

Repentance Precedes Forgiveness

Text : **Luke 13: 1-9**

INTRODUCTION :

A. Our lesson today is an outgrowth of our study about sin.

1. The nature of sin is so malevolent it is difficult to adequately describe.
 - a. Sin is so bad that the God of love hates it.
 - b. Sin is the product of the devil who hates God and who has been sentenced to Hell.
 - c. All those who sin align themselves with the enemy of God and share his fate.
2. The consequences of sin are worse than anything man will ever encounter on earth.
 - a. Sin makes one an enemy of God and an object of God's wrath. (**Rom. 5**)
 - b. Sin destroys lives and brings untold misery to people here on the earth.
 - c. Then in eternity, sin separates the sinner from God and from all of God's blessings.
3. The worst consequence of sin is that it brought about the crucifixion of our Lord.

B. Once a person realizes the grievous nature of sin, it's normal for him to have a virile response against it.

1. He will hate it. (*Change of attitude toward it.*)
2. He will oppose it. (*Change of action toward it.*)
3. He will purge it from his life. (*Change of relationship with it.*) *Grieved by it.*

C. One must realize the consequences of **his** sins before he will seek salvation for it.

1. It is easy to justify one's self when he does not realize the full scope of sin.
 - a. Self-justification is the most common reaction to one's failings. (**Prov. 21: 2**)
 - b. One can always find someone to compare himself to who is worse.
2. Only when one realizes that he is indeed a sinner will he seek forgiveness.

D. This change of attitude and action toward sin is called repentance.

1. Repent (*metanoeo*) means : to change one's mind for better and to heartily amend with abhorrence of one's past sins. (Strong's Enhanced Lex)
2. Because anyone who understands sin wants to escape it, it was important for us to come to a full understanding of sin before addressing the necessity of repentance.

**** It is the singular goal of this lesson to demonstrate that repentance toward sin is an integral and an indispensable part of the gospel message.**

I. John the baptizer came preaching repentance.

A. Repentance was the primary message of John the baptizer.

1. **Matt. 3: 1-2** Now in those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea, saying, 2 “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”
2. The kingdom was not yet there, but repentance was required to be ready to receive it.

B. John required a physical response as part of the repentance he preached.

1. **Matt. 3: 8-** Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance;
2. Thus, repentance brings about a change in the way one lives.

C. Remember : John was to prepare the way for Jesus.

1. **Matt. 11: 1-15**
2. Thus, people must repent in order to receive the promised Messiah.

II. Jesus preached the necessity of repentance.

A. **Mark 1: 14-15** Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, 15 and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.”

1. What was Jesus preaching ? “The gospel of God.”
2. Jesus asked for two responses :
 - a. “**Believe**” ... If one does not accept the message, he has no reason to respond.
 - b. “**Repent**” ... If one accepts the message, it must affect his attitude and his actions.

B. Like John, Jesus preached that repentance was essential to enter the kingdom.

1. **Matt. 4: 17-** From that time Jesus began to preach and say, “Repent, for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand.”
2. God wants everyone in the kingdom, but repentance is a prerequisite to entry.
3. Remember the parable of the garment at the wedding banquet : (*Parable of repentance*)
 - a. **Matt. 22: 10-14** Those slaves went out into the streets and gathered together all they found, both evil and good; and the wedding hall was filled with dinner guests.
11 But when the king came in to look over the dinner guests, he saw a man there who was not dressed in wedding clothes, 12 and he said to him, ‘Friend, how did you come in here without wedding clothes?’ And the man was speechless. 13 Then the king said to the servants, ‘Bind him hand and foot, and throw him into the outer darkness; in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth.’ 14 For many are called, but few are chosen.

- b. This man was already at the table, but he did not change ... **did not repent.**
- b. *Jesus' application explains that just being a church member is not enough; one must change his attitude toward sin and surrender his life to God.*

C. Jesus taught that there is a clear choice one must make : repent or perish.

1. Remember our text :
 - a. Vs. **1-5**
 - b. Two illustrations indicating that without repentance one will perish eternally.
2. He then tells a parable indicating that God expects the fruit of repentance – actions.
 - a. Vs. **6-9**
 - b. When fruit is not forthcoming, ultimately rejection ensues.
3. God is not eager to condemn (*waited 3 yrs*), but He absolutely demands repentance.

II Pet. 3: 8-13 But do not let this one *fact* escape your notice, beloved, that with the Lord one day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years like one day. **9** The Lord is not slow about His promise, as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance. **10** But the day of the Lord will come like a thief, in which the heavens will pass away with a roar and the elements will be destroyed with intense heat, and the earth and its works will be burned up.

11 Since all these things are to be destroyed in this way, what sort of people ought you to be in holy conduct and godliness, **12** looking for and hastening the coming of the day of God, because of which the heavens will be destroyed by burning, and the elements will melt with intense heat! **13** But according to His promise we are looking for new heavens and a new earth, in which righteousness dwells.

**** The message of Jesus is clear ... *repent or perish.***

III. The gospel that the Apostles preached included repentance.

A. The very first gospel sermon included repentance.

1. When the crowd asked how to respond to the Apostles' gospel sermon Peter said :
 - a. **Acts 2: 37-38** Now when they heard *this*, they were pierced to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brethren, what shall we do?" **38** Peter said to them, "Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.
 - b. Their belief was indicated by their response ... "What shall we do?"
2. They were then told to **act** upon their belief ... "Repent, and ... be baptized"

B. The Apostle's second sermon contained the same message and same command :

1. The Apostles did not seek to preach a different sermon every time, **D.B.R. of Jesus.**
2. **Acts 3: 19-** Therefore repent and return, so that your sins may be wiped away,
in order that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord;
 - a. Repentance required a change of direction; a changed life.
 - b. Repentance was a prerequisite to salvation in Christ Jesus.

**C. When the gospel was presented to the gentiles,
the Jews realized they were being given an opportunity to repent.**

1. **Acts 11: 18-** When they heard this, they quieted down and glorified God, saying,
"Well then, God has granted to the Gentiles also the repentance that
leads to life."
2. Notice that their repentance had to come before they could receive "life."

D. Repentance is a universal command. (*Jews & Gentiles ; then, now & forever*)

1. **Acts 17: 30-31** Therefore having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now
declaring to men that all people everywhere must repent,
31 because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in
righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having
furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead.
 - a. Why must all people repent ? Judgment is coming !
 - b. Repent or perish.
3. **Acts 26: 19-20** So, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision,
20 but kept declaring both to those of Damascus first, and also at
Jerusalem and then throughout all the region of Judea, and even to
the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing
deeds appropriate to repentance.
 - a. Paul was given this message by Jesus during his heavenly vision on the road.
 - b. The message remained the same everywhere he went.
 - c. The message required people to : *to have a change of heart*
to make a commitment to follow God
to perform deeds ... change the way they lived

E. Christian faith is based upon teaching given to us by our Lord via His Apostles.

1. **Eph. 2: 19-22** So then you are no longer strangers and aliens, but you are fellow
citizens with the saints, and are of God's household, **20** having been
built on the foundation of the apostles and prophets, Christ Jesus
Himself being the corner stone, **21** in whom the whole building, being
fitted together, is growing into a holy temple in the Lord, **22** in whom
you also are being built together into a dwelling of God in the Spirit.

2. Therefore, repentance is one of the foundation stones of the Christian religion.
 - a. Only those who are willing to repent of their sins will be accepted by God.
 - b. We cannot see into the heart of another person, but God can and does judge hearts.

IV. Repentance is not a onetime event at time of conversion, rather a way of life.

A. Christians are often called upon to repent.

1. Simon the sorcerer :
Acts 8: 22- Therefore repent of this wickedness of yours, and pray the Lord that, if possible, the intention of your heart may be forgiven you.
2. The Christians in the churches of Asia :
 - a. Ephesus : **Rev. 2: 5-** Remember from where you have fallen, and repent and do the deeds you did at first;
 - b. Pergamum : **Rev. 2: 16-** Therefore repent; or else I am coming to you quickly, and I will make war against them with the sword of My mouth.
 - c. Thyatira, Sardis & Laodicea all received similar warnings ... *repent or else.*

B. Ongoing repentance is necessary because sin is ongoing.

1. **I John 1: 8-9** If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.
2. God provides for ongoing forgiveness, but only for those who acknowledge their sin.
 - a. Acknowledging sin is part of repentance.
 - b. **Rom. 6: 1-2** ... Those who disregard sin disregard God and deny Christ.
3. We all struggle against sin daily so we must live with a repentant heart. **Rom. 7:14f**

CONCLUSION :

A. The singular goal of this lesson has been accomplished.

1. We have shown the repentance is essential to salvation.
2. No one is forgiven **IN** their sins.

B. No gospel presentation is complete without a call to repentance.

INVITATION :

If you have not repented of your sins **NOW** is the time to start.

Lesson Text :**Luke 13: 1-9**

1 Now on the same occasion there were some present who reported to Him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mixed with their sacrifices. **2** And Jesus said to them, “Do you suppose that these Galileans were *greater* sinners than all *other* Galileans because they suffered this *fate*? **3** I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. **4** Or do you suppose that those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them were *worse* culprits than all the men who live in Jerusalem? **5** “I tell you, no, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

6 And He *began* telling this parable: “A man had a fig tree which had been planted in his vineyard; and he came looking for fruit on it and did not find any. **7** And he said to the vineyard-keeper, ‘Behold, for three years I have come looking for fruit on this fig tree without finding any. Cut it down! Why does it even use up the ground?’ **8** And he answered and said to him, ‘Let it alone, sir, for this year too, until I dig around it and put in fertilizer; **9** and if it bears fruit next year, *fine*; but if not, cut it down.’ ”