

Elementary Truths of Christianity – Repentance

Written and typed: 1/31/24

- We must all learn the basics of anything before we become mature
 - Sports – tee ball comes before baseball
 - Education – algebra & trigonometry come before calculus
 - Christianity is no different
- **Hebrews 5:11 – 6:3** describes for us 6 elementary teachings about Christ
 - In our last lesson, we discussed how all of these revolve around Christ
 - And rightfully so – the entire Bible points to Christ
 - The entire OT points to His coming
 - There are 4 gospel accounts of His life on earth – the Holy Spirit deemed His time on earth so important that 1, 2, not even 3 were sufficient enough to capture the details
 - The rest of the NT points to the supremacy of Christ and how it is the gospel through Him that saves us
 - It would only make sense that the elementary teachings of Christianity are Christ-centered
 - These 6 elementary teachings are
 - Repentance from acts that lead to death
 - Faith in God
 - Instruction about baptisms
 - The laying on of hands
 - The resurrection of the dead
 - Eternal judgment
- In this lesson, we will focus on repentance
- Let's begin by defining repentance
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action
 - I watched someone deadlift more weight than I'll ever be able to do and he just continued going up in weight somehow
 - He'd barely get the previous rep and then throw 90lbs more on and somehow found the strength to do that (he went up to ~600lbs that day)
 - He constantly repeated to himself "If the mind determines it, then the body must execute"
 - Consider **Matthew 7:13-14**
 - There are 2 roads here
 - Biblical repentance would not only be the realization that I am on the wrong road
 - But it would not be true repentance until I turned around and started walking the straight & narrow

- Repentance requires a change in the actions that were leading you to eternal death

- **2 Corinthians 7:8-13a**

- There is a major difference between Godly sorrow and repentance
- Paul starts this passage of Scripture by stating how he regretted the fact that he had to write the Corinthian church a letter that caused them distress – not the fact that he pointed out their flaws, but the fact that they had flaws that needed to be pointed out
 - There's no 100% guarantee of this, but I would assume that the letter subject here is what we now know as 1 Corinthians
 - Paul had to spend the first 14 chapters of 1 Corinthians correcting everything they were doing wrong
 - Ch's 1 – 3: they were divided, could not figure out who they wanted to follow
 - Ch 4: they were going beyond their written instructions (vs 6)
 - Etc.
- As a specific example, take the man who had his father's wife for instance
 - 1 Corinthians 5 – Paul had to tell the Corinthians to expel this wicked man
 - **Vs 6-8**
 - Apparently, the church at Corinth obeyed Paul's instructions because in 2 Corinthians 2, we read that this man was apparently ready to be restored
 - Paul urges the brethren to forgive and reaffirm their love for him
 - **Vs 5-8**
- Not only did this man have Godly sorrow, but it's evident that he repented of his actions
- And apparently, this man was not the only one who repented
- Vs 9 – Paul writes that he is happy, not because of the sorrow they felt at the result of the first letter, but that their sorrow led them to repentance
- We can be sorry for what we did all we want when we realize that we have made a mistake, but if that realization does not lead to a change in action, that sorrow is useless
- Vs 10 – Godly sorrow → Repentance → Salvation
 - Worldly sorrow → No repentance → Death
- Let's look at this concept in 2 examples – a comparison of Judas and Peter
- Let's examine Judas first
- **Luke 22:1-6**
 - This is the Luke account of Judas agreeing to betray Jesus
 - Parallel accounts: Matthew 26:14, Mark 14:10
 - Matthew 26:15 indicates that the agreed upon price was 30 pieces of silver
 - Judas problem: greed
 - 1 Timothy 6:10 – “For the love of money is a root of all kinds of evil. It is through this craving that some have wandered away from the faith and pierced themselves with many pangs.”
 - Unfortunately, this applied to Judas here

- John 13:29 and John 12:6 tell us that Judas was in charge of group's moneybag (treasurer)
- John 12:6 goes further by saying that Judas was a thief. Helped himself to the contents of the moneybag.
- Consider the following:
 - John 21:25 – tells us if everything Jesus did was recorded, the amount of books required could not be contained by the world
 - John 9:3 – miracles were done to display God's power
 - Jesus did many things that we do not have recorded for us, but Judas would have seen most of them
 - Yet, for 30 pieces of silver, he betrayed the Son of God
 - \$91 - \$441 value in today's currency (depending on coin used)
- In reading Matthew 27:1-5, I do not think that Judas realized that his actions were going to lead to Jesus' death. Slap on wrist perhaps – beating, told to stop preaching as apostles were told in Acts 5.
- When he realized this, that's when he felt the remorse – that's when he was seized with sorrow
- But what kind of sorrow was this?
- 2 Corinthians 7:9 – sorrow as God intended will lead you to repentance
- Did Judas repent here? Unfortunately he did not
- He had the same chance to repent as you and I do today
- But his sorrow was worldly – and he took his own life (Matthew 27:5)
- 2 Corinthians 7:10 – *“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”*
- Now let's examine Peter
- **Luke 22:31-34**
 - This is the Luke account of Jesus telling Peter that he will deny Him
 - Parallel accounts: Matthew 26:34, Mark 14:30
 - Notice wording in vs 31 – “Simon, Simon, behold, Satan demanded to have you, **that he might sift you like wheat.**”
 - Sift – examine thoroughly as to isolate that which is most important or useful
 - Satan identified Peter as important to Jesus' work and wanted to remove him from the equation
 - Unfortunately, Satan was successful with Peter this time
 - We can read that Peter did deny Christ 3 times in **Luke 22:54-62**
 - Luckily, unlike Judas, Peter repented of his actions and was restored in **John 21:15-19**
 - Peter went on to continue his life as a faithful servant in the Lord's church
 - Wrote the books of 1 & 2 Peter
 - Preached the famous sermon in Acts 2
 - Was heavily involved in the conversion of Cornelius and his household in Acts 10
 - Peter felt the same sorrow that Judas felt (he wept bitterly when he realized what he had done – Luke 22:62)

- But what kind of sorrow was Peter's?
- Peter's sorrow did not lead to death – in fact, quite the opposite
- His sorrow was the Godly sorrow talked about in 2 Corinthians 7 and it led him to become a very faithful servant of the Lord's
- When we sin, we are covering ourselves with dirty rags in God's sight (Isaiah 64:6)
 - And God wants us to be clothed with Christ (Galatians 3:27)
 - Not the dirty rags that our sins are
 - When we realize what we've done, it should lead us to be sorrowful
- But when we've calmed down a little bit and are back in somewhat of a correct mindset to reflect upon what we've done and determine the course of action we are to take as a result, realize that God is waiting for you to come back
 - Just as the Father was waiting on his youngest son in Luke 15:20
 - This youngest son in Luke 15 requested his portion of the inheritance, took it, and wasted it all in wild living (Luke 15:13)
 - But then he came to his senses (Luke 15:17) – which implies that when you are living in sin, you are not in the correct state of mind
 - His youngest son was ready to come home to his Father as a servant (Luke 15:19)
 - But his Father wasn't having any of that
 - The Father was waiting for his return and was rejoiced when he did
- Repentance is a gift from God (Acts 11:18)
 - And thanks be to God for that gift
 - Let us not lose sight of this
 - Do not willingly live in sin, we should all strive to do the exact opposite – not sin
 - But when we inevitably stumble, remember the Lord and He will pick you up every time
- Repentance is essential to salvation
 - Acts 2:37-39 – *“When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, ‘Brothers, what shall we do?’ Peter replied, ‘Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off – for all whom the Lord our God will call.”*
 - Luke 13:3 – *“I tell you, no! But unless you repent, you too will all perish.”*
- Romans 12:2 – *“Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is – his good, pleasing and perfect will.”*
 - Rather than living life according to our own wits, we need to give our lives to the Lord
 - Submit to His almighty holiness
- Repentance is one of the elementary teachings about Christ according to Hebrews 6:1
- Hopefully we all have a better understanding of this gift
- The plan of salvation is simple and will never change
 - **Step 1: Hearing the gospel** – *Romans 10:13-17*

- Gospel = Jesus Christ died for our sins, was buried, arose, and appeared to many
– *1 Corinthians 15:1-8, Romans 1:16*
- **Step 2: Believing the gospel** – *Mark 16:16, John 3:16*
- **Step 3: Confession that Jesus is Lord** – *Romans 10:8-10, 1 John 1:9*
- **Step 4: Repentance of sins** – *Luke 13:3, Acts 2:38*
 - Repentance: a turning away from sin, disobedience, or rebellion and a turning back to God. Change of mind that produces a change in action.
- **Step 5: Baptism into Christ** – *Galatians 3:27, Acts 2:38, Romans 6:1-10, 1 Peter 3:21-22*
 - Before you can be raised with Christ, you must die – I'm not speaking in a physical sense, but a spiritual sense
 - Your old self full of sin is crucified with Christ in the form of baptism according to Romans 6:4
 - Romans 6:4 also states that when we rise out of the waters of baptism, we arise into newness of life just as Christ was raised from the dead
- **Step 6: Live faithfully** – *Revelation 2:10*