



“Teaching them to observe all things whatsoever I have commanded you...” Matthew 28:20

Church of Christ • 13800 S. 4080 Road • P.O. Box 527 • Oologah, Oklahoma 74053

“But Now Commandeth All Men Every Where to Repent”

Chuck Northrop

One of the most common themes in the Bible is repentance. Though the word is not often found, the concept is prevalent. From the beginning, men have needed to turn back to God, and God’s messengers have called men to do such. Sin entered the world with the first man and woman, Adam and Eve, and since that time repentance has been necessary. Noah was “a preacher of righteousness” (2 Peter 2:5), and since he lived in “the world of the ungodly,” he preached repentance. The various Old Testament prophets preached messages of repentance to Israel and later to the divided kingdom. Like the prophets of old, John the baptizer preached repentance in the wilderness of Judea (Mark 3:2). Jesus also preached repentance. He declared, “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Mark 2:17). In addition, Jesus sent His apostles to preach throughout Judea, and they preached the same message (Mark 6:12). After the church was established, the apostles continued preaching repentance (Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30).

Since repentance is a common theme, then it is essential for all men to understand it. The basic definition of the word means “to change one’s mind” (Thayer’s). However, that is descriptive of where and how repentance begins. Jonah was a man of repentance. God called Jonah to go to Nineveh and preach against it because of their wickedness. However, Jonah went the opposite way (Jonah 1). After being “in the belly of the fish three days and three nights,” Jonah had a change of mind, but his repentance did not stop there. He went to Nineveh and preached against it (Jonah 3). Thus, repentance is a change of mind which results in a change of actions.

Within repentance there are two turnings: turning from sin and turning to God. Micah called upon Judah to turn from their wicked ways. Their leaders acted like cannibals (Micah 3), the wealthy coveted lands and houses (Micah 2), and their priests and prophets taught for money (Micah 3). Because of this, Micah called them to turn from their sins. They needed “to do justly, and to love mercy,” but they also needed “to walk humbly with...God” (Micah 6:8). Thus, they needed to turn from their sins and turn to God.

A New Testament example is Simon the sorcerer of Acts 8. When he “saw that through laying on of the apostles’ hands the Holy Spirit was given, he offered them money” (verse 18). In response Peter said, “Thy money perish with thee” (verse 20) “...for thy heart is not right in the sight of God” (verse 21). Simon needed to do some serious thinking about what he did. He needed to turn from his sins. For this reason, Peter declared, “Repent therefore of this thy wickedness, and pray God, if perhaps the thought of thine heart may be forgiven thee” (verse 22). “Repent...of this thy wickedness” is about turning from sin; whereas “pray God” is about turning to God.

Repentance begins with a change of mind, continues with a change of actions, and results in a change of relationship with God. Joel exhorted old Israel, “Therefore also now, saith the LORD, turn ye *even* to me with all your heart, and with fasting, and with weeping, and with mourning: And rend your heart, and not your garments, and turn unto the LORD your God: for he *is* gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness, and repenteth him of the evil” (Joel 2:12-13). Within this exhortation to repentance, Joel noted the time to repent is “now.” He further declared repentance was more than weeping and mourning. It is turning from sin and turning to God. Grace, mercy, and kindness of the Lord would be the result.

People are motivated to repent for various reasons and probably most often by a combination of reasons. Since God sent preachers to preach repentance, then it must be the case preaching is an effective tool to draw men from sin to turn to the living God. Obviously, not every person will listen as it was in Noah’s day and in the days of the Old Testament prophets. To the unbelieving world, the preaching of the cross is foolishness. However, to those who are saved and desire to be saved from their sins, it is the power of God unto salvation (1 Corinthians 1:18).

Within life, bad things happen, and sometimes those unfortunate events cause people to contemplate their standing before God. This must have been the circumstance of Luke 13 in which some people came to Jesus and “told Him of the Galileans, whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices” (verse 1). In response Jesus asked if they thought these Galileans were worse sinner and then exhorted, “I tell you, Nay: but, except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (verse 3). Then Jesus asked about eighteen individuals who lost their lives when the tower in Siloam fell which was followed by the same question and the same exhortation. People find themselves in horrible and deplorable situations. Bad things happen, and no one is exempt. What do we do? Repent and turn to God for help lest an even worse event happens; to perish eternally.

After serious reflection and as a person would expect, the bad things which happen to people are sometimes the result of personal sins. Paul declared, “for whatsoever a man soweth, that shall he also reap” (Galatians 6:7). The godly view sin with “godly sorrow.” They mourn over their sin realizing sin separates a person from God (Romans 6:23). In this way, “godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation” (2 Corinthians 7:10). Keep in mind, however, there is a difference between how Judas Iscariot sorrowed over his sins and how Peter sorrowed over his sins. Judas only sorrowed but did not turn to God for forgiveness. Peter truly repented by turning from sin and turning to God for salvation.

Though many people do not normally consider such, but God’s goodness should lead a person to repentance. Paul asked, “Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance” (Romans 2:4)? “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and cometh down from the Father of lights, with whom is no variableness, neither shadow of turning” (James 1:17). Even while in sin, God “maketh His sun to rise on the evil and on the good, and sendeth rain on the just and on the unjust” (Matthew 5:45). Does God’s goodness lead you to turn from your sins and turn to Him?

Though sometimes people get into the mind-set that if a miracle would occur, they would repent. Such is simply not the truth. How many people heard Jesus preach, saw the miracles which He did, and did not turn from sin and turn to Him? The same could be said of those who heard Peter and Paul during the first century and saw the wonders and signs which they did. In the account of the rich man and Lazarus, Jesus made a thought-provoking statement in response to the rich man’s request, “if one went unto them from the dead, they will repent.” Jesus said, “If they hear not Moses and the prophets, neither will they be persuaded, though one rose from the dead” (Luke 16:30-31).

God does not want anyone to “perish but that all should come to repentance” (2 Peter 3:9). It is for this reason He sent His Son into this wicked world of woes, not to condemn but to save (John 3:17). Jesus declared, “I say unto you, that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth” (Luke 15:7). This implies God and His angels are waiting to rejoice. Do you need to repent? You know God’s desire. What is your desire? It is your choice.

Interesting Quote from the forefathers of the United States:
“I believe in practical or applied Christianity. No sincere Christian will leave to the representatives of Satan the strong qualities. Cultivate the qualities of many-sided strength. I want you not only to be able to abstain, but I want you to be able to hold your own in the world, not merely to endure, but to fight the

good fight of faith; not merely to refrain from doing evil, but to war valiantly for righteousness against evil, for the great Captain of your salvation.” – Theodore Roosevelt, twenty-sixth President of the United States; in an address in Albany, New York, 1899 (“A Cloud of Witnesses” Page 381; Stephen Abbott Northrop; 1902)

Observations and Concerns

December 7, 2022

Welcome Visitors! We appreciate the encouragement you provide us by your coming.

“The LORD shall reign for ever, *even* thy God, O Zion, unto all generations. Praise ye the LORD” (Psalm 146:10).

Expression of Gratitude: We are thankful for the children and for all students who see the need and come to Bible classes each week.

Our **monthly potluck luncheon** is Sunday, December 11 after morning services. Everyone is invited and encouraged to stay! Please bring your favorite finger foods and a gift valuing \$10 or less if you wish to participate in the gift exchange.

Our guest speaker for this coming Sunday, December 11, is **Tony Welch**. He is a student at the Bible Institute of Missouri. Please be sure to make him feel welcomed.

For your convenience, small containers have been set in some pews for the disposal of communion cups.

Remember in Prayer:

- ▶ **Bill Dilks** has been feeling poorly after cancer treatments.
- ▶ **Ed Dindy**, father of Tia Swearingen, has been diagnosed with cancer. A recent bone scan was negative. He has a CT scan scheduled for this week.
- ▶ **Amanda Georgakis**, friend of Sherry Carmona, has breast cancer, and it has metastasized to her spine.
- ▶ **Mike Roberts**, preacher from Porter, OK, is doing better after his recent health trials.
- ▶ **Corey Johnson’s mother** has been very ill and is in the hospital in OKC. Corey is one of the Bibleway Media podcasters.

Schedule of Services	Assignments		
	Wednesday, Dec. 07	Sunday, Dec. 11 AM	Sunday, Dec. 11 PM
Sundays			
Bible Classes. . . 9:30 AM	Paul Praschnik	Russ Earl	Ross Swearingen
Worship 10:30 AM	Doyle Jackson	Ross Swearingen	Doyle Jackson
Worship 5:00 PM	Chris Nelson	Paul Praschnik	Russ Earl
Wednesdays			
Bible Classes. . . 7:00 PM		Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson
Website: oologahcofc.org		Doyle Jackson	
	Lesson	Chuck Northrop	Tony Welch
	Prayer / Door Attendant	Chuck Northrop	Chris Nelson
		Ross Swearingen	Paul Praschnik