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Lordship and Free Grace Salvation: Repentance in Luke-Acts

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of the requirements for graduation
in the Honors Program
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Acceptance of Senior Honors Thesis

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Currently, there is great debate over what Jesus Christ meant when He called sinners to repentance. Those on the Lordship side believe that repentance means to turn from sin – to have a change of life as well as a change of mind.[1] According to the Lordship perspective, repentance is turning from sin; a gift given by God and not a work; a change of mind; and it will be evidenced by a change of behavior.[2] Yet another characteristic of repentance is that it is necessary for salvation: "The gospel calls sinners to faith joined in oneness with repentance."[3]

Those on the Free Grace side argue either that repentance is not necessary for salvation,[4] or that repentance is simply a change of mind.[5] Hodges argues that repentance is not necessary for salvation, instead salvation is gained by having a "inward conviction that what God says to us in the gospel is true. That – and that alone – is saving faith"[6] Hodges concludes that "The call to repentance is broader than the call to eternal salvation. It is rather a call to harmony between the creature and His Creator."[7] Repentance, in Hodges view, is better seen as part of the sanctification process.[8] Thus the

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[1] John F. MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus: What Does it Mean When He Says, "Follow Me"?* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1994), 204.

[2] John F. MacArthur, *Faith Works: The Gospel According to the Apostles* (Dallas: Word, 1993), 24.

[3] Ibid., 24.

[4] Zane Hodges, *Absolutely Free* (Grand Rapids: Redencion Viva, 1989), 42.

[5] Charles C. Ryrie, *So Great Salvation: What It Means to Believe in Jesus Christ* (Wheaton: Victor Books, 1989), 157.

[6] Hodge, *Absolutely Free,* 31.

[7] Ibid.,160.

[8] Ibid., 163.

defining characteristic of repentance is a call for the justified to restore fellowship with God.[9]

Others from the Free Grace perspective have argued repentance has at least three meanings: first, to feel sorry for sin; second, to have a change of mind about Christ; and third, to have a change of mind about sin.[10] Concerning repentance as a change of mind about Christ, Ryrie states: "That kind of repentance saves, and everyone who is saved has repented in that sense."[11] So in salvific contexts, repentance has at least two characteristics: it is only a change of mind about Christ and is necessary for salvation.

Reasoning and Method

Put into its simplest terms this debate concerns if a turn, or change of life, is necessary for salvation. That is why πιστρέφομαι (I turn) is key to understanding the concept of repentance. If Scripture uses πιστρέφομαι in way that suggests turning is necessary for salvation that would be in favor of the Lordship point of view. Or if Scripture's use of πιστρέφομαι demonstrates that turning is not necessary for salvation the Free Grace perspective gains ground.

Another key word to this debate is μετανοέω (I repent). Discovering how the New Testament writers use μετανοέω will shed considerable light on the validity of either the Lordship or Free Grace concepts of repentance. This means that one of the best methods for determining the biblical concept of repentance is the examination of these words in context.

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[9] Ibid., 163.

[10] Charles Caldwell Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, (Chicago: Moody Press, 1995), 112.

[11] Ibid.

Luke-Acts proves to be fertile ground for this kind of examination as it contains nearly half of all the references to πιστρέφομαι in the entire New Testament[12] and nearly half of the references to μετανοέω as well.[13] This shows that "turning" and "repentance" are important concepts for Luke and make his writings a logical choice for this kind of study.

The following discussion has two major sections both of which are limited in scope to Luke-Acts. The first is an analysis of πιστρέφομαι and the second is an analysis of μετανοέω. Within these sections, the occurrences of each of these words are taken in canonical order[14] and examined contextually, syntactically, and grammatically for the purpose of discovering the Lukan paradigm of repentance and how that paradigm fits the characteristics of repentance espoused by those adhering either to Lordship or Free Grace salvation.

Analysis of Επιστρεφομαι

Semantic Domain

In Louw and Nida's lexicon there are five different listings for πιστρέφομαι. The five definitions represent πιστρέφομαι's semantic domain. They are as follows:

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[12] Επιστρεφω and its noun form are used a total of 37 times, 17 of which are in Luke-Acts

[13] Μετανοέω and its noun form are used a total of 56 times, 25 of which are in Luke-Acts

[14] There are some exceptions. Concerning πιστρέφομαι, there are six examples of πιστρέφομαι used to mean physical turning in Luke-Acts (Luke 2:39, 8:55, 17:31, Acts 9:40, 15;36, 16:18). These examples represent a specific aspect of πιστρέφομαι's semantic domain that does not necessarily apply to this discussion other than to say that it does indicate that πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω cannot be true synonyms since μετανοέω is never used to describe physical turning. Also, those instances of πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω which are neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace debate have been put in to the Appendix. The neutral references for πιστρέφομαι are: Luke 17:4; Acts 9:35, 15:3. For μετανοέω they are Luke 10:13, Acts 5:31, 13:24, 20:21.

(1) to return to a point or area where one has been before, with probable emphasis on turning about.[15]

(2) to turn to, to come to believe, to come to accept.[16]

(3) to cause a person to change belief, with focus upon that to which one turns[17]

(4) to change one's manner of life in a particular direction, with the implication of turning back to God[18]

(5) to turn around, to turn toward.[19]

The question is how Luke uses the word and the implications for the Lordship versus Free Grace debate. There are two basic meanings of πιστρέφομαι. The first refers to external or physical turning. The second refers to internal or spiritual turning. The discussion below will separate those instances that deal with only physical turning from those that indicate a spiritual turning. For the most part these different aspects of the semantic range of πιστρέφομαι are easily discernible. But there is one instance that deserves special consideration before the other domains can be addressed.

Occurrences of Επιστρέφομαι in Luke-Acts

Luke 1:16, 17.

The first instance of πιστρέφομαι in reference to internal turning comes from the voice of an angel in Luke 1:17.

> He will turn [πιστρέφομαι] many of the people of Israel to the Lord their God. And he will go as forerunner before the Lord in the spirit and power of Elijah, to

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[15]Johannes P. Louw and Eugene Albert Nida, *Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament : Based on Semantic Domains*, Electronic ed. of the 2nd edition. (New York : United Bible Societies, 1996), 1:193.

[16]Ibid., 1:372.

[17]Ibid., 1:373.

[18]Ibid., 1:509.

[19]Ibid., 1:213.

> turn [πιστρέφομαι] the hearts of the fathers back to their children and the disobedient to the wisdom of the just, to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him (NET).

Here the angel is describing to Zechariah John the Baptist's future ministry. On these verses, Trites concludes: "[John's] ministry summoned people to make a clear-cut confession of sin, repent of all known evil, and turn to God. The genuineness of one's response was to be indicated by submission to baptism at John's hands."[20] Here πιστρέφομαι is used both in reference of man to man (1:16) as well as God to man (1:17). The angel prophesies that John will return the hearts of the people back to God. This return to God represents a return to their covenant responsibilities with God.[21] Such a return, especially in a Jewish context, surely includes a return to righteous and holy living. The call to restored relationships from man to man is an uncommon use of πιστρέφομαι.[22] Still, this restoration has similar impactions as the man to God restoration. It should be evidenced by proper relationship to one another as described in Old Testament law.

There are a couple of issues that make the interpretation of these verses difficult to interpret. First is the issue of dispensation. John's ministry was as an Old Testament prophet and not a New Testament preacher. The difference in dispensation brings up important differences in the requirements for salvation. Second is whether these instances of πιστρέφομαι have a salvific connotation at all. In verse 17 the angel proclaims the purpose of this turning is "to make ready for the Lord a people prepared for him (NET)."

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[20] Allison A. Trites, *The Gospel of Luke* Conerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort. (Carol Streams: Tyndale, 2006), 38.

[21] Ibid., 28.

[22] The only other time that Luke uses πιστρέφομαι in person to person context is in Luke 17:4.

So it appears as more of a preparatory turning than a saving one. Nevertheless, the implication for a Lukan definition of πιστρέφομαι is significant. Luke uses πιστρέφομαι to indicate an inward turn evidenced by outward actions, namely performing their covenant duties. But, considering the hermeneutical difficulties, it is best to say that this instance is neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace debate.

Luke 22:32.

Jesus, speaking to Peter just before he is to be crucified, informs Peter that he has prayed that Peter's faith would not fail. Jesus also implies that Peter's faith will indeed fail by saying, "once you have turned back (πιστρέφομαι), strengthen the brothers."

The phrase translated "once you have turned back" is of primary concern to this discussion. In Greek, the phrase reads as follows: κα σύ ποτε πιστρέψας στήρισον τος δελφούς σου (and when you have turned back, strengthen your brothers). Here πιστρέφομαι is an adverbial aorist participle connected to an aorist imperative (στήρισον) which when normally found in narrative is translated as an attendant to circumstance participle.[23] If that is the case, the words of Jesus should be translated, "turn back and strengthen your brothers." However, that rendering is awkward in this context as it would make turning back simultaneous to strengthening. How could Peter strengthen his brothers if he had not yet turned back? Taking it as a temporal participle is much better choice especially in light of the presence of the particle ποτε which is normally related to time. This would agree with Wallace who cites Luke 22:32 as an exception to

[23] Daniel. B. Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1996), 642.

the general rule that in almost all narrative literature the aorist participle + aorist imperative constructions are attendant to circumstance participles.[24]

So now having established the likely interpretation of Luke 22:32, what did Jesus mean by "once you have turned back?" To answer that question, it must first be realized that the 'turning back' Jesus was referring to here was a turning back from a failure of faith. Peter would deny Jesus three times because he did not have the faith to be identified with Christ during his trial. Concerning Peter's failure, Bock concludes

> It is clear that failure here means ultimate, total failure, that is, a total renunciation of Jesus. Peter will not fall away completely, since Jesus goes on to note that, when Peter turns back, he will strengthen the brothers. [25]

Now that is known what Peter was turning from (faith), one can better understand what Jesus means when he says, "once you have turned back." This turning "refers to coming back to faith – or better faithfulness – since Peter will deny Jesus, only to regret his action afterward." [26] So Jesus is not speaking of Peter's conversion, but rather of his restoration. After he had retraced his steps, Peter was to strengthen his brothers. [27]

Still, it remains to be seen at what point Peter would be turned back. Some have suggested that Peter began his turning back in 22:62 with his tears of remorse over betraying Jesus. [28] Perhaps, but it is unlikely that this remorse was the completion of the turning back that Jesus had in mind. More likely, this turning back was a process.

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[24] Ibid.

[25] Darrell L. Bock, *Luke,* Baker Exegetical Commentary on the New Testament, no. 3 (Grand Rapids, MI: Baker Books, 1994), 1743.

[26] Ibid.

[27] C. Morris, *Luke: An Introduction and Commentary* (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1988), 337.

[28] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 140.

To prove that for Peter turning back was a process, the various stages of his return need to be evidenced. The first stage has already been mentioned – remorse for betraying Jesus. The next stage is in 24:12. Here Peter runs to tomb of Jesus, finds it empty, and then returns home "wondering what happened." That Peter had not yet returned to faith was evident by the fact that he had yet to realize the significance of the cross or that Jesus was resurrected. The third stage occurs in 24:31 where, while dining with Jesus, Jesus opened the eyes of his disciples to recognize him. It was at this moment that Peter's faith was restored. [29] This restoration is evidenced by the disciples proclamation in 24:34, "The Lord has really risen..." The final stage occurs in Acts 1:13-15 where Luke describes Peter as standing up among the eleven. Here Peter is now shown strengthening his brothers – just as Christ had commanded him to do after Peter had turned back. Luke has thus given his readers a complete picture of Peter's return to faith.

What are the implications for the Luke's concept of πιστρέφομαι and the Lordship-Free Grace debate is this context? Those implications are difficult to extrapolate considering the special circumstances in this case, specifically that this instance is not salvific in nature. However there are at least two that can be made. First, this passages shows that turning is a gift from God. Jesus is the one who restores Peter's faith in 24:31 by opening his eyes. Second, the believer may experience failures of faith. A believer may go through trials that could cause them to deny Christ. Still, Jesus did not accept this as the norm for Peter. He expected Peter to turn back from his failure of faith and then to strengthen his brothers. A convert will demonstrate his redeemed status with fruit. This principle is more consistent with the Lordship view because it indicates that

[29] It is worth noting here that Peter was turned back by Christ (Luke 24:31). That is what makes the "turning back" certain – Christ is the agent who accomplishes it.

Jesus expects Peter's turning back to be evidenced by works, namely the strengthening of his brothers.[30] Luke 22:32 favors a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 3:19.

Peter proclaims to an amazed, Jewish crowd in Acts 3:19: μετανοήσατε ο□ν κα□ □πιστρέψατε ε□ς τ□ □ξαλειφθ□ναι □μ□ν τ□ς □μαρτίας (Therefore repent and turn to God so that your sins can be wiped out). Peter continues in verse 20 where he adds that "times of refreshing" are the result of repent and turning. Since □πιστρέφομαι occurs with the word for "repent" so it is treated later in the discussion along with μετανοέω. Still there a couple of important truths about □πιστρέφομαι that can be discovered here. First is that the turning in this context is unto God. This suggests a return to life by God's standard.[31] Second is that that turning must be completed in order for sins to be erased. This results in present salvation.[32] Third, turning is necessary for "times of refreshing" to come, which Marshall argues refers to the Second Coming of Christ.[33] Because □πιστρέφομαι in Acts 3:19 suggests both a return to righteous living and that turning is necessary for personal salvation, this passage favors a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 11:21.

Acts 11:21 contains an intriguing instance of □πιστρέφομαι. The context of this usage is relatively simple. Luke tells his readers that some believers went to Antioch to

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[30] John F. MacArthur, *Faith Works: The Gospel According to the Apostles* (Dallas: Word, 1993), 43.

[31] Barrett, C. K. *The Acts of the Apostles* The International Critical Commentary, ed. J. A. Emerton. (New York: T & T Clark, 1998), 1:203.

[32] William J. Larkin, *Acts* Cornerstone Biblical Commentary, ed. Philip W. Comfort. (Carol Steams: Tyndale House, 2006), 404.

[33] Marshall, I. Howard. *The Book of Acts* Tyndale New Testament Commentaries, ed. Leon Morris. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1980), 93.

preach to the Greeks. While they were preaching, the hand of the Lord was with them which resulted in πολύς τε □ριθμ□ς □ πιστεύσας □πέστρεψεν □π□ τ□ν κύριον (many believing ones turned to the Lord).

One cannot take πιστεύσας as adverbial since it is articular and thus modifying □ριθμος (a number). There is some disagreement among scholars as to how this verse should be taken. One commentator has suggested that this verse indicates a two step process of "belief followed by an adherence to the one in who they have believed and to his teaching."[34] But another writes

> The clause *believed and turned* to the Lord does not necessarily refer to two separate actions. The Greek construction (an aorist participle with an aorist finite verb) often indicates that the two actions are simultaneous. This clause, then, means, "in believing, they turned to the Lord."[35]

And still another argues

> On numerous occasions the gospel heralds exhorted the people to believe in Christ; on other occasions they urged the people to repent (cf. Acts 2:38; 3:19; 5:31; 8:22; 11:18; 17:30; 20:21; 26:20). This indicates the terms should be understood synonymously. Paul's statement, "repentance toward God and faith in our Lord Jesus Christ" (Acts 20:21), suggests repentance is bound up in faith. To have faith is to repent; without repentance faith is not possible.[36]

So there at least three possibilities for what Luke had in mind and they are as follows: (1) believing and turning is a two step process where believing must completed before turning, (2) believing is simultaneous to turning but the actions are distinct from each other, or (3) the terms are synonymous and interchangeable. But which possibility is the most likely?

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[34] Ben Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary (*Grand Rapids: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 369.

[35] Stanley D. Toussaint, *Acts* The Bible Knowledge Commentary, ed. John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary. (Wheaton: Victor, 1983), 2:383.

[36]Paul P. Enns, *The Moody Handbook of Theology* (Chicago: Moody Press, 1997), 96.

An argument from syntax may help solve this difficulty. Luke uses the "article + aorist participle + aorist verb agreeing in tense and number with the participle" at least two other times, both of which are found in his Gospel. The first instance is in Luke 2:18: πάντες ο□ □κούσαντες □θαύμασαν (all the hearing ones were astonished). Luke writes that all who heard about the birth of Jesus were astonished. In this case it is clear that one must hear about Jesus before being astonished. But the astonishment would occur immediately or perhaps even the in process of hearing. Still, the "hearing" had to begin before the "astonishing" could. The other example by Luke is in 7:10 which states: ο□ πεμφθέντες ε□ρον (the sent ones found). Needless to say, one must be sent before he can find. These two examples, as well as the other instances of this same construction,[37] indicate that Luke probably did not intend for "believing" and "turning" to be taken synonymously, thus ruling out possibility (3).

The syntax suggests that the "turning" could have been completed either while believing or immediately upon completion of believing. That leaves two possible interpretations. The first possibility might read "Immediately after believing the gospel they turned (as a result of believing)." The second possibility might read as follows: "As they began to believe the gospel, they turned (as a result of believing)." Considering that believing seems to be a rather instantaneous action, the former option appears best.

That being the case, the best view most closely resembles that of the first commentator mentioned above. However, there are some nuanced distinctions. For example, while "believing" and "turning" may be two different steps, the immediate result of believing is turning and is the means by which turning is accomplished. The

[37] The Article + aorist participle + aorist verb agreeing in tense and number with participle construction is found in the following verses: Matthew 18:31, Matthew 27:54, Luke 2:18, Luke 7:10, Acts 11:21, 2 Timothy 2:4, Hebrews 12:19.

first implication is that one cannot turn without first believing. A second, and critical implication is that one could believe without turning. The belief indicated here is the non-salvific kind of belief that James 2:19 indicates. Luke uses belief in a non-salvfic way in Acts 8:13 in reference to Simon the magician. The belief mentioned in Acts 11:21 is the non-salvific kind, that is why Luke adds the verb πιστρέφομαι. Another evidence that this was not adequate belief can be found in Luke's use of ριθμς (a number) in Acts 11:21. Luke writes that "a number of the believing ones turned."[38] If this was adequate belief why did just "a number" turn to the Lord?

Just knowing the right information about the gospel was not enough. In order to be saved, they had to turn to God. This would be a direct contradiction of Free Grace salvation. Just as in Luke 2:18 one could hear and not be astonished and in Luke 7:10 one could be sent and not find.

A number of important truths about Luke's use of πιστρέφομαι are revealed in Acts 11:21 First, turning is again shown to be given by God. In 11:21, Luke cites the hand of God as the reason for the conversion of the Greeks. Second, turning is different from believing. Turning requires belief. Thus Acts 11:21 favors a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 14:15.

Acts 14:8-20 records a dramatic event wherein Paul and Barnabas had gone to Lystra, a small Gentile village,[39] and met a man lame from birth. Paul healed the man; consequently inciting a fervor among the crowds who believed that the gods had come down to them in human form. The crowd wanted to offer sacrifices to Paul, who they

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[38] See Barrett, *Acts,* 551.

[39] Conrad Gempf, *Acts* New Bible Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson. (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1994), Ac 14:8.

believed to be Hermes, and Barnabas, who they believed to be Zeus. It is within Paul's frantic plea to the citizens of Lystra not to sacrifice animals to himself and Barnabas that he shouts to the crowd, □με□ς □μοιοπαθε□ς □σμεν □μ□ν □νθρωποι ε□αγγελιζόμενοι □μ□ς □π□ τούτων τ□ν ματαίων □πιστρέφειν □π□ θε□ν ζ□ντα (We too are men with human natures just like you! We are proclaiming the good news to you so that you should turn from these worthless things to the living God).

One of the more intriguing aspects of this reference is the Greek construction that Paul uses: □πιστρέφειν □π□ θε□ν (to turn to God). One commentator writes the following:

> [We have translated] □πιστρέφειν as an infinitive of purpose, but this is somewhat awkward contemporary English. To translate the infinitive construction "proclaim the good news, that you should turn," which is much smoother English, could give the impression that the infinitive clause is actually the content of the good news, which it is not. The somewhat less formal "to get you to turn" would work, but might convey to some readers manipulativeness on the part of the apostles. Thus "proclaim the good news, so that you should turn," is used, to convey that the purpose of the proclamation of good news is the response by the hearers.[40]

What makes Paul's sermon here especially interesting is that he uses □πιστρέφειν in connection with turning from something, specifically "vain things." Bolt said, "For the Lystra crowd, Paul had stressed that repentance consisted of turning from idols to the God who has not left himself without witness."[41] The fact that Paul tells his audience to turn from their idols strongly suggests that something more than a simple change of mind is in view. No longer worshiping their traditional gods would surely entail a change in

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[40]Footnote, *Net Bible,* Ac 14:15.

[41]Peter G. Bolt, "Mission and Witness," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts,* ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 207.

lifestyle. Witherington agrees that Paul's speech in verse 15 has the purpose of not just changing belief, but behavior as well. [42]

Also, another argument against a mere change of mind can be made from a similar statement made later by Paul found in 1 Thessalonians 1:9: □ς □πεστρέψατε πρ□ς τ□ν θε□ν □π□ τ□ν ε□δώλων δουλεύειν θε□ ζ□ντι κα□ □ληθιν□ (which you turned to God from your idols to serve the living and true God). Here Paul uses similar phraseology, turning from idols to the living God, but he adds δουλεύειν (to serve)[43] – possibly indicating that conversion entails not only abandonment of belief in false gods, but also a lifestyle of serving the true God. [44]

Luke's use of □πιστρέφομαι in Acts 14:15 shows that Paul is not simply calling his audience to belief in God (if so why did he add "from these worthless things"?), but instead to a change of lifestyle characterized by serving the living God. Therefore, since Paul mentions not only a turning to God, but also a turning from false gods, the concept of turning presented here is consistent with the Lordship doctrine.

Acts 15:19.

The next time that Luke uses the □πιστρέφομαι □π□ construction is in Acts 15:19 and comes from the lips of James who was apparently moderating an early church council.[45] A schism had arisen between Paul and the church at Jerusalem over the issue of

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[42] Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles: A Socio-Rhetorical Commentary,* 426.

[43] It may be the case that the infinitive δουλεύειν is an infinitive of purpose, indicating that the purpose of conversion is to serve.

[44] A.T. Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Ac 14:15.

[45] John R. Stott, *The Message of Acts: The Spirit, the Church, & the World,* The Bible Speaks Today (Downers Grove, Il: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994, 246.

circumcision. It is within this context that James speaks up with a resolution to the disagreement that the church should not cause any extra difficulty for the Gentiles by forcing them to follow the Jewish law, but instead they should abstain from sexual immorality as well as obey some dietary restrictions.

Here □πιστρέφουσιν □π□ τ□ν θεόν (turn unto God) is used as a euphemism for conversion and does not reveal significant information about whether or not turning is a change of mind, necessary for salvation, or unnecessary. Although, from the context it appears that there was indeed a certain type of behavior expected by those Gentiles who were "turning to God." Since converts were expected to show evidence of their conversion by adhering to a moral code, Acts 15:19 should be taken in favor of the Lordship view.

Acts 26:18, 20.

Acts 26:18, 20 contains instances of μετανοέω as well as □πιστρέφομαι which makes it especially important. These verses need to be considered as a whole, and will be done so later in the μετανοέω part of the discussion, but for now the significance of □πιστρέφειν □π□ τ□ν θεόν (to turn unto God) in Acts 26:20 will be briefly discussed. Paul uses □πιστρέφομα to describe his ministry to those in Jerusalem, Judea, and finally to the Gentiles, □πήγγελλον μετανοε□ν κα□ □πιστρέφειν □π□ τ□ν θεόν (I was telling them to repent and to turn to God). It appears as though Paul uses □πιστρέφειν □π□ τ□ν θεόν (to turn to God) as a summary statement of his entire ministry. It is significant that Paul, in the shortest summary of his message[46], includes the concept of turning to God. This implies that turning was a critical part of salvation.

[46]Footnote, *NET Bible,* Ac. 26:20.

So there are at least three conclusions about πιστρέφομαι in Acts 26:20 that can be made. First is that turning should be toward God. As mentioned earlier, a turn to God suggest a turn to righteous living. Second, Acts 26:20 shows that Luke sometimes used πιστρέφομαι as a summary term for the gospel. Third, Acts 26:20 suggest that turning is neccesary for salvation. Thus Acts 26:20 favors a Lordship interpreation.

Acts 28:27.

This instance of πιστρέφομαι occurs in a LXX quotation of Isaiah 6:10 The translators of the LXX used the word πιστρέφομαι to render the Hebrew word שָׁב which means to turn back or return.[47] The quotation of Isaiah 6:10 comes from Paul while he is under house arrest in Rome. Paul quoted the verse as those who had come to listen to his message were leaving and arguing on their way out.

> For the heart of this people has become dull,
> and their ears are hard of hearing,
> and they have closed their eyes,
> so that they would not see with their eyes
> and hear with their ears
> and understand with their heart
> and turn [πιστρέφομαι], and I would heal them (NET).

He then concluded his quotation by saying, "Therefore be advised that this salvation from God has been sent to the Gentiles, they will listen (NET)!" So Paul connects πιστρέφομαι to eternal salvation, but not directly. Rather, Isaiah wrote that after the Israelites turned, then they would be healed. This indicates that turning back to God is the necessary condition for receiving God's healing. And Paul is using God's healing to describe salvation. But there is still more to learn about this use of πιστρέφομαι that can

[47]Francis Brown, Samuel Rolles Driver, Charles Augustus Briggs, *Enhanced Brown-Driver-Briggs Hebrew and English Lexicon* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 2000), 996.

be found within the Isaiah quotation itself. Concerning the significance of the Isaiah quotation, Polhill writes the following:

> The three organs of perception are highlighted – the eyes, the ears, and the heart, the latter in Hebrew thought being considered the organ of understanding and will. The picture is that of a people who merely take in sensory perceptions but in no sense appropriate them… Their hearts had become calloused; the message received by their eyes and their ears was neither understood nor acted upon… If they had heard and understood the divine word, they would have turned from their ways in repentance (πιστρέφομαι) and received God's blessing.[48]

The evidence is such that it favors a Lordship interpretation. First, in favor of the Lordship view, is that "turning" (not "changing your mind") is presented as necessary for receiving salvation in the Isaiah passage.[49] Also, if Polhill is correct in his analysis of the Isaiah quotation, the need for a response of not only the mind but also the will, leans in favor of a Lordship perspective.

Definition of Επιστρέφομαι in Luke-Acts

Having now examined every occurrence of πιστρέφομαι in Luke-Acts it is now possible to discover the Lukan definition of the word. Before a definition is given, it must be remembered that "although Luke is concerned with the conversion from one form of life to another, then, he outlines no 'typical' way of understanding the nature of that conversion."[50] Still, that does not mean a solid definition cannot be made. Luke uses πιστρέφομαι in three distinct ways. First, he uses it in reference to physical turning. Second, he uses πιστρέφομαι to describe reconciliation from one man to another (Luke

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[48] John B. Pohill, *Acts,* The New American Commentary (Nashville: Broadman, 1992), 543.

[49] Interestingly enough, belief is presented as a prerequisite for turning in the Isaiah quotation: "and *understand* with their heart and turn.,," This is consistent with other examples of the Lukan concept of turning.

[50] Joel B. Green, "'Salvation to the Ends of the Earth' (Acts 13:47): God as Saviour in the Acts of the Apostles," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts,* ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 104.

1:17, 17:4). Third he uses it in reference to turning to God for salvation.[51] From the text, there are number of aspects of the Lukan definition of πιστρέφομαι that can be derived and they are as follows:

(1) turning is a gift from God (Luke 22:32; Acts 11:21)

(2) turning should be in the direction of God resulting in a life of righteousness (Acts 3:19, 9:35, 11:21)

(3) turning is a summary term for the gospel (Luke 24:47; Acts 9:35, 15:3)

(4) turning is necessary for salvation (Acts 3:19, 26:20, 28:27)

(5) for turning, belief is a prerequisite (Acts 11:21, 28:27)

So a Lukan definition of πιστρέφομαι in salvific contexts is as follows: a change of life to God for righteous living, based on belief in Jesus Christ, and given by the grace of God unto salvation. Because this shows turning to be both necessary and characterized by righteousness, this definition favors a Lordship position. Also because Luke makes a distinction between turning and believing, his use of πιστρέφομαι favors a Lordship position.

Analysis of Μετανοεω

Semantic Domain

Some have sought out the definition of μετανοέω through a wide examination of other Greek literature, but "whether linguistically or materially, one searches the Greek world in vain for the origin of the New Testament understanding of μετανοέω and

[51] There are two exceptions. Luke 1:16 uses πιστρέφομαι in a non-salvific way. The other exception is Luke 24:47 which is probably not salvific.

μετάνοια."[52] This seems especially relevant to this discussion which is attempting to discover the meaning of μετανοέω specifically in Luke-Acts. Though, it seems that if the Lukan concept of μετανοέω has its roots anywhere, it would be in the Old Testament. The way Luke uses μετανοέω "comes very close to the Hebrew verb for repent which literally means 'to turn or turn around.'' [53]

Now, concerning a New Testament definition, Louw-Nida only gave one reference to μετανοέω and its noun counterpart μετάνοια and it is as follows:

> to change one's way of life as the result of a complete change of thought and attitude with regard to sin and righteousness—'to repent, to change one's way, repentance.'[54]

This definition is a contradiction of the opinion of those who hold to Free Grace. Their definition of repentance does not involve a change of life, simply a change of mind. Ryrie writes of repentance as follows: "Faith is the only condition. Anything added becomes a work attached to the grace of God."[55]

One proponent of Free Grace salvation believes that μετανοέω ought to have a wider semantic domain than the one suggested by Louw and Nida. Wilkin believes that there are four different uses of μετανοέω and they are as follows:

1) as a synonym for eternal salvation

2) a change of mind regarding sinful behavior

3) a change of mind regarding self and Christ,

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[52] Behm, Johannes. "Μετανοέω." In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gehard Friedrich. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 4:980.

[53]Bock, *A Theology of Luke-Acts,* 129.

[54]Louw, *Lexicon* 1:509.

[55]Ryrie, *A Survey of Bible Doctrine*, 112.

4) a change of mind regarding idols and God.[56]

Wilkin has also rightly argued that all New Testament uses of μετανοέω include a change of mind.[57]

Further, there has been no little controversy over the translation of this word. Wilkin, advocating that "repentance" should be rendered "change of mind," has stated the following:

> I wish we could retranslate the NT. It would make teaching and preaching passages using μετανοέω simpler. It would eliminate the confusion many have when they read their Bibles and see the word 'repent'. However, this is not a likely to happen. It seems that "repentance" as a translation will probably be with us for a long time The only times 'repent' is actually a good English translation is when the object of 'μετανοέω' is sinful deeds. A change of mind about sinful behaviour is equivalent to repentance."[58]

Other scholars agree that the New Testament ought to be retranslated, but differ in their view as to the direction it should be taken in. For example, a writer in the 1800s argued that repentance was not strong enough a word and should instead be translated, "reform," which, according to him, meant "a change of mind, of character, of conduct, [and] of life."[59] One scholar from the early 20th century put it this way: "The New Testament writers in no instance employ the term [μετανοέω] to express the action solely of either the intellect or of the sensibility, but use it exclusively to indicate the action of the will."[60] This point of view is also consistent with some more modern scholars: "Concerning

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[56] Robert N. Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 3: New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations." *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society,* no. 2 (1989): 18-19.

[57] Ibid., 17.

[58] Ibid., 20.

[59] Treadwell Walden, *Our English Bible and its Ancestors* (Philadelphia: Porter and Coates, 1871), 231.

[60] Effie Freeman Thompson. *Metaneo and Metamelei in Greek Literature until 100 A.D.* . (Chicago, IL.: University of Chicago Press, 1908), 7.

μετανοέω, it is the change of life following a change of thought or behavior… it is not only an inner change or contrition but also a behavioral transformation."[61] But the question at hand is what did Luke mean when he wrote μετανοέω?

Occurrences of Μετανοέω in Luke and Acts

Luke 3:3, 8.

There first time that Luke uses μετανοέω in his two volumes was in Luke 3:3 in relation to the baptism of John. There have been entire dissertations written on the significance of John's baptism, and this author will not attempt such a thorough explanation. Rather, only one particular issue with John's Baptism will be dealt with – how John's baptism relates to repentance. Luke makes three references to John's baptism of repentance throughout Luke-Acts: Luke 3:3; Acts 13:24, and 19:4. According to one author, the theme of repentance in Luke begins its development with John's baptism in Luke 3:3. [62] But what implications about repentance can be made from this first step in Luke's development of repentance?

Some have suggested that there are various types of repentance associated with the various stages of salvation history. One of these proponents believes that John the Baptist, Jesus, and the early church each had in mind a slightly different idea when they preached "repent."[63] Perhaps, though the idea of repentance possibly was minutely modified, its primary content remained the same. No matter what the dispensation, there

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[61] F. Mendez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke* (London: T&T Clark International, 2004), 16.

[62] Robert C. Tannehill, "Repentance in the Context of Lukan Soteriology," in *The Shape of Luke's Story: Essays on Luke-Acts* (Eugene: Cascade Books, 2005), 89-90.

[63] Francois Bovon, *Luke the Theologian: Fifty-Five Years of Research* (Waco: Baylor University, 2005), 311.

was always a religious (turn to God) and moral aspect (from sin) to repentance; it was the emphasis that shifted. John the Baptist focused on the imminent coming of judgment, Jesus was concerned with the arrival of the Kingdom, and the apostles focused on the second coming and resurrection of Christ.[64]

Luke 3:3 reveals the most about the baptism of John as it gives the content of his preaching which was associated with his baptism of repentance. The content of his preaching is summed up in Luke 3:8. Here John says that his audience ought to "produce fruit worthy of their repentance." There are only two other times that the phrase □ξίους τ□ς μετανοίας (works worthy of repentance) occur in the New Testament. One of those times in Acts 26:20,[65] and the other is found in Mathew 3:8 – also from the voice of John the Baptist. But only in Luke 3:3 is John's baptism explicitly connected to the forgiveness of sins. In Luke 3, John is shown preaching and baptizing as he prepares the way for Christ to come. The content of his message is revealed in verses 3:7-9 as follows:

> So John said to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You offspring of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? Therefore produce fruit that proves your repentance, and don't begin to say to yourselves, 'We have Abraham as our father.' For I tell you that God can raise up children for Abraham from these stones! Even now the ax is laid at the root of the trees, and every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." (NET)

These verses reveal a piece of the puzzle crucial to understanding John's concept of repentance. In verse 8, John commands his hearers to ποιήσατε ο□ν καρπο□ς □ξίους τ□ς μετανοίας (produce fruit that proves your repentance). So it seems that John is indicating that repentance should produce works. If such is the case, it would greatly aid the case of Lordship proponents who argue that true repentance must include a change of

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[64] Ibid.

[65] See below for further discussion on □ξίους τ□ς μετανοίας and its significance in that passage.

life. But there is an enormous difference between John meaning that repentance should produce works and that repentance must produce works. There is some debate on this very issue.

Some scholars, such as Bing, have argued that "'Fruits worthy of repentance' can only speak of the results of the inner attitude of repentance and not define repentance itself".[66] Though, Roy Zuck wrote that one could not repent without producing fruit "Deeds are the natural, expected product of genuine repentance."[67] Tanehill writes that "The references to 'fruits' and 'deeds' make clear that this is an ethically transforming event, one that results in change behavior."[68]

At first, Bing's point of view seems legitimate. It makes sense to argue that the "fruits worthy of repentance" are simply the result of a true change of mind. However, if one considers this statement in a wider context, it becomes clear that Bing's perspective has a serious problem. In 3:9 John the Baptist says that "every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire." It seems as though John is saying that good fruits *must* be evident if one is to escape judgment: "An ax is ready to cut down trees that do not bear good fruit so they can be burned. Likewise, judgment was near anyone who did not evidence (produce good fruit) a genuine repentance."[69] If fruits worthy of repentance do not define repentance, then John is suggesting that something more than repentance is necessary for salvation. It would be repentance plus good works

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[66] Charles C. Bing, "Lordship Salvation: A Biblical Response," (Dallas: Dallas Theological Seminary, 1997), 79.

[67] Bock, *A Theology of Luke-Acts,* 131.

[68] Tannehill, "Repentance in the Context of Lukan Soteriology," 87.

[69] John A. Martin, *Luke* The Bible Knowledge Commentary, ed. John F. Walvoord, Roy B. Zuck and Dallas Theological Seminary. (Wheaton: Victor, 1985), 2:211.

that equals salvation. Other Free Grace scholars have taken a different approach in hopes to avoid this conclusion. Wilkin argues that John's call to repentance was for temporal salvation only.[70] Wilkin's view seems counter-intuitive to the fact that "the nearest analogies to the baptism of John are the baptisms of official Judaism, and especially proselyte baptism. John's baptism, like that of proselytes, is once and for all."[71] However, he is uncomfortable with his conclusion and adds: "I feel that this is a topic which needs much additional attention. Hopefully someone from the Free Grace Salvation perspective will soon write a thesis, or better yet a dissertation, on John the Baptist's preaching."[72]

Those from the Lordship perspective have a more ready answer and it is as follows:

> Genuine saving faith changes behavior, transforms thinking, and puts within a person a new heart… Implicit in that change of heart is a new set of desires – a desire to please God, to obey, and to reflect his righteousness. If such a change does not occur, there is no reason to think genuine salvation has taken place. If, as in the case of Zaccheus, there is evidence of faith that desires to obey, that is the mark of a true son of Abraham.[73]

MacArthur's point of view works best in this context. For example, John the Baptist's call to fruits worthy of repentance are outlined in verses 3:10-14.[74] The reason that those who do not produce good fruits will be "cut down and thrown in the fire" (Luke 3:9) is

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[70] Robert N. Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts," *Journal of the Grace Evangelical Society* (1990): 23.

[71] Albrech Oepke. "Βαπτίζω." In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gehard Friedrich. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 1:537.

[72] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts," 23.

[73] MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus,* 103.

[74] Tannehill, "Repentance in the Context of Lukan Soteriology," 87.

because they have not experienced saving faith – saving faith obtained by repentance and which produces verifiable results.

Thus there are at least two implications about μετανοέω that can be made from these references on John's baptism. First is that genuine repentance will produce fruit. It must or else suffer judgment. The second implication follows from the first. If one does not repent, they will not receive salvation, but be "thrown in the fire" (Luke 3:9). So these verses favor a Lordship interpretation.

Luke 5:32.

Luke uses μετάνοια as the object of a preposition only once. That occurrence is in Luke 5:32 and is credited to Jesus. Just after the call of Levi, Levi had threw a banquet in honor of Jesus to which many sinners and tax collectors came. In verse 30 the Pharisees issued a complaint against Jesus that he should not be eating and drinking with sinners. In response, Jesus said, ο□κ □λήλυθα καλέσαι δικαίους □λλ□ □μαρτωλο□ς ε□ς μετάνοιαν (I surely have not come to call the righteous, but sinners unto repentance). John MacArthur writes the following concerning this verse: "This is the theme of the gospel according to Jesus: He came to call sinners to repentance… until they feel the weight of sin and long to be rid of it, the Lord will not give them salvation."[75] This commission statement by Jesus is found in both Matthew and Mark, but only Luke adds in the phrase about repentance, showing the Lukan emphasis on this particular concept. Once again, there is debate as to what the meaning of repentance in this verse entails. What is clear, however, is that "Jesus himself acknowledges repentance as the expected result of his ministry"[76] This is evident from the context as well as from the grammar that

[75] MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus,* 72.

Jesus used. He employed a "consecutive and final ε□ς" which "denotes the direction of an action to a specific end."[77]

The area of dispute is over the precise meaning of repentance in this context. Hodges, who does not believe repentance to be necessary for salvation, argues that 5:32 is representative of what repentance really means – restoration of fellowship of believers with God.[78] His view centers on the immediate context involving Levi. Levi was already a follower of Jesus Christ, how then could Jesus call him to repentance that leads to salvation? The only kind of repentance Jesus could call Levi to at this point is the kind that leads to the restoration of fellowship. But there is no reason to think that the other "sinners and tax collectors" at the banquet were saved. Also, there is no reason to so narrowly limit the context to only a few verses. For example, Luke seems to be setting Jesus' statements in verse 31, which are about the healthy not needing a physician, against the healing of the leper and paralytic earlier in chapter five.

Bing argues the following:

> The emphasis of this text lies not on [turning from] sins in general, but on attitudes… Thus only sinners, or those who realize their need of righteousness are ready to change their minds about Christ's offer of forgiveness. Repentance, then, is spoken of in terms of one's thinking about himself and the need for Christ's salvation.[79]

This interpretation is a better choice than Hodges'. It also seems to fit the context. Although, there is another view which is more appealing.

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[76] Mendez-Montalla, *Paradigm of Conversion of Luke,* 189.

[77] Albrech Oepke, "E□ς." In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gehard Friedrich. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 2:429.

[78] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 149.

[79] Bing, "Lordship Salvation," 69-70.

The call of Levi could be said to be paradigmatic for Jesus' mission statement in verse 32. Luke portrays Levi as abandoning everything to follow Christ. If Levi's call and response is to be the example of repentance, it is a powerful one. Repentance would be a radical life change.

A perquisite of repentance in this context is recognition of one's own sinfulness. Also, given the close association with the call of Levi, repentance is also shown to include obedience to Christ. Lastly, μετανοέω is used a summary statement in Luke 5:32 to describe the mission of Jesus. Thus, Luke 5:32 favors a Lordship interpretation.

Luke 11:32.

Luke 11:32 makes reference to the ministry of Jonah. Here Jesus says that the men of Nineveh repented (μετανοέω) when Jonah preached to them. In Jonah 3:10[80] the NET reads as follows: "When God saw their deeds, that they turned from their wicked way, then God relented…" It was because of their deeds that God did not judge Nineveh. These deeds are further described in the preceding verse. In Jonah 3:8 the king of Nineveh declares: "everyone must turn from their evil way of living and from the violence that they do (NET)." It was not because of a change of mind only that God relented. It was a change of mind evidenced by works. Since Jesus is using the example of the repentance of the people of Nineveh as the kind of repentance that the Jews should demonstrate[81], this strongly suggests that Jesus did not have "change of mind" in view, but a turn from wickedness. Jesus also says that if the Jews did not repent, they would be

[80] The LXX uses two different words for turn in this verse. The first is πέστρεψαν which is used to describe the turning of the people from God. The second is μετανοέω which is describes God "changing his mind" about destroying the Ninevites. The fact that Jesus seems to use this verse as the background to his statement in Luke 11:32 suggests that perhaps μετανοέω in Luke-Acts does not just mean "change of mind" as it once did.

[81] Trites, *Luke,* 182.

condemned thus making repentance necessary for salvation. Therefore, repentance in this context should be taken as favoring a Lordship interpretation.

Luke 13:3, 5.

There are two uses μετανοέω as a present subjunctive in Luke-Acts and both occur in the same context. These two occurrences are in Luke 13:3-5 and are as follows:

> No, I tell you! But unless you repent you will all perish as well! Or those eighteen who were killed when the tower in Siloam fell on them, do you think they were worse offenders than all the others who live in Jerusalem? No, I tell you! But unless you repent you will all perish as well!" (NET)

Both times repent is used here it is in a third class conditional construction which indicates that repentance had not yet occurred, but was still possible.[82] Hodges points out that this repentance is in reference to national salvation.[83] In 13:3 and 13:5, the threat is imminent – all need to repent now or face physical death like those died when the tower of Siloam fell on them.[84] It is clear that this narrative is talking about Israel as nation because it is "connected with the preceding discourse of Jesus. He had asked them whether they could not discern the signs of the terrible national storm that was nearing."[85] The subsequent parable in verses 6-9 also suggests that the repentance in view is national and not necessarily personal. This parable also reveals what Jesus meant by repentance in this context. In the parable, a man tells his worker to cut down a tree because it does not bear fruit. Marshall comments:

> The situation of the nation was like that of a tree that produced no fruit. It was fit only for destruction, and the ground which it occupied could then be used for a

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[82]Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, S. Lk 13:3.

[83] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 160.

[84] Bock, *Luke,* 1207.

[85]Alfred Edersheim, *The Life and Times of Jesus the Messiah* (Bellingham, WA: Logos Research Systems, 1896, 2003), S. 2:221.

> healthy tree. But just as the owner was prepared to feed it and give it another chance, so God was prepared to allow Israel an opportunity for repentance. If the people failed to respond, their fate would be their own responsibility.[86]

While this may be a reference to national repentance and not personal repentance, it is obvious that the way to achieve national repentance is through personal repentance. That being the case, these verses can make valid contributions to the Free Grace/Lordship controversy.

Repentance in this context must be evidenced by the production of fruit. Further, it also shown to be necessary for salvation. Without repentance evidenced by fruit, Israel would be destroyed. So Luke 13:3 and 5 fit better with a Lordship perspective.

Luke 15:7, 10.

There are only two examples of μετανοέω used as a participle in Luke-Acts and they are both found in Luke 15, but each is in a different parable. The first parable is about shepherd finding a lost sheep. The second parable is about one finding a lost coin. They both have similar endings with a conclusion by Jesus about the joy in heaven over the repentance of one sinner. The shepherd parable adds an additional phrase about those who are not in need of repentance. From the context, it appears that Jesus is using μετανοέω as a euphemism for conversion. This would imply that repentance is necessary for salvation. Jesus does not define the meaning of repentance in the parables, but immediately before he gives these two parables, he has given one of his most difficult teachings. In Luke 14:25-27 Jesus says the following:

> Now large crowds were accompanying Jesus, and turning to them he said, "If anyone comes to me and does not hate his own father and mother, and wife and children, and brothers and sisters, and even his own life, he cannot be my disciple.

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[86] I. Howard Marshall, *Luke* New Bible Commentary, ed. D. A. Carson. (Downers Grove: Inter-Varsity, 1994), Lk 13:1.

> Whoever does not carry his own cross and follow me cannot be my disciple. (NET)

Just before he tells these two parables, Jesus indicates that there is a great cost to following him. Following this, he then tells the parable of the Prodigal Son which is clearly a parable about conversion.[87] So then what is Jesus saying about repentance in this context?

Jesus is teaching two things about repentance. First that repentance is necessary for salvation – so necessary that in Luke 15:7 and 10 he uses repentance as a synonym for conversion. Secondly, his connection of repentance to salvation and his teaching on becoming his disciple in chapter 14, imply that repentance is more than a change of mind. Repentance is a call to action; a call to take up one's cross and follow Jesus. Since repentance is both necessary for salvation and a call to obedience, these verses are in favor of a Lordship interpretation.

Luke 16:30.

Luke 16:30 gives the only example in Luke-Acts of μετανοέω used in the future tense. It is found within a parable told by Jesus and is actually spoken from the voice of a rich man cursed to Hades. The parable tells the story of two men. The first was a beggar who died and went to Abraham's bosom. The other man is a rich man who died and went to Hades. The rich man begs Abraham to send someone from the dead to his brothers to warn them. He pleads, "but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent (μετανοέω) (NET)." Abraham replies by saying, "If they do not respond to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead."

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[87] Trites, *Luke,* 221 .

Some Free Grace advocates see this as an example of repentance being only a change of mind.[88] But the strongest argument against this perspective is that Abraham gives the reason for the rich man's punishment in verse 31. It was because he did not respond to Moses and the Prophets. The word translated "respond" is κούω (hear). The NET translators have correctly noted that, especially in this context, "hear" should be viewed in light of its Old Testament counterpart, where "hearing" calls for obedience.[89] Thus in this parable, Jesus is equating repentance with obedience. It was lack of response – not belief – that sent the rich man to Hades.

That repentance is both necessary for salvation and requires a response are two of the significant contributions that this verse makes to the Free Grace and Lordship controversy. This verse favors a Lordship interpretation.

Luke 17:3, 4.

Jesus' teaching on forgiving one's brother in Luke 17 has already been discussed above with the significance of its unique use πιστρέφομαι. But this account also contains the verb μετανοέω. Bock says that this is important as it shows that

> The picture of repentance uses two ideas together: turning and repentance. The sinner takes the initiative in admitting error and requesting pardon for the action. The combination may be significant, since a "forced" request might not be genuine.[90]

The question of what repentance means in this context still remains. Many argue that Luke 17:3 represents one of the most likely occasions that μετανοέω is used in the

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[88] Bing, "Lordship Salvation," 72.

[89] Footnote, *The NET Bible,* Lk 16:31.

[90] Bock, *Luke,* 1389.

popular Greek sense, that is, it speaks of "regret for a fault against one's brother."[91] Mendez-Moratalla also gives this example as an occurrence of repentance meaning change of mind or sorrow.[92] Wilkin agrees as well: "Jesus taught the disciples that they were to forgive all who sinned against them if they came and indicated that they had changed their minds."[93] Indeed, this seems to be the best interpretation in light of the context. Though this narrative follows the account of the rich man and Lazarus which was argued above to be a reference to repentance as a change of life, the immediate context overrules. The fact that the brother in sin is pictured as "sinning seven times in a day" makes it difficult to argue that the brother in sin had experienced a "life change". Rather it is more likely that he simply regretted his actions. This interpretation would be consistent with the Free Grace point of view. However, it has some limitations that need to be considered. First, it is speaking only of a horizontal action of one man to another. Second, there is no reason that this must be taken as only referring to regret. It could still refer to more than remorse or a change of mind, but the context does not necessarily support that conclusion. Finally, since this is a non-salvific context, meaning that even if it could be confidently shown that this instance refers to a change of mind only, it would not reveal what Luke meant by μετανοέω is salvific contexts.

Luke 24:47.

This particular instance is of unusual importance as it is given in Luke's version of the Great Commission. There are two main views on the meaning of repentance in

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[91]Behm, "Μετανοέω," 4:999.

[92] Mendez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke,* 17.

[93] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 3: New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations," 18.

Luke 24:47. It is worth mentioning Hodges view here, but it does not seem particularly popular. Hodges again takes repentance to be a reference only to a restoration of fellowship after salvation. He argues that this is evidenced by the connection of table fellowship immediately after Luke mentions repentance.[94] This interpretation is rather forced. The most natural reading of Luke 24:47 tends to persuade the reader that the repentance in view is the repentance unto salvation. In fact, μετάνοιαν is connected directly to ε□ς □φεσιν (unto the forgiveness of sins).

The first main view is that of the Free Grace proponents. Ryrie summarized his view this way: "Luke's rendering of the Great Commission uses repentance in the same sense as believing in Christ."[95] This argument is based on the idea that "repent" means a change of mind. But there are several who disagree with this assumption.

One of the primary objections to Ryrie's view is that Jesus explicitly connects his commissioning to fulfillment of Old Testament prophecies (Luke 24:44). Others have picked up on this, and they represent the second main view. Bock, for example, does not take Ryrie's perspective. Instead, he argues, "Because repentance is rooted in the OT, it involves 'turning' not just 'agreeing' The link with the Old Testament in verse 44 makes the idea that repentance in this context is connected to the Hebrew שוּב (turn), which cannot be mistaken as only a change of mind. For Luke, repentance in 24:47 represents a summary term for the response to the apostolic message.[96] Bock sees such a connection to Old Testament that he suggests that Luke 24:47 is a possible Semitism.[97] Along those

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[94] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 161.

[95] Ryrie, *So Great Salvation,* 97.

[96] Bock, *Luke,* 1939.

[97] Ibid.

same lines Zuck writes: "That the Hebrew sense of the term is primary is clear from Luke 24:44–47, where the message of repentance is seen as fulfilling Old Testament promise that such a message would be preached to all the nations."[98]

From this context, repentance denotes obedience to God because of its close connection with Hebrew concept of turning. That Luke uses μετανοέω as a summary statement for the gospel reveals its necessity for salvation. Once again, the evidence appears in favor of a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 2:38.

This is the first time that Luke uses "repent" in his second volume. It comes at the end of a dramatic narrative. The Holy Spirit had just descended onto the believers in Jerusalem. The onlookers there for Pentecost accused the Christians of being drunk (2:13), but Peter responded with his powerful Pentecost Sermon. In his sermon, Peter proves to the Jews that Jesus was indeed their Messiah and that they had crucified them. The effect on the Jews was incredible – they felt as if they were "stabbed in the heart" (2:37). The rendering "stabbed in the heart" comes from the word κατενύγησαν, which is only used here in the entire New Testament. It shows the exceeding remorse of those who realized their responsibility in Christ's death. In light of their remorse, the people asked Peter what they should do. Peter's response was two different imperatives: μετανοήσατε, [φησίν,] κα□ βαπτισθήτω (repent and be baptized) (Acts 2:38).

But before one can get to the heart of what Peter meant by "repent" in this case, there is a dilemma that first must be dealt with. That dilemma centers around how the second imperative, be baptized, is used. There are a few peculiarities that cause it to call

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[98] See Bock, Darrell L. *A Theology of Luke-Acts* A Biblical Theology of the New Testament, ed. Roy B. Zuck. (Chicago: Moody, 1994),130.

attention to itself. First, it is singular in number while "Μετανοήσατε" is plural. Scholars have suggested that there are three different possibilities on how to take Peter's command.[99]

First, a view held only by a minority, is that Peter meant that salvation was achieved only by both repentance and baptism.[100] Fitzmyer writes "Implied in the present context is remission of sins by baptism and that one is enabled thereby to call upon then name of the Lord and so find salvation."[101] However, in light of other scripture and the unique grammar (μετανοέω is plural while βαπτίζομαι is singular), this possibility is unlikely. Thus the command to be baptized should not be considered as necessary step in the salvation process.

The second possibility is that βαπτισθήτω □καστος □μ□ν □π□ τ□ □νόματι □ησο□ Χριστο□ ε□ς □φεσιν τ□ν □μαρτι□ν □μ□ν (each of you be baptized upon the name of Jesus unto the forgiveness of your sins) may contain a special use of the preposition ε□ς and would thus be translated as follows: "be baptized, each one of you, on the name of Jesus Christ, on the basis of the forgiveness of your sins."[102] Now, while this may be a possible rendering, it is unlikely because it would be a relatively rare use of ε□ς or as Barrett put it as follows: "We should probably be right in thinking that for Luke the preposition was relatively unimportant."[103] Also, it still has not resolved the difficulty

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[99] Footnote, *The NET Bible,* Ac. 2:38.

[100] See Robert Toole, *The Unity of Luke's Theology: Analysis of Luke-Acts* (Wilmington, DE: Michael Glaizer, 1984), 51.

[101] Joesph A. Fitzmyer, *The Acts of the Apostles*. (New York: Doubeday,1997), 265.

[102] Toussaint gives this as a possibility, but does not take this position. See Toussaint, *Acts,* Ac 2:38.

[103] See Barrett, *Acts,* 154.

of why Peter used the two imperatives with two different numbers – both singular and plural.

The final and best possibility is that Peter meant the βαπτισθήτω phrase parenthetically, which would read: "Repent (and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ) so that your sins may be forgiven."[104] This view best explains the third person singular use of βαπτισθήτω since agrees with □καστος in number. Larkin agrees: "Peter made a general call for repentance, followed by a parenthetic, individualized instruction to be baptized."[105]

An argument from syntax also favors this rendering. The construction of the grammar of Peter's statement is second person imperative +conjunction + third person imperative. One of the few other places in the New Testament where the second person imperative + conjunction + third person imperative occur is in Luke's Gospel. And since Luke also wrote Acts, that only adds to the relevance of this argument. This construction can be found in Luke 11:41 from the voice of Jesus: πλ□ν τ□ □νόντα δότε □λεημοσύνην, κα□ □δο□ πάντα καθαρ□ □μ□ν □στιν (but all of you give charity from within and behold, all things are clean to you).

The first imperative (give charity) is clearly distinct from the second (behold). At the same time, the second is an action (beholding) that can only be done by those who have given charity and only as a result of giving charity. It is clear that giving charity is not a parallel to beholding. On this basis the first possibility, that repentance and baptism are parallel actions, is ruled out. The second option in Acts 2:38, that Peter is using a

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[104] Toussaint, *Acts,* Ac 2:38.

[105] Larkin, *Acts,* 396.

special use of ε□ς, is not a possibility since Luke does not use ε□ς in this context. The fact that a special use of ε□ς is not needed to make the grammar in Luke 11:41work weakens the probability that Luke is using ε□ς in an unusual way in Acts 2:38. Further, it is possible to take the second imperative, "behold," as parenthetical here as well. Doing so, the translation would be rendered "but give (and behold) all things are clean for you," the point being that the action of beholding does not make all things clean, but giving charity from within makes all things clean. In the case of Luke 11:41, Jesus' command to give is not to be equated with his second command to behold. Those receiving the command to give can only behold the results of their giving once they have, in fact, gave. So, while this does not solidly prove that Peter did not mean to equate baptism and repentance together, it does suggest a usage that sees the two actions as separate. The first action, "repent," is to be completed so that the second command, "be baptized", may be observed as a result of the repenting. This concept confirms the idea that Peter meant his command to be baptized parenthetically.

Now, the content of the concept of μετανοέω in the context is free to be analyzed. With the command βαπτισθήτω □καστος □μ□ν □π□ τ□ □νόματι □ησο□ Χριστο□ (be baptized, every one of you, upon the name of Jesus Christ) contained in a parenthetical statement, μετανοέω then becomes directly connected with ε□ς □φεσιν τ□ν □μαρτι□ν □μ□ν κα□ λήμψεσθε τ□ν δωρε□ν το□ □γίου πνεύματος (unto the forgiveness of your sins and you will secure the gift of the Holy Spirit). This indicates two results of repentance. First is the forgiveness of sins. Second is the reception of the Holy Spirit.

Both of these results are only achieved in salvation, thus Peter is clearly stating that repentance is necessary for salvation.[106]

But when Peter commanded the Jews to repent did he mean a change of mind only, or something else? According to Ryrie, this is the clearest example in all Scripture that μετανοέω means only a change of mind.[107] Wikin argues that "in this use repentance occurs as a virtual synonym for faith"[108] Certainly a good case for this view can be made from the context. The content and purpose of Peter's sermon concerns the fact that "The Jews had rejected Jesus; now they were to trust in Him."[109] They change in view was surely a cognitive one. Still, that does not rule out the possibility that μετανοέω here includes the concept of lifestyle change as well.

In favor of this possibility is that very last line of Peter's sermon which is found in verse 2:36: "Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified (NASU)." The "you" here is emphatic; "whom you yourselves crucified." It is also worth noting that Peter calls Jesus both Lord and Christ. He goes out of his way to indicate that Jesus had the position and title of Lord, thus implying that one must acknowledge him as such. From this statement, Peter seems to be saying "You sinned. You crucified our Lord. Now, stop sinning and accept Christ as both your Lord and Messiah."

So there are number of conclusions about μετανοέω to be made from Acts 2:38. First is that μετανοέω is strongly presented as necessary for salvation, thus contradicting

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[106] Marshall, *Acts,* 80.

[107] Ryrie, *So Great Salvation, 95-96.*

[108] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 3: New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations," 18.

[109]Toussaint, *Acts,*. 2:359.

Hodges' version of the Free Grace view. Second, the context suggests that μετανοέω "indicates a change of direction in a person's life rather than a simple mental change."[110] Though there is an emphasis on changing one's mind about Christ in Acts 2:38, it is unlikely that is all Peter had in mind. Third, μετανοέω's close connection to baptism shows that true repentance will be demonstrated by a response.[111] Repentance should be evidenced by works to considered true repentance. Finally, it at their realization of their sin of crucifying their own Messiah that the Jews realized their need for repentance (Acts 2:37). This argues that recognition of one's sin is a perquisite for repentance. In light of these conclusions, Acts 2:38 is more consistent with a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 3:19.

Acts 3:19 gives the next example of μετανοέω used as an imperative. This time, like the last, the word comes from the voice of Peter. Also, paralleling Acts 2:38, Peter uses a pair of imperatives joined by a conjunction, "repent and turn." However, unlike last time, there is nothing unusual about this pair of imperatives as both agree in number, tense, as well as person. Normally, these two imperatives used together have brought commentators to the conclusion that the change Peter was asking of his audience was "not just a matter of turning form sin (μετανοέω), but of turning to God. This turning involves moving from rejecting to accepting Jesus."[112] Polhill writes the following:

> The Jerusalem Jews were to have a complete change of mind, turning from their rejection of Christ and turning, or "returning," to God. In rejecting God's Messiah they had rejected God's purpose for them. Accepting the Messiah would thus be a return to God.[113]

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[110] Marshall, *Acts,* 80.

[111] Ibid.

[112] Witherington, *Acts,* 184.

[113] Polhil, *Acts,* 134.

Now, one important question that must be answered before any attempt to apply this reference to the Lordship-Free Grace discussion is whether or not Peter was speaking of personal salvation or national salvation. Some have suggested: "Peter was not describing individual salvation here so much as the blessing that would come to the nation if they would but repent and believe."[114] Some of what Peter says does suggest that he has a national view in mind, for example, he invokes the Abraham covenant in verse 25. But perhaps the strongest piece of evidence in favor of the national view is that Peter connects repentance with "times of refreshing".

The "times of refreshing" refers to that long period of repose, prosperity and joy, which all the prophets hold forth to the distracted Church and this miserable world, as eventually to come, and which is here, as in all the prophets, made to turn upon the national conversion of Israel."[115] So if Peter is suggesting that repentance will bring in the Messianic age, he must be referring to a national repentance. Still, there is another possibility. Perhaps Peter means to show that "Israel's repentance was to have had two purposes: (1) for individual Israelites there was forgiveness of sins, and (2) for Israel as a nation her Messiah would return to reign.'[116] As Barrett points out, the way to national repentance would be through individual repentance.[117] This view seems most acceptable.

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[114]Warren W Wiersbe, *Wiersbe's Expository Outlines on the New Testament* (Wheaton, Ill.: Victor Books, 1997, c1992), S. 284.

[115] David Brown, *The Acts of the Apostles* A Commentary, Critical and Explanatory, on the Old and New Testaments, ed. Robert Jamieson, A. R. Fausset and David Brown. (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997), Ac 3:19.

[116]Toussaint, *Acts,* 2:362.

[117] Barrett, *Acts,* 203.

Having established that Peter's statement about repentance in verse 19 does refer to individuals, an attempt to understand further what he meant by "repentance" in this context be made. A couple of observations can be readily made. First, repentance is once again connected with the forgiveness of sins. Again, the preposition ε□ς is what connects μετανοέω to the phrase about the forgiveness of sins. As discussed above, it is best to take this ε□ς as indicating purpose and not means. If repentance is for the forgiveness of sins, then it is necessary for salvation.

What is especially relevant to the Lordship-Free Grace debate is the connection of μετανοέω and □πιστρέφομαι, which are connected by conjunction κα□ .Some have suggested the possibility that κα□ is epexegetical thus making □πιστρέφομαι a term that explains μετανοέω, "Therefore repent (that is turn back)." However, that view does not fit with the normal paradigm of epexegetical conjunctions.[118] So if these two imperatives are not related epxegetically, then how are they related? They form a more cohesive thought than the previous example in Acts 2:38. Here both verbs agree in number (plural), tense (aorist), voice (imperative), and person (second), so there is no reason to take one parenthetically as was the case in Acts 2:38.

One way to learn how □πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω are interacting in Acts 3:19 is by examining other places in the New Testament where similar syntax occurs. A search for second person imperative + postpositive ο□ν + κα□ + second person imperative constructions revealed five results: Acts 3:19, 10:32, 1 Peter 4:7, Revelation 2:5, 3:19. It could be argued that in each one of these examples the first imperative indicates a state that must be achieved before the second imperative may be completed. The other reference in Acts is especially relevant. In Acts 10:32 the text reads: πέμψον ο□ν ε□ς

[118] Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics,* 678.

□όππην κα□ μετακάλεσαι Σίμωνα (Therefore, send to Joppa and summon Simon). In this case, one must first send to Joppa before summoning Simon. It would be impossible to summon Simon without first sending someone to get him. One more example may prove helpful in deciding whether this syntactical relationship is a valid one. Revelation 2:5 reads: μνημόνευε ο□ν πόθεν πέπτωκας κα□ μετανόησον (Therefore remember from where you have fallen and repent). Jesus is speaking here to the church at Ephesus. He told the church to first remember their past achievements, then, as a result of their remembering, repent. The other examples follow the same idea. This perspective is somewhat similar that of Bing's as well as Wilkin's[119]:

> The internal and mental aspect of repentance is emphasized by Peter's mention of ignorance (v. 17) There is no indication of necessary external actions such as the forsaking of sins. In fact, Peter's second command, 'be converted' (v. 19 from □πιστρέφομαι), distinguishes the logical outward result of the inner attitude.[120]
>
> The word "turn" is used similarly in Acts. In 3:19, turning is associated with repentance: "Repent, then, and turn to God." Forgiveness is the result. This verse points up a slight difference between repentance and turning. Repentance is the change of perspective and turning follows[121]

So while it is not conclusive that this construction indicates that the first imperative must be completed as a basis for the second imperative; one might say that at least most of the time that is the case. Therefore, in Acts 3:19, μετανοήσατε (repent) is likely a command that must be completed before □πιστρέψατε (turn) can also be completed.

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[119] Those authors take the two imperatives as two separate actions, the first as basis for the second. However, *this* author does not necessarily agree with the meanings that these writers give to the words.

[120] Bing, "Lordship Salvation," 74.

[121] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts,"17.

The implications of the previous statement are not insignificant. It means that repentance is necessary for conversion which would contradict Hodges.[122] It would also contradict Wilkin who argues that repentance is used here as synonym for believing in Christ.[123] What these findings imply is that there are two different kinds of turning required before one can experience the forgiveness of sins as well as the times of refreshing which are both mentioned in verses 19 and 20. First, one must repent (μετανοέω) and then turn (πιστρέφομαι); repentance most probably meaning "stop sinning" and turning meaning "turn to God."

Determining the individual meanings of μετανοέω and πιστρέφομαι from this context is exceedingly difficult. The difficulty arises from the fact that though πιστρέφομαι μετανοέω are separate actions, Peter does not distinguish between them. Still, they can be analyzed as a unit. Peter portrays both as necessary for salvation. He also tells his audience the result of completing these two actions. He quotes the Old Testament and identifies Jesus with the prophet mentioned in Deuteronomy 18:15 which states that every person is to obey that prophet or be destroyed. So, obedience, or lordship, in this context, was a necessary component. Also, in verse 26 Peter uses a different word for turn, ποστρέφομαι, and explains that one of the blessings that Christ brings is turning from sins. Thus turning is a gift from God. Though the individual meanings of μετανοέω and πιστρέφομαι cannot be determined here, there is still a good case that Peter believed that saving faith involved much more than a change of mind alone and had in mind something more closely resembling the Lordship point of view.

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[122] See Hodges, *Absolutely Free.*

[123] See Wilkin ,"Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts," 17.

Acts 8:22.

Acts 8:4-25 tells the story of the gospel being preached in Samaria. The story begins with Philip preaching and performing miracles in the region of Samaria. During Philip's missionary journey, he stopped at the main city in Samaria. In the main city, there was a magician named Simon who believed Philip's message and began to follow Philip.

In Acts 8:13, Luke tells his readers that Simon the Magician believed and was baptized. Normally, one would take this to mean that Simon was saved. Some have said that Simon was saved despite the glaring problems within his character.[124] Others have argued it this way:

> Luke left no doubt as to Simon's spiritual condition. In Acts 8:13 he explicitly indicates that Simon came to faith in Christ and testified to his faith by water baptism, just as many other Samaritans had (v.12). the forgiveness spoken of by Peter in v. 22 thus refers to forgiveness of a believer – not salvific forgiveness.[125]

However, there is some debate concerning whether or not Simon was truly converted at this point. One can see the tremendous implications that Simon's position with God would have on the discussion at hand. So was Simon converted or not? At first glance, the answer seems obvious: Luke said that he believed and was baptized so he must have been saved.

However, upon closer examination, one can see details that suggest that Simon Magnus was not saved. Walvoord gives seven reasons that suggest he was not:

(1) The verb "believe" (πιστεύω) does not always refer to saving faith. Simon's faith could have been like that of the demons in James 2:19, merely intellectual assent.

(2) Furthermore, faith based on signs is not a trustworthy faith (cf. John 2:23-25;

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[124] Bing, "Lordship Salvation," 120.

[125] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts,"19.

4:48).

(3) In addition, Luke never stated that Simon received the Holy Spirit (Acts 8:17-18).

(4) Simon continued to have a self-centered interest in the display of miraculous power (vv.18-19).

(5) The verb "repent" (μετανοέω) used in verse 22 is normally addressed to lost people.

(6) The word "perish" (εἰς πώλειαν) employed in verse 20 is strong. It is related
to the word "perish" in John 3:16.

(7) The description of Simon in Acts 8:23 is a better description of a lost man than of one who is saved (cf. Deut. 29:18). Still one cannot be dogmatic on this point. The Lord knows those who are His (2 Tim. 2:19).[126]

Peter's rebuke of Simon is the strongest argument against a saved Simon. Marshall concludes that Peter's rebuke ought to read: "To hell with you and your money… That is exactly what the Greek says."[127] Barrett agrees and adds that this use of μετανοέω represents a Semitism and should be translated "turn."[128] So there are some good reasons to doubt that Simon had experienced a genuine conversion. But still another reason could be added to the list given above. The second half of verse 13 says that Simon stayed close to Phillip at all times and that he was amazed whenever Phillip would do miracles - Simon was not converted, but simply mesmerized by Phillip.[129] In other words, "Simon had not responded to the Gospel; he had responded to greed. He lacked the contrition and inner conviction that accompany a true response to the gospel."[130] In truth, Simon was

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[126]Toussaint, *Acts*, 2:373.

[127] Marshall, *Acts,* 159.

[128] C. K. Barret, *Acts*, 415.

[129] Stott, *The Message of Acts,* 149.

following someone, only that someone was not Christ, but Philip. The word translated "continued on" in verse 13 in the NASB is προσκαρτερέω and suggests further that Simon was enamored with Philip and not Jesus Christ whom Philip preached.[131] The argument from church history does not support the conversion of Simon either, as one commentator points out: "Despite the apparently genuine request to Peter to pray that this wouldn't happen, Simon became known in later Christian tradition as the archetypal heretic and enemy of Christianity."[132] Larkin too describes Simon as "unregenerate."[133]

Taking the position that Simon Magnus was not a convert when Peter spoke to him in verse 22, it is now possible to analyze the concept of repentance that Peter is trying to convey. Interestingly enough, many of the same elements that are in the other two imperative examples are here as well (Acts 2:38, 3:19). For example, this imperative is also in the aorist tense as are the others. It is also connected with another imperative verb (δέομαι) as are the others. Though, it is not clear that these secondary imperatives all have the syntactical function.

One area that this instance that is unique is the severity of the threat that Peter gives to Simon. Some have classified Peter's command as a kind of conditional statement with the omitted apodosis, if the apodosis were added in, it would read something like the following: "If you repent and pray, then perhaps God will forgive your sins." [134]

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[130] Polhill, *Acts,* 220.

[131]Louw, *Lexicon of the New Testament,* 2:211.

[132]Gempf, *Acts*, Ac 8:4.

[133] Larkin, *Acts,* 451.

[134]Ernest De Witt Burton, *Syntax of the Moods and Tenses in New Testament Greek*. (Edinburg: T. & T. Clark, 1898), 111.

This points to Peter's disappointment in Simon. Whereas before others had asked him, "what must we do?" indicating a genuine desire to change, Peter is unsure that Simon even wants to change. Hence he says, "If you repent…" Peter further increases the severity of his command to Simon with the phrase ε□ □ρα □φεθήσεταί, which is "a conditional statement mixed with a final construction…. [This] indicates a possible, but far from certain condition."[135] It might be translated: "'in the hope that perhaps God would forgive your sins."[136] In essence Peter was saying, "If you repent (because I am not sure you will) and you pray, then maybe (but only maybe) God will forgive you of your sins". So, at least in this context, repentance is necessary if forgiveness is to be even a possibility.

The other question at hand is whether Peter meant μετανοέω as a "change of mind" or "change of life". Luckily there are clues in this context as to what Peter probably meant. It is absolutely clear that Peter at least had a change of mind in view. In verse 20 Peter explains that part of Simon's sin was thinking that he could acquire the Holy Spirit with money. This being the case, Peter certainly wanted Simon to have "a change of mind" about where the power of the Holy Spirit comes from.

But did Peter also mean for Simon to have a change of life as well? There are details in this account that suggest that is the case. For example, in verse 24 Peter outlines Simon's character as being both bitterly envious as well as in bondage to sin. The fact that Peter brings out flaws in Simon's character immediately after a call to repentance suggests that Peter meant for Simon to change those things about himself. If Peter meant

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[135] Witherington, *Acts,* 286.

[136] C. F. D. Moule, *An Idiom Book of New Testament Greek* (Cambridge: Cambridge University, 1959), 158.

for Simon to have a change of mind it would be more likely that he would have brought out Simon's wrong beliefs about Christ. Perhaps he would have said, "Simon, you have misunderstood who Jesus is. He is not some magician, but the Son of God. Realize this and your sins will be forgiven." While it is difficult to be dogmatic, Peter does seemingly suggest a change of lifestyle as well of beliefs.

So then there are several implications concerning μετανοέω to be made from this context. First, taking the position that Simon was not saved, it is evident that belief alone is not enough. Belief must be accompanied by appropriate response. That leads to the conclusion that μετανοέω in this context cannot mean change of mind only. It should include a change of life as well. Repentance is also shown to be necessary to salvation in Peter's rebuke of Simon. Peter tells Simon to repent in order that he might be saved. If one is genuinely converted they must demonstrate that change through works. Therefore, μετανοέω in Acts 8:22 is best considered in favor of the Lordship perspective.

Acts 11:18.

Acts 11:18 is a reference to the conversion of the Gentiles, of which Cornelius is the archetype.[137] While Acts 11:18 uses μετανοέω, the word repentance is noticeably absent from the narrative about Cornelius. It is even left of the description of John's Baptism in 10:37. This could present quite a problem for the Lordship proponents who argue that repentance is necessary for salvation. However, if looked from another perspective, this narrative may turn into a rather strong argument for the Lordship point of view.

Those holding the Lordship view normally would say that a change of life is necessary for salvation. However, there is no reason to think that Cornelius needed any

[137] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 162.

change in his ethics. In fact, it seems that Luke goes out of his way to describe the outstanding character of Cornelius. In 10:2 Cornelius is described as being a "God fearing man." In 10:22 he is again described as "a righteous and God-fearing man, well spoken of by the whole Jewish nation." When the angel visits Cornelius in verse 4, he speaks of Cornelius' acts of charity. So this man does not need to change his life morally speaking, but what he does need is to change his mind about who Christ is. In fact, that is the only change he needs to make. And what is missing from this narrative? Repentance is missing. If repentance were only a change of mind, why is that Peter did not tell Cornelius to repent? Of course this is an argument from silence, which can only be so strong.

Another possibility is that Cornelius was already saved – like the Old Testament saints were saved, but still did not know of the Gospel. If this is the case, one still has to ask why Peter did not ask Cornelius to repent for he still needed to change his mind about Christ.

Verse 10:43 also needs to be considered. This verse states: "that everyone who believes in him receives forgiveness of sins through his name (NET)." Repentance is not included in this invitation to salvation. At least not explicitly, but it is perhaps included implicitly. To be clear, Peter is not calling for repentance because his audience seems to be of unusually high character – perhaps all God-fears like Cornelius as is implied in verse 10:35. In other words, Peter does include the call to righteous living, but in this case that call was already being pursued by his audience, so he left it out of his invitation.

So with this in mind, what can be gleaned about repentance in Acts 11:18? For one, Acts 11:18 shows that repentance is given by God.[138] Also, the usage strongly suggests that repentance was a term that was used in a general way to describe conversion. Johnson argues that perhaps a better translation would be "God has granted the conversion (μετανοέω) that leads to life."[139] Such an interpretation shows the necessity of repentance to salvation. The implications for the Lordship and Free Grace debate are difficult to determine. If the argument above concerning the significance of the absence of μετάνοια in the narrative is accepted, than this instance of μετάνοια leans in favor of the Lordship view.

Acts 17:30.

The first time that μετανοέω is used as infinitive by Luke is in Acts 17:30. In Acts 17, Luke relays the account of Paul at Mars Hill. In Acts 17 Paul's preaching fell on the ears of two different kinds of philosophers. One kind was the Epicurean philosopher who "saw the aim of life as pleasure, they were not strictly hedonists, because they defined pleasure as the absence of pain." [140] The second kind was the Stoic who believed that "a man's happiness consisted in bringing himself into harmony with the course of the universe. They were trained to bear evils with indifference, and so to be independent of externals." [141] Paul stands on the Areopagus and proclaims in verses 29-31:

> So since we are God's offspring, we should not think the deity is like gold or silver or stone, an image made by human skill and imagination. Therefore, although God has overlooked such times of ignorance, he now commands all people everywhere to repent, because he has set a day on which he is going to

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[138] MacArthur, *Faith Works,* 25.

[139] Luke Timothy Johnson, *The Acts of the Apostles* Sacra Pagina, ed. Daniel J. Harrington. (Collegeville: Liturgical Press, 1992), 199.

[140]Footnote, *The NET Bible*, Ac 17:18.

[141]Ibid.

> judge the world in righteousness, by a man whom he designated, having provided proof to everyone by raising him from the dead (NET).

It was these philosophers who he called to repentance:

> "But because they have thought this way and have failed to recognize and worship God – who actually is not far from them – there follows Paul's call to his Athenian audience to repent. The immediate motivation for the repentance of this kind of sin is the coming judgment in righteousness through a divinely appointed judge."[142]

The call to repentance in light of certain judgment at the end of human history would have been "strange news" to both the Epicureans and the Stoics.[143]

One question that must be answered before dealing with the concept of repentance in this section is what Paul meant by "times of ignorance" in 17:30. Bock says that the times of ignorance which Paul refers to is similar to the era of Law for the Jews, but now new revelation had come and the Gentiles could not live in ignorance anymore.[144] So, in keeping with the Lordship versus Free Grace discussion, that brings out an important question: "Were the men of Athens to repent of ignorance and thus have a change of mind about Christ, or were they to repent in the sense that they were to stop sinning?" A brief look at the word translated "ignorance" may prove helpful.

The noun translated "ignorance" is γνοια, which is used only four times throughout the New Testament.[145] The first instance is in Acts 3:17. Here γνοια is given as the reason for the crucifixion of Jesus. Another example is in Ephesians 4:18 and is

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[142] Christoph Stenschke, "The Need for Salvation," in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 142.

[143] Larkin 458

[144] Darrell Bock, "Scripture and the Realisation of God" in *Witness to the Gospel: The Theology of Acts* ed. I. Howard Marshall and David Peterson (Grand Rapids, MI: Eerdmans Publishing, 1998), 46.

[145] These references are Acts 3:17, 17:30, Ephesians 4;18, 1 Peter 1:14, it is also occurs in some variant manuscripts in 1 Peter 2:13,15

relevant because it comes from Paul as does the occurrence in Acts 17:30. In Ephesians 4:18 γνοια is closely connected to "indecency" and "impurity". The last example is in 1 Peter 1:14 were Peter writes: "like obedient children, do not comply with the evil urges you used to follow in your ignorance (NET)." So while these few references certainly do not prove that γνοια is not simple "not knowing" but rather "sinning without knowing", they do at least suggest the possibility and perhaps the probability that γνοια implies sinfulness.

If such is the case so that one might render "time of ignorance" as "times of sinning without knowing" the call to repent would be a call to stop sinning in light of new revelation. If it is the case that γνοια should not be taken with a connation of sinful living, then this verse would agree with Free Grace concept of "change of mind." It would also be similar to Wilkin's argument: "Repentance in acts 17:29-31 is a 'transfer' of faith in idols to faith in God."[146] But Barrett disagrees. He argues instead that "here it is clear that repentance will mean in the first instance turning from the false gods with which Athens abounds. It is also true however that since the call is for repentance the defect of Greek religion is not simply intellectual but existential."[147]

A few observations about μετανοέω can be made from its use in Acts 17:30. It is shown to be necessary to escape judgment at the end of human history, and is therefore necessary of salvation. It is also used a summary statement for the response that God requires. Since the context shows that salvation is in view, it safe to say that this also suggest repentance is necessary for salvation. Still, the argument that Paul gives does not

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[146] Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 3: New Testament Repentance: Lexical Considerations," 19.

[147] Barrett 851

seem to be one designed to convict of sin, but rather one of persuasion, revealing Jesus Christ to those who have not known him. Paul even offers "proof" in verse 31. So, it seems like this reference is in favor of the Free Grace perspective – unless it can be established with more certainty that γνοια denotes sinfulness.

Acts 19:4.

In Acts 19 Paul encounters a group of believers who were baptized by John. Paul baptized them in the name of Jesus and they began to speak in tongues. On the surface, this story seems consistent with that of Wilkin who argues that the repentance John preached was only for temporary salvation. Pettigrew makes a convincing argument that this is not the case:

> The Ephesian disciples were rebaptized primarily for Christological and ecclesiological reasons. The story contains soteriological implications, of course, in that salvation under the new covenant has increased benefits… But baptism, as a symbol, identified these disciples with Christ and his church. Whereas previously they had identified with John's message of the coming messianic kingdom by John's water baptism, they were now being identified by Christian baptism with the church.[148]

He continues later:

> The Old Testament saints who had not known about John's preparatory ministry would, of course, have been baptized in Christian baptism after they accepted Christ as their Savior. Because they had not been baptized into John's baptism in the first place, they were not "rebaptized." Those who had received the baptism of John and had made no further progress in their understanding of God's kingdom salvation would have needed to be repbaptized in identification with Christ and the church when they believed in the Christian Gospel.[149]

Witherington argues a similar point of view: "verse 4 explains that John's baptism was

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[148] Larry D. Pettegrew, *The New Covenant Ministry of the Holy Spirit* (Grand Rapids, MI: Kregel Publications, 2001), 150.

[149] Ibid., 151.

preparatory, it was a baptism of repentance which itself was a form of preparation for what was to come thereafter."[150]

They were still considered Old Testament saints, and upon hearing the Gospel, needed to be rebaptized in order to identify themselves with Christ. Thus John's baptism, as well as Christ's, is not efficient for salvation, Instead they are symbols of something else. In the case of baptism in the name of Jesus, it represents entry in to and identification with the body of Christ. In the case of John's baptism, it is symbolic or expressive of repentance.[151] This further confirmed grammatically through the use of the preposition ε□ς with □φεσιν □μαρτι□ν (forgiveness of sins) in connection with John's baptism (cf. Mark 1:4; Luke 3:3).[152]

This account has some similarities to the Cornelius narrative. In both accounts Luke portrays characters who were probably saved as Old Testament saints, but once hearing about Jesus they were responsible for changing their minds about him. In both accounts Luke gives no reason that a moral turn from sin was needed, only the acceptance of Jesus as Messiah. That being the case, if repentance was a only a change of mind, Acts 19:4 would be a great place for Paul to call for repentance. He does not do so. Instead, he calls for belief in Jesus Christ.

The context of Acts 19:4 suggest continuity of the Lukan concept of μετανοέω from John to Paul. The kind of repentance John preached and the kind that Paul preached. The repentance John preached was to produce fruit or else face judgment (Luke 3:8-9).

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[150] Witherington, *The Acts of the Apostles,* 571.
[151]Toussaint, *Acts,* 2:210.

[152] J. R. Mantey, "The Causal Use of Eis in the New Testament," *Journal of Biblical Literature* 70, no. 1 (1951): 48.

Paul said in verse 4 that belief in Jesus Christ was the fulfillment of John's ministry. Thus repentance is a change of life as well as necessary for salvation. Acts 19: is in favor of a Lordship interpretation.

Acts 26:20.

In Acts 26:1-30, Luke relays the account of Paul as he stands on trial before King Agrippa. In this account Paul gives a formal defense of his preaching, arguing resurrection of Jesus was legitimate citing his own conversion as evidence. The reader first encounters □πιστρέφομαι in Acts 26:18 as Paul quotes the very words that Jesus spoke and gave him as a commission: □νο□ξαι □φθαλμο□ς α□τ□ν, το□ □πιστρέψαι □π□ σκότους ε□ς φ□ς κα□ τ□ς □ξουσίας το□ Σαταν□ □π□ τ□ν θεόν (to open their eyes, so that they turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God). One scholar notes: "The apostle is to open the eyes of the blind that they may 'turn away' from darkness and the power of Satan and "turn to" the light and God. The twofold content of the Christian concept of conversion is clearly expressed here."[153] Larkin describes this summary of Paul's ministry as "double turning."[154]

In 26:20 Paul uses both μετανοέω and □πιστρέφομαι together in the same sentence and thus provides insight on the role of each in salvation. As Paul was giving his defense to King Agrippa, he told the king that the content of his preaching was □πήγγελλον μετανοε□ν κα□ □πιστρέφειν □π□ τ□ν θεόν, □ξια τ□ς μετανοίας □ργα

[153] George Bertram, "Επιστρέφω," In *Theological Dictionary of the New Testament*, ed. Gerhard Kittel and Gehard Friedrich. (Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1964), 7:728.

[154] Larrkin, *Acts,* 629.

πράσσοντας (I was commanding them to repent and turn to God, doing works worthy of their repentance). Green notes: "Repentance (or 'turning to God') is often mentioned explicitly as an appropriate response to God's salvific work." [155] Both kinds of turning are used together – a turning from sin (μετανοε□ν) and a turning to God (□πιστρέφειν). Here it is important to see that "repentance precedes turning to God, and both are confirmed by corresponding works. Conversion is thus a change in which the main concern is turning to God."[156]

The use μετανοέω and □πιστρέφομαι in Acts 26:20 is similar to their usage in Acts 3:19. Both cases show a double turning. Acts 26:20 provides further insight in to the precise meanings of each of these words. It seems as though Paul is using μετανοέω to explain what a convert will be changed from. A believer will stop being in darkness. They will stop being under the influence of Satan. Paul uses □πιστρέφομαι in reference to the positive aspects of conversion. The believer will now be in the light. The believer will now be under God's power.

Paul continues to add to the description of the content of his preaching: □ξια τ□ς μετανοίας □ργα πράσσοντας (doing works worthy of their repentance). This phrase by Paul explains the expectations he gave to those who were converted. They were to perform deeds as a result of their repentance. [157] And these deeds were to become the lifestyle of the redeemed as the present active participle πρασσοντας (doing) suggests. [158]

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[155] Green, "'Salvation to the Ends of the Earth' (Acts 13:47): God as Saviour in the Acts of the Apostles,"104.

[156] Bertram, "Επιστρέφω," 7:728.

[157] Stott, *The Message of Acts,* 375.

[158]Robertson, *Word Pictures in the New Testament*, Ac 26:20.

This phrase nearly mirrors that of John the Baptist as recorded by Luke in his Gospel: ποιήσατε ο□ν καρπο□ς □ξίους τ□ς μετανοίας (Therefore, do works worthy of repentance) (Luke 3:8). These parallel statements show the continuity between John the Baptist and Paul, who both expected good works as the natural result of true repentance.[159] The basis of Paul's preaching was John the Baptist's call to repent.[160] Though some have sought to dispute this idea[161], the connection that Luke makes from John to Paul by using nearly the same grammar is hard to deny. Still others argue that Paul is not teaching that repentance is necessary, rather he is giving a call to holiness.[162] However, that conclusion is unlikely. Paul is not discussing the issue of sanctification with King Agrippa. He is proclaiming his call to "open the eyes" of the Jews and Gentiles.

There are number of conclusions about the Lukan concept of μετανοέω that can be made from this context. First, repentance is associated with the cessation of something negative; in this case, being in darkness under the control of sin. Second, repentance is shown to be necessary to salvation. Third, repentance is to be evidenced by works. If there is no evidence, there is no repentance. Thus Acts 26:20 fits best with a Lordship interpretation.

Definition of Μετανοέω in Luke-Acts

From the discussion above, there are at least five aspects to the Lukan concept of

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[159]Bock, *A Theology of Luke-Acts,*. 131.

[160] MacArthur, *The Gospel According to Jesus,* 73.

[161] See Wilkin, "Repentance and Salvation, Part 4: New Testament Repentance: Repentance in the Gospels and Acts," the author argues that John the Baptist's call for repentance was a call to "temporal salvation".

[162] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 163.

μετανοέω and they are as follows:

(1) involves obedience to God (Luke 5:32, 10:32, 11:32, 15:7, 16:30, 24:47; Acts 8:22, 19:4, 26:20)

(2) is necessary for salvation (Luke 11:32, 15:7,10, 16:31, 24:47; Acts 2:38, 3:19, 5:31,8:22, 11:18, 17:30, 19:4, 26:20)

(3) is a gift from God (Acts 5:31, 11:21)

(4) involves a turn from sin (Acts 3:19, 26:20)

(5) must be evidenced by works (Luke 3:3,8, 11:32; Acts, 2:38 19:4, 26:20)

In all of Luke-Acts, there was not a single instance where μετανοέω must mean only a change of mind. Thompson, writing in the early 20th century states: "The New Testament writers in no instance employ the term [μετανοέω] to express the action solely of either the intellect or of the sensibility, but use it exclusively to indicate the action of the will".[163] Further, there are two other reasons to think that Luke never meant μετανοέω as a change of mind only. First, is the fact that when the context most clearly supported that all those who were being preached to needed was change their mind about Christ, μετανοέω is not used. Cornelius and his God-fearing friends did not need to morally change, but still needed to change their minds about Christ. The Ephesian disciples of John had no need of moral change, only to realize Jesus was the fulfillment of John's ministry. Yet in neither of these contexts is μετανοέω used. This argues against μετανοέω having the ability to refer only to a change of mind in Luke-Acts.

Another line of evidence against μετανοέω being only a change of mind comes from Acts 28:4-6. The following outlines that line of evidence:

> When the local people saw the creature hanging from Paul's hand, they said to one another, "No doubt this man is a murderer! Although he has escaped from the sea, Justice herself has not allowed him to live!" However, Paul shook the creature

[163] Thompson, *Metaneo and Metamelei*, 27.

> off into the fire and suffered no harm. But they were expecting that he was going to swell up or suddenly drop dead. So after they had waited a long time and had seen nothing unusual happen to him, they changed their minds (μεταβάλλομαι) and said he was a god (NET).

Here is an instance which Luke should have been able to use μετανοέω if it means only a change of mind. But instead Luke uses μεταβάλλομαι which means "to change one's mind." [164] The islanders thought Paul was a murderer, then, based on an apparent miracle, they changed their minds to believe he was a god. A similar change of beliefs is required for salvation. One must realize that Jesus is not just a man, but Messiah and Lord. With such similar "change of mind" concepts in view, there is no reason why Luke should not have used μετανοέω in Acts 28:4-6, if μετανοέω meant only a change of mind. Instead he uses μεταβάλλομαι. It seems as though if Luke used μετανοέω to mean only a change of mind he would have used it here. But the fact that he does not, suggests that the Lukan concept of μετανοέω did not ever mean a change of mind only.

If Luke were to write a definition of μετανοέω, this is how it would probably read: a gift given by God, necessary for salvation, to forsake sin, to live in obedience to God, and to produce good works as evidence. Thus, the Lukan paradigm of μετανοέω best fits with the doctrine of Lordship salvation.

Conclusion

Both πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω have been shown to be more to most consistent with the Lordship salvation perspective. Below is a chart of the results:

Chart 1.

Reference	Word	Free Grace	Lordship

[164] James Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical Languages With Semantic Domains: Greek New Testament* (Oak Harbor: Logos Research Systems, 1997),. DBLG 3554.

Luke 1:16	□πιστρέψει		X
Luke 22:32	□πιστρέψας		X
Acts 3:19	□πιστρέψατε		X
Acts 11:21	□πέστρεψεν		X
Acts 14:15	□πιστρέφειν		X
Acts 15:19	□πιστρέφουσιν		X
Acts 26:18	□πιστρέψαι		X
Acts 26:20	□πιστρέφειν		X
Acts 28:27	□πιστρέψωσιν		X
Luke 3:3	μετανοίας		X
Luke 3:8	μετανοίας		X
Luke 5:32	μετάνοιαν		X
Luke 11:32	μετενόησαν		X
Luke 13:3	μετανο□τε		X
Luke 13:5	μετανο□τε		X
Luke 15:7	μετανοο□ντι		X
Luke 15:7	μετανοίας		X
Luke 15:10	μετανοο□ντι.		X
Luke 16:30	μετανοήσουσιν		X
Luke 17:3	μετανοήσ□	X	
Luke 17:4	μετανο□	X	
Luke 24:47	μετάνοιαν		X
Acts 2:38	μετανοήσατε		X
Acts 3:19	μετανοήσατε		X
Acts 8:22	μετανόησον		X
Acts 11:18	μετάνοιαν		X
Acts 17:30	μετανοε□ν	X	
Acts 19:4	μετανοίας		X
Acts 26:20	μετανοε□ν		X
Acts 26:20	μετανοίας		X

Of all the 44 occurrences of □πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω in Luke-Acts, there are only 14 occurrences where the specific meaning of the word was either indiscernible or referred to physical turning. Further, 27 times they were best interpreted as being in favor of the

doctrine of Lordship salvation. Only 3 times did μετανοέω favor a Free Grace interpretation. Two of these instances referred to a man to man repentance. That leaves only one time in all of Luke-Acts that Luke used either πιστρέφομαι or μετανοέω in a way more consistent with the doctrine of Free Grace salvation in a salvific context. This conclusively demonstrates that Luke's concepts of πιστρέφομαι and μετανοέω are most similar to the concepts of Lordship salvation. While these findings do not resolve all tension in the Lordship-Free Grace debate, they do show the importance of the Lukan concept of repentance and the need for further study.

Appendix

Analysis of Επιστρεφομαι

Luke 17:4

What makes this case hard to classify as either internal or external turning is that it could be taken either way. Upon first glance, this reference seems to indicate a physical turning which would read, "When he comes to you…" Others disagree. For example one scholar writes: "return [means that he] turns back to you. The Greek word for 'conversion' has the same stem, so this means a genuine sorrow and change in attitude." Still others argue that it represents both change of inward attitude and physical turning.[165] It may be best to consider the precise meaning of πιστρέφομαι in Luke 17:4 ambiguous.

Acts 9:35

In Acts 9:32-35, Luke records a miracle performed by Peter. While he was visiting the saints in Lydda, Peter encountered a man who had been confined to his bed for eight years due to being paralyzed. Peter tells the man to get up in the name of Jesus the Christ and the man does so. The text then reads that all those who lived in Lydda and Sharon saw the man and "πέστρεψαν πτν κύριον (turned to the Lord)."

[165]Mendez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke*, 16.

This narrative does not explicitly state that Peter preached to the onlookers at Lydda that they must turn. It seems as though "Luke has no qualms about the idea that miracles can have an evangelistic value and effect."[166] If the miracle was the sole catalyst for the conversion of those at Lydda, it would suggest that the crowd was persuaded to change their minds about Christ because of the miracle.

However, it is not improbable those at Lydda to have previously heard the gospel message (which contains the idea of "turning".) For example, throughout Luke-Acts, πιστρέφομαι is used as a summary term for the gospel[167], so it would be reasonable to assume that either Peter did preach the gospel or those who were converted knew its content even though it was not explicitly mentioned in the text.[168] Another possibility is that Phillip had already preached in that area. This would explain why there were already saints at Lydda.[169] Or perhaps the crowd at Lydda that was converted heard the Gospel for the saints who were already there.

There are two implications about πιστρέφομαι that can be made from Acts 9:35. First is that turning should be unto God. Secondly, πιστρέφομαι is sometimes used as a summary statement for the gospel. This passage does lean slightly in the favor of the Free Grace perspective since the miracle performed by Peter seems to be the catalyst for conversion. Still, considering the probability that turning to God was already preached, there is considerable doubt that a change of mind is all that Luke had in mind, especially in light of the fact that "change of mind" is not a recognized part of πιστρέφομαι's

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[166] Witherington, *Acts*, 330.
[167] Larkin, *Acts,* 404.

[168] Footnote, *NET Bible,* Ac 9:35.

[169]See Toussaint, *Acts*, 2:378.

semantic domain. Acts 9:35 would be best classified as neutral to the Lordship and Free Grace controversy.

Acts 15:3

This is the only time in the entire New Testament that □πιστρέφομαι occurs in its noun form, □πιστροφή. Also it is "the only time in the whole New Testament that □πιστρέφομαι is used a as technical word for conversion."[170] It is often translated "conversion," but is more literally rendered as "the turning." [171] This time, the word comes from the voice of the author rather than a character within his narrative and he uses it to describe the state of the Gentiles: □κδιηγούμενοι τ□ν □πιστροφ□ν τ□ν □θν□ν (telling fully of the conversion of the Gentiles). In the narrative Paul and Barnabas are discussing the results of their first missionary journey. [172]

One way to discover what Luke meant by □πιστροφ□ν is to examine his portrayal of the conversion of the Gentiles in Paul's first missionary journey. Such an examination reveals that Luke gives accounts of the content of Paul's preaching on several of those locations, beginning with Cyprus. According to Luke, in Cyprus, Paul encounters a magician but Luke does not mention Paul doing any preaching. Only one possible convert is mentioned in 13:12 as Luke writes that the proconsul "believed". The next city is Pisidian Antioch where one of Paul's sermon's is recorded. Paul's sermon conclusion is found in 13:38-39:

> Therefore let it be known to you, brothers, that through this one forgiveness of sins is proclaimed to you, and by this one everyone who believes is justified from everything from which the law of Moses could not justify you (NET).

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[170] Mendez-Moratalla, *The Paradigm of Conversion in Luke,* 16.

[171] Swanson, *Dictionary of Biblical*, DBLG 2189, #2.

[172]See Bock, *A Theology of Luke-Acts*, 132.

Repentance is a noticeably missing element. In fact, Paul mentions repentance only in relationship to John's baptism for Israel in verse 24. Despite this missing element, some are clearly converted (Acts 13:48). Luke says that a similar incident happened at Iconium where many Jews and Gentiles were converted. Next Luke relates the situation at Lystra. In this scenario, Paul does preach a "turning" (Acts 14:15) , but it is unclear whether any were converted, though it is suggested in verse 20.

So what is the paradigm for the conversion of the Gentiles? The answer appears to be that there is not a solid paradigm, at least from these few accounts. Certain elements are missing from one narrative to the next. It is interesting that the command "repent" is never used, but Paul does tell those at Lystra to turn (14:15). In light of all this, the Acts 15:3 reference appears to be in favor of a Free Grace interpretation. However, the weight of the argument based on this particular evidence is not great. First is the fact that □πιστροφ□ν means "to turn." Making this a summary statement for the response to the gospel would contradict the Free Grace perspective that saving faith is accomplished by having "a change of mind" about Christ. If the Luke had written "the repenting of the Gentiles," that would swing more in favor of a Free Grace perspective. Secondly, nearly every other time □πιστρέφομαι is used by Luke to describe internal turning the idea of "turning to God" is in view, thus somewhat diminishing the argument that it does not contain that concept in Acts 15:3. Thirdly, is an argument from silence. Simply because turning is absent in these particular sermons recorded by Luke does not mean Paul did not include it. The sermons and speeches throughout Luke-Acts are no doubt shortened

versions of the original. The Acts 15:3 use of πιστρέφομαι is best considered as neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace controversy.

Analysis of Μετανοεω

Luke 10:13

There are two examples of Luke using μετανοέω in the aorist indicative and both come in similar contexts. These two references can be found in Luke 10:13 and 11:32. Both come from the mouth of Jesus and both are in reference to previous opportunities for repentance. In 10:13, Jesus is giving instructions to the 72 he is about to send out. He makes a list of several cities who had failed to repent (Chorazin, Bethsadia) and in verse 15 he adds Capernaum. These cities were probably beneficiaries to Jesus' early ministry.[173] He contrasts these cities with Tyre and Sidon who had not received the same quality of ministry. Jesus says that these two Gentile cities would have repented if they had the same quality of miracles that the Jewish cities had. From the context it seems that "a call to repent is the natural response to the miracles Jesus performed."[174] But repentance in response to a miracle seems more like persuasion than conviction. This would be consistent with a Free Grace view – a miracle would be sufficient for someone to change their mind about Christ.

Verse 16 may pose a problem for Free Grace proponents though. In verse 16 Jesus says that salvation is available to those who "listen" to his disciples, which was in effect, listening to him. What is it they must listen to? The last teaching that Jesus gave before he sent out the 72 is in Luke 9:57-62. Verse 62 the last verse before the narrative

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[173]Martin, *Luke,*. 2:233.

[174]Behm, "Μετανοέω," 131.

about the sending out of the 72 begins. It reads: "Jesus said to him, 'No one who puts his hand to the plow and looks back is fit for the kingdom of God." So it may be argued that listening to Jesus meant following him.[175] Also, hearing can have the idea of obeying, especially in a Hebrew context.[176] This would mean that the concept of repentance in this context probably had an element of turning, namely turning to follow Christ. Repentance is also shown to be the proper response to miracles. Because repentance is linked with obedience, Luke 10:13 is best viewed as in favor of the Lordship perspective.

Acts 5:31

Peter gives the next example of μετάνοια as used as a direct object in Acts 5:31; this time as the object of the infinitive δο□ναι (to give). The utterance by Peter is in a defense to the Sanhedrin in Acts 5:29-32:

> But Peter and the apostles replied, "We must obey God rather than people. The God of our forefathers raised up Jesus, whom you seized and killed by hanging him on a tree. God exalted him to his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins. And we are witnesses of these events, and so is the Holy Spirit whom God has given to those who obey him (NET).

The context is such that little can be determined about the specific nature of repentance. Although one aspect certainly worthy of note is that repentance is a gift given by God. It is not something that man can achieve by himself. Acts 5:31 states that God gives repentance. Larkin agrees: "Every aspect of applying salvation, the human response (repentance) and the salvation benefit (forgiveness of sins), is a gift of the risen and

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[175] This point may be strengthened by the fact that the participle □κούων which is translated "the one who listens" is in the present tense and could also be translated "the one continues listening". That would bring out the concept of obedience more clearly.

[176]Footnote, *The NET Bible,* Ac 16:29.

exalted Lord."[177] This has tremendous implications for the Lordship-Free Grace debate. One of the criticisms that the Free Grace adherents have made of Lordship salvation is that it is works based. Hodges says that Lordship salvation is a "kind of faith/works synthesis which differs only insignificantly from Roman Catholic dogma."[178] If one must have a change of life in coming to Christ, it is no longer faith alone, but works. Unless, that change of life is given by God. Then a change will result not because of man's work, but God's grace. This verse helps diffuse the most powerful argument against Lordship salvation.

So there are two implications that can be made concerning repentance in Acts 5:31. First, as Ryrie points out, repentance here does seem to stand for faith or conversion.[179] That suggests it is necessary for salvation. Second that repentance is a gift given by God. But since the concept of repentance itself cannot be discovered from the context, it is best to view Acts 5:31 as neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace debate.

Acts 13:24

This use μετανοέω is in reference to John's baptism, which is discussed later. Paul uses it a sermon to the men of Israel and he mentions it only in a historical reference to John's baptism: Before Jesus arrived, John had proclaimed a baptism for repentance to all the people of Israel (NET)." Because of the context of this example it is difficult to draw any conclusions about μετανοέω. It should be considered neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace discussion.

Acts 20:21

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[177] Larkin, *Acts*, 424.

[178] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 20.

[179] Ryrie, *So Great Salvation,* 97.

There are some peculiarities about the grammar in Acts 20:21.[180] Some have seen this verse to be chiastic in structure.[181] Those who believe there is a chiastic structure[182] would outline the verse this way:

A □ουδαίοις (to both the Jews)
B τε κα□ □λλησιν (and to the Gentiles)
B τ□ν ε□ς θε□ν μετάνοιαν (repentance unto God)
A κα□ πίστιν ε□ς τ□ν κύριον □μ□ν □ησο□ν (and faith unto our Lord Jesus)

This chiastic structure would explain the unusual grammar, but it raises other questions. The first issue is that it seems to suggest that there are distinct responses required for the Jew and the Gentile. Paul would be calling the Jews, not to repentance, but to faith in Jesus in Christ. At the same time, his focus to the Gentiles concerns repentance unto God. In light of other scripture, this interpretation seems questionable.[183]

Wallace makes another suggestion: "This [use in Acts 20:21], of course, fits well with the frequent idiom of the first subset of second for impersonal TSKS[184] constructions."[185] Wallace believes that the first substantive (repentance) ought to be taken as a subset of the second (faith).[186] If this view is correct, it may mean that Luke

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[180] Barrett, *Acts,* 968.

[181] Barrett mentions this as possible but unlikely. See Barrett, *Acts,* 968

[182] Chiasm is a type of poetry which creates a "X" structure from the lines of the poem. An example of chiastic structure would be A B B A.

[183] Barrett, *Acts,* 969.

[184] TSKS stands for "article + substantive + κα□ + substantive"

[185] Wallace, *Greek Grammar: Beyond the Basics,* 289.

[186] Ibid.

views conversion not as a "two-step process, but one step, faith – but the kind of faith includes repentance."[187]

Ryrie does not agree, however. He argues instead that:

> Repentance and faith are joined by one article indicates that the two are inseparable, though each focuses on a facet of the single requirement for salvation. Repentance focuses on changing one's mind about his former conception of God and disbelief in God and Christ; while faith in Christ, or course, focuses on receiving Him as personal Savior.[188]

Ryrie's view does have the benefit of a similar TSKS construction occurring in Acts 2:23 where the two substantives may be equivalent. Though, that issue is heavily debated as well.

Unfortunately, the immediate context does not help to solve this tension. It appears as though either view is tenable. The best way to discover what kind repentance means in Acts 20:21 would be to examine it throughout Luke-Acts, which is the very aim of this paper. Still, there are important issues addressed her that are relevant to the Lordship versus Free Grace controversy, namely that repentance and faith are undeniably connected in what appears to be a summary of Paul's message of salvation. Hodges, of course, disagrees and believes that Paul meant repentance in reference to the after salvation kind.[189] But the view cannot supported by context. So, at least in Acts 20:21, repentance and faith are explicitly connected as part of the salvation experience. This passage is best viewed as neutral to the Lordship-Free Grace debate.

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[187] Ibid.

[188] Ryrie, *So Great Salvation,* 198.
[189] Hodges, *Absolutely Free,* 145.

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