 1:15](#); [John 1:12; 3:16-19, 36; 5:24, 40; 6:28-29, 35, 47; 11:25-26](#); [Acts 2:21; 16:30-31](#); [Romans 3:28; 4:3; 5:2](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:10-12](#); [Hebrews 11](#))

The idea of "believe" is related to the concept of dependence, trust, and faith. At salvation, we stop trusting in ourselves for salvation, and we stop trusting in our sin for satisfaction... and we turn and trust Jesus and Jesus alone.

Again, it's important that we see these two ideas—repentance and belief, turning and trusting—not as separate entities, but as two perspectives of the same action. They are two sides of the same coin. Sometimes God's Word mentions repentance by itself. At other times, it refers to belief/faith by itself. It's not that they are two steps to salvation, but two perspectives of the same reaction and responsibility.

Side note: Like repentance, faith is also a gift from God. ([John 6:37-40, 44, 65](#); [Acts 13:48](#); [Romans 8:29-30](#); [Ephesians 1:1-12](#); [1 Thessalonians 1:4-5](#); [2 Thessalonians 2:13](#); [2 Timothy 1:9](#); [1 Peter 1:1-2](#)). Grammatically, in [Ephesians 2:8-9](#), both grace and faith are divine gifts from God to an individual.

Nevertheless, though our finite minds cannot grasp a correlation, we still have responsibility to repent and trust Jesus Christ as Savior and Lord!



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In our upcoming [Member Statement of Faith](#) revision, our Elder Board has summarized this as follows:

We are saved by the grace of God through faith in the person and work of Christ. Genuine conversion involves the human response to the gospel, consisting of repentance from sin and faith in Jesus as Savior and Lord.

Christian, what is our responsibility in transformation?

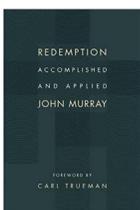
#1 – We continually turn from our sin and self-dependence. ([Matthew 3:8; 5-7; Ephesians 4:22-23; 1 John 1:5-10](#))

#2 – We continually trust Jesus for transformation. ([Romans 1:17; Galatians 2:20; 3:1-3; Colossians 2:6](#))

So, what is God inviting us to do as we follow Him?

Keep turning and trusting Jesus every single day!

Resource Recommendation:



[Redemption: Accomplished and Applied](#)

by John Murray