

REPENT - Part One

Part ? of LUKE, Luke 5:27-39.

Peter Foxwell. The Cornerstone Church. July 25, 2021.

INTRODUCTION

Today, I'm here to ask you to repent.

I'm pretty sure that most people who hear the words *repent* or *repentance* have an immediate negative reaction. Personally, the words bring to my mind that wild-eyed person standing in a public place with a sandwich board: "Turn or Burn". To say the least, repentance has a bad reputation in our culture.

My goal today is to change that. I want you to know that repentance properly understood is your friend. Seriously. Regular, thoughtful, Jesus-centered, repentance is a vital spiritual discipline. You and I cannot follow Jesus as his faithful disciples without repenting daily, even hourly.

Before we go any further, we need a working definition of repentance:

Repentance is turning from our sin in order to turn or return to God.

I plan to use two sermons to take a close look at what Jesus said about repentance in Luke 5. We'll explore several aspects of repentance. By the end, we'll all have a clear understanding of repentance and its importance in our lives. Finally, I'll ask you to make repentance a habit in your life.

Before we read Luke 5:27-39, we need a little context.

CONTEXT OF LUKE 5:27-39

Jesus is in or near the fishing village of Capernaum, on the shores of the Sea of Galilee. At this stage in his three year public ministry, he is focused on creating a community of God's people. He does this by 1) preaching the Good News of the Kingdom of God all around the region of Galilee, 2) healing the sick, 3) setting free those oppressed by demons, 4) forgiving sins, and 5) calling disciples to follow him. Because Capernaum was on the main road, there was a tax collection center there to collect customs duties on goods being transported north and south. That's where we find Jesus.

LUKE 5:27-39

After this, Jesus went out and saw a tax collector by the name of Levi sitting at his tax booth. "Follow me," Jesus said to him, 28 and Levi got up, left everything and followed him.

29 Then Levi held a great banquet for Jesus at his house, and a large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them. 30 But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

31 Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

33 They said to him, "John's disciples often fast and pray, and so do the disciples of the Pharisees, but yours go on eating and drinking."

34 Jesus answered, "Can you make the friends of the bridegroom fast while he is with them? 35 But the time will come when the bridegroom will be taken from them; in those days they will fast."

36 He told them this parable: "No one tears a piece out of a new garment to patch an old one. Otherwise, they will have torn the new garment, and the patch from the new will not match the old. 37 And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. Otherwise, the new wine will burst the skins; the wine will run out and the wineskins will be ruined. 38 No, new wine must be poured into new wineskins. 39 And no one after drinking old wine wants the new, for they say, 'The old is better.'" say, 'Get up and walk'? 24 But I want you to know that the Son of Man has authority on earth to forgive sins." So he said to the paralyzed man, "I tell you, get up, take your mat and go home." 25 Immediately he stood up in front of them, took what he had been lying on and went home praising God. 26 Everyone was amazed and gave praise to God. They were filled with awe and said, "We have seen remarkable things today."

REPENTANCE IS FOR EVERYONE

Luke 5 helps us understand what repentance is. Over these two Sundays, there are three insights I want us to consider, but today we'll only explore one: Repentance is for everyone.

The Conflict Between Jesus and the Pharisees

Luke 5:30. But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, "Why do you eat and drink with tax collectors and sinners?"

The situation in Luke 5 is framed as a conflict - Jesus versus the Pharisees and teachers of the law. The conflict can be boiled down to an argument about inclusion: who does God include in his kingdom community?

The Pharisees and Inclusion

The Pharisees believed that God includes people who are very good. They meant people who lived like them; respectable, law-abiding, religious Jews.

The tax collectors and sinners did not live like the Pharisees. Tax collectors worked for the Roman occupation. They were known as spies, liars, and abusers of authority. The ultra-zealous religious experts viewed them as ritually unclean, beyond hope, permanently separated from God. In their minds, these people could never enter God's kingdom. God had rejected them forever and no godly person should ever eat with them since sitting down for a meal was a sign of friendship and unity.

Jesus and Inclusion

Jesus, on the other hand, was joyfully feasting with these notorious sinners. How could he be friends with such people? Because he believed that God includes people in his kingdom community when they repent, not when they get religion.

Jesus believed that repentance is for everyone. Open, public, notorious sinners

need to repent. Pious, religious, outwardly perfect people need to repent. That's why Jesus answered his critics with words that would have cut them to the heart.

(Luke 5:31-32) Jesus answered them, "It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

A little background will help us feel the full force of his words. Back then, Jewish scholars described God as a physician and salvation as healing. Who receives healing? People who go to the doctor. Who receives salvation? People who admit they are sinners and repent - turn from their sin and turn to God.

Jesus is not saying that the Pharisees are righteous and don't need to repent. No, he's saying they won't admit that they are sick men in need of a doctor. He's saying they won't own their sin and unrighteousness and desperate need of salvation. He's saying they feel no need to repent. And that is tragic.

Why Is Repentance for Everyone?

Why did Jesus believe that repentance is for everyone. I'll give you a clue: it was not because he thought everyone is basically good. No, Jesus believed that everyone is basically a sinner. Everyone strays from God, falls short of the standard, breaks God's laws, and fails in many ways. Therefore, everyone needs to repent. *"God commands all people everywhere to repent"* (Acts 17:30). No exceptions.

The typical man hates going to the doctor. He might be lying on the couch gasping for his last breath and he'll tell his wife, "I'm not going to the doctor, I'm fine. They are in denial. The Pharisees were in denial about their sinfulness, just as many people today are. Are you?

There are three groups of people in the room today.

In group one are people who acknowledge their sins and repent and trust in

Jesus as their God and Savior. Not just once, but daily, even hourly, constantly. Give thanks to God because your repentance is God's gift to you: (Acts 11:18) *"God has **granted** repentance that leads to life."*

In group two are people who think they are too bad for God to save them. They have no problem admitting they are sinners, but they don't think they can be saved. As a result you don't bother turning from your sin and you definitely don't turn to God. You think, what's the use if God won't grant repentance and salvation to bad people. If that's you, please take a look at Levi. He was bad to the core and the Pharisees judged him too far gone for God. But he found salvation and forgiveness in Jesus. God is ready to save and forgive you, so he commands you to repent.

In group three are people who think they are too good for God to save them. You're religious, respectable, and outwardly perfect. You have no overt sins. You're nice people, friendly to your neighbors, church-goers. Why would you need to repent? Here's why: Being nice doesn't save you. This is what Jesus told the religious leaders of Israel.

(Matthew 21:31-32) Jesus said to them (chief priests and elders of the people), "Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. 32 For John (the Baptist) came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

You can dress up the outside, but God looks at your heart. He sees your private sins: hidden evils, such as pride, envy, lust and bitterness. You're spiritually sick, in desperate need of the doctor and healing, but you won't admit it. You need God's salvation and forgiveness just as badly as the tax collectors and sinners.

God commands you to repent.

CONCLUSION: REPENT RIGHT NOW

I want you to come back next Sunday for more insights into repentance. We've barely scratched the surface of the biblical teaching on this vital topic.

I hope, however, that this teaching has gone well beyond the surface of your life and into your heart of hearts. Repentance is about much more than cleaning up your outside. True repentance deals with the deep, hidden, roots of sin in our hearts.

Repentance is admitting who we really are: lost, broken, guilty, sinners in need of a savior. The English Puritan preacher, Thomas Watson, wrote *"Till sin be bitter, Christ will not be sweet"* (The Doctrine of Repentance).

Since sin dogs us throughout our lives, and even the most devoted disciples of Jesus tend to wander off the path more often than we might want to admit, repentance must be constant and life-long.

Repentance is urgent. Now is the right time to repent. How long do you imagine God will put up with your hard-hearted disobedience? Pray with me that God will grant you repentance now.

As we come now to the Table, where Christ is offered to us in bread and cup, remember this: He is our cleansing from all our sin. Trust him.

If you'd like to review my teaching notes online, go to:

- <https://www.famousgod.com/teaching-notes>

If you want to explore repentance in more depth, check out:

- Repentance: The First Word of the Gospel, by Richard Owen Roberts.
- The Doctrine of Repentance, by Thomas Watson.

WORSHIP CELEBRATION

Sunday, July 25, 2021

1:30 Welcome & Prayer -Eve

Welcome

Pray

Invocation: I rejoiced when they said, "Let us go up to the house of the Lord!"

5:29 *Glorious -Eve*

Eve

6:21 *Freedom -Alex*

Alex

0:45 Pray & Dismiss Kids -Dennis

3:00 Bible Reading -Rom 12:9-21 -Dennis

5:14 *Tremble - Latrice*

Latrice

3:00 Vision Prayer -Tami

3:00 Albert Bachman Baptism -Peter, Brian

25:00 Teaching - Gospel Repentance, Luke 5:27-39

1:00 Apostle's Creed -Peter

7:00 Communion -Tami

4:07 *God So Loved - Alex*

Eve

1:30 Updates -Joey

visitor

Family Camp

Men's group

updates on Joe F & Ginny

Church website

0:30 Blessing- joey

psalm 20

May the Lord answer you when you are in distress;

may the name of the God of Jacob protect you.

2 May he send you help from the sanctuary

and grant you support from Zion.
