

Choosing a Lifestyle of Repentance

Lesson #2

Scripture: Psalms 139:23-24 “Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.”

Introduction:

You have surely heard the term “spring cleaning”. Every year many Americans set aside some time to thoroughly clean their homes. During this grand event we even clean the top of our ceiling fans. We look under our beds for the first time in a year and we move furniture to even clean under them.

When we are done the house usually finds itself rearranged to some degree and smelling of Pine Sole. It stands tall and leans into the wind...so to speak.

We have several different cleanings each year because the longer between cleanings the harder it is to get the job done. Instead of an annual even we have turned it into a weekly maintenance process.

Transitional Statement:

We can view our spiritual live in much the same way. Anyone that has the breath of life in them has messes in their lives. As we consider pleasing God we want to keep ourselves, His temple, clean and not just as an academic exercise, but from a real heart felt desire to please God.

Lesson:

I. Repentance Begins with Knowledge

A. God instills in each of us a basic knowledge of right and wrong...Romans 2:14-15

1. And He gives us all the basic ability to know that He exists...Romans 1:20
2. As He draws us unto Himself. 2 Peter 3:9

B. With this most basic of knowledge God expects us to faithfully obey Him

1. This includes giving up ourselves Matthew 16:24
 - a. RepentanceActs 2:38
 - b. To turn and go a different direction.
2. But more specifically to change the way we view things in this world
 - a. i.e. to have another mind.

C. Repentance is more than sorrow, regret or grief although these things certainly accompany repentance.

1. It's not just a feeling of heart, but it is an action.

D. Beyond this basic implant of knowledge God expects us to grow in our understanding of Him.

1. 2 Timothy 2:15....Studying to show ourselves approved unto God.

E. And the more we study and search God's word the more our minds will be changed toward godliness.

1. You see, repentance is not a one time deal....it's a lifestyle !

2. It stems from a deep daily desire to please God.

II. Repentance grows out of Confession

A. We must acknowledge our failings in order to change them.

1. In short, we can't fix what we won't admit.

2. 1 John 1:9 "If we confess our sins...God is faithful to forgive".

B. Daily we must understand that we have all sinned and fallen short of God's expectation in our lives Romans 3:23

1. We must understand that there is great value in confession.

a. We must avoid the human tendency to see shame in it.

b. And understand that it is a vital step in changing the way we view life and our relationship with God.

c. And confession is a healing suave for the soul.

C. We must avoid at all cost the tendency to hide our sins. Adam and Eve found out real quick that they God knows all things.

1. Hiding sin is really an attempt to direct your own path and in so doing you ultimately ask God to take a back seat in your life.

D. Psalms 139:23-24 "Search me, O God, and know my heart; Try me and know my anxious thoughts; 24 And see if there be any hurtful way in me, And lead me in the everlasting way.

E. Church, we must understand the depths of the idea that Satan is a roaring lion seeking to devour us 1 Peter 5:8

III. Repentance grows out of an understanding of Sin

- A. While Sin includes the doing of wrong things and not doing what we know to do.
- B. Sin in the New Testament comes to us from the Greek word HARMATIA meaning to miss the mark.
 - 1. A deep relationship with God comes from a heart that desires to reach the mark that God has set in their lives.
 - 2. A mindset that is constantly willing to embrace the maturing winds that God sends in our lives and readjust our course daily.
 - 3. Not an attitude of we have arrived.

IV. Repentance Grows With Delight in Righteousness

- A. I have learned in this life to delight in many things. For instance I love my family, my power tools and I sure do like rib-eye steak. I find great personal pleasure in these things and they bring joy to my heart in many ways.
 - 1. I make time for each of these things in my life.
 - 2. I am never too far removed from any of them.
- B. Church, the mindset of repentance is one that feels this way about God to the exclusion of all other things. Luke 14:26
- C. Is God this important in our lives.
 - 1. Do we lay awake at night longing to see God.
 - 2. Is He the focus of all of our dreams
 - 3. Have we placed God on the highest place of our hearts.
- D. True repentance leads us to this desire of heart.

V. Repentance is the light switch of praise

- A. A repentant heart is one that cannot contain its praises to God.
 - 1. The Pharisees wanted to stop the praise of God when Jesus entered Jerusalem.
 - a. The Pharisees tried to shut down the praise of God and Jesus says if you stop it the rocks will cry out... Luke 19:40
 - b. Jeremiah says God is like a fire in my bones....I have to let it out...Jeremiah 20:9
- B. I also think of King David's repentant heart in consideration of his sin with Bathsheba
 - 1. After David asked God to return to him the joy of His salvation.

- a. He says “Oh Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.” Psalms 51:15
- b. His repentance had led him back to the alter of praise.
- C. Hebrews 13:15 “Through Him then, let us continually offer up a sacrifice of praise to God, that is, the fruit of lips that give thanks to His name.”

VI. Repentance draws others to God.

- A. A repentant heart is one that is full of passion.
 - 1. Working for God with the whole heart. Col. 3:23
- B. Deeply convicted
- C. Unable to contain the excitement.
 - 1. We might think of being “On Fire for God”
- D. A repentant heart is a heart of submission
 - 1. Applying ourselves to the mission of Matthew 28:18-20

VII. Repentance brings us to Spiritual Wholeness.

- A. Real repentance happens at the most humble of places in our hearts.
- B. But through it, God lifts us to the mountains of Zion
- C. Real repentance moves us away from outward appearances, and moves us into a deep relationship with the Almighty God.
 - 1. Jesus says seeking after the outward appearance is like white washing tombs to give a grand appearance....while the truth is they only house dead men’s bones. Matthew 23:27

Conclusion:

Matthew 12:43-45

43 " Now when the unclean spirit goes out of a man, it passes through waterless places seeking rest, and does not find it. 44 "Then it says, 'I will return to my house from which I came'; and when it comes, it finds it unoccupied, swept, and put in order. 45 "Then it goes and takes along with it seven other spirits more wicked than itself, and they go in and live there; and the last state of that man becomes worse than the first. That is the way it will also be with this evil generation."