

Repentance - Part 2

by David Smithers

Repentance is a heartache for holiness, a longing to be conformed to the image of Christ, and a willingness to be changed by God.

Duration: 23:24

Scripture: Mark 1:14-16

Topics: "Repentance", "Spiritual Transformation"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on Mark 1:14-22, where Jesus begins his ministry by preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Jesus prepares the people to receive this message by calling them to repentance and belief in the gospel. The preacher emphasizes that repentance involves turning away from our old identity and allowing Jesus to redefine our present self-image and future dreams. He also highlights that repentance is not limited to turning away from obvious sins, but includes a deeper transformation of the heart. The sermon encourages listeners to embrace repentance as a vital part of their Christian experience.

Transcript

You guys, do you know what it is to have a heartache for holiness? To have a heartache for holiness? When you get a glimpse of the King, when you get a glimpse of the King Jesus, does he ever have an experience where your heart burned and ached, and you say, oh God, make me a holy man, make me a holy woman. God, I must be, I must be, I must be conformed to the image of your Son. God, set me free from these things that are binding me and hold me back.

Have you ever had that? That is normal Christianity, you guys. If you don't have a heartache to be conformed to the image of Christ, if something doesn't break in you and cry out and long, reach up to heaven to be changed, you guys, that's not the way it's supposed to be. You want to read an awesome book about this? There's the testimony of David Brainerd, a wonderful man of God, missionary that went to the Indians of North America, sold out for Jesus, so much more sold out than anybody that I've ever met, but this man's constantly had a heartache, a longing to be conformed to the image of Christ.

Read about it, it's right over there. The diary of David Brainerd, wonderful stuff. You guys, we have got to, this is a clear, clear part of our Christian experience.

Is your heart hurting? Is it longing to be conformed to the image of Christ? It's a good sign that repentance is at work, that you're a man or woman that knows how to walk out repentance. So we see the majesty, the glory of the King demands that there be a repentance, demands that there be a turning away from anything having dominion over your life. But you guys, repentance does not always involve what we would call normal sensual sins.

Did you know that? Sometimes when we think, well, I've turned away from sin. You know all the bad junk, all the drinking and drugging and immorality, all the ugly stuff, the dark stuff that we wouldn't like to admit to. But you guys, repentance involves a lot more than just turning away from the shameful things.

Did you know that? Let's look at another passage here. Let me read this. Repentance is turning away from our old identity.

It is the willingness to allow the King to redefine our present self-image and all our future dreams. Repentance. Did you catch that? Repentance is not just turning away from the ugly stuff.

It's actually saying, God, I will turn to You as King. I will submit to You as King. I am willing to let You rule and reign in my life by Your grace, by Your power, through faith in what Jesus did on the cross.

I'm willing to totally let that happen in every area of my life, not just the shameful areas. Isn't this what Paul was talking about in Philippians 3? Let's look at that passage just real quickly. Philippians 3. This is not a sin list that Paul gives us when he's talking about turning away from everything.

Rejoice in Christ and have no confidence in the flesh. Verse 4, chapter 3, Though I also might have confidence in the flesh, if anyone else think he may have confidence in the flesh, I more so. Circumcise the eighth day.

He's a good church kid is what he's saying right here. Of the stock of Israel. Of the tribe of Benjamin.

A Hebrew of Hebrews. Concerning the law. A Pharisee.

Very religious. Concerning zeal. Persecuting the church.

Concerning righteousness, which is in the law. Blameless. Can any of us say that? I don't think so.

But what things were gained to me, these I have counted lost for Christ. Yet indeed I also count all things lost for the excellence of the knowledge of Christ Jesus, my Lord, for whom I have suffered the loss of all things. Not just the dirty, ugly things, you guys.

He surrenders all things and counts them as rubbish that I may gain Christ. He's just talking about a lot of things. Good things.

Religious things that most people would be proud to boast in. He says, I count it all as rubbish. Repentance is turning away from our old identity.

This is Paul's old identity, even though it was very religious. Repentance is turning away from our old identity and a willingness to allow the King to redefine our present self-image and all our future dreams. Mark 1, 14-22.

Let's read a story about Jesus. Now, after John was put in prison, we're talking about John the Baptist, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel of the kingdom of God. Now, how does Jesus prepare the people to receive this gospel of the kingdom? That the King has come.

That He's on His way. He wants access to His people again. This is how He does it.

Saying, the time is fulfilled and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent and believe in the gospel. Jesus preached repentance.

And as He walked by the Sea of Galilee, He saw Simon and Andrew, His brother, casting a net into the sea, and they were fishermen. These men were fishermen. This is what they did well.

This was the family business. This is all they knew. This is how they identified themselves.

Guys, don't you know what I'm talking about? The things that we do are a lot of times the things that we gain our significance from. This is what they took merit in. This is what they trusted in, to feel good about themselves.

This wasn't a bad thing. This wasn't a sinful thing. They were good, hardworking men.

They were fishermen. But this repentance that prepares the way for God's kingdom to come in their life would also touch this good thing in their life. And Jesus said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you become fishers of men.

He'll do it, not us. Come after Me. Follow Me explicitly, without question, without reserve.

And I will make you become fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed Him. Is that awesome or what, you guys? The audacity of Jesus to barge into these good, hardworking men's lives and walk right up to them and say, Hey, I want to change everything about you.

I know you're doing a good job at this. I know you gain your significance from these acts, good acts. But I'm wanting to change it.

I'll make you fishers of men. Leave all this and follow Me. They immediately dropped their nets and let Jesus, in one fell swoop, radically redefine everything about them.

That is repentance. Is that wild or what, you guys? Repentance isn't just turning for some ugly thing. Repentance is turning away from anything that we trust in.

What you're trusting in is what is king in your life. These hardworking men trusted in the fact that they were hardworking men, diligent, responsible. That's a good thing, isn't it? Don't we need men that are... The Scripture says that if a man does not provide for his own household, he's worse than an infidel.

Jesus isn't discouraging sloth or negligence or irresponsibility. But He's saying, Hey, I'm going to be king first and foremost in your life. Let's read on.

These weren't the only two guys He picked on. Then Jesus said to them, Come after Me, and I will make you fishers of men. And immediately they left their nets and followed Him.

Read on. When He had gone a little farther, just a little farther down the road, when He had gone a little farther from there, He saw James the son of Zebedee and John his brother, who also were in a boat

mending nets. And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with the hired servants and went after Him.

These two fishermen have a whole family business going. Dad's there that no doubt has handed the business down to them. He's got some other servants working here.

They're working hard. These two brothers, you know, it was probably what? Zebedee and son's fishing business right there on the Sea of Galilee. You know what I'm saying? But Jesus again barges into their life.

Says, Follow Me. Follow Me. Leave everything and follow Me.

Let Me be king of your life. Have you guys thought about repentance in this way? And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with their hired servants and went after Him. Am I encouraging to disregard? You guys, do you know what it is to have a heartache for holiness? To have a heartache for holiness? When you get a glimpse of the King, when you get a glimpse of the King Jesus, did you ever have an experience where your heart burned and ached, and you say, Oh God, make me a holy man.

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Dad's there that no doubt has handed the business down to them. He's got some other servants working here. They're working hard.

These two brothers, you know, it was probably what? Zebedee and son's fishing business right there on the Sea of Galilee. You know what I'm saying? But Jesus again barges into their life and says, Follow Me. Follow Me.

Leave everything and follow Me. Let Me be King of your life. Have you guys thought about repentance in this way? And immediately He called them, and they left their father Zebedee in the boat with their hired servants and went after Him.

Am I encouraging to disregard or dishonor your fathers? By no means. Anybody that knows me very well knows I'm a huge advocate of the Fifth Commandment. If you want a blessing in your life, you better obey and honor your parents.

But, you guys, there's only one King. Let's read on. In Matthew 9.9, Jesus just had a habit of doing this, to walking into people's lives and saying, Hey, follow Me, and they left everything.

Matthew 9.9, and Jesus went on from there. He saw a man named Matthew sitting at a tax office, and He said to him, Follow Me. So he arose and followed Him.

Oh, to God. Lord, I wish we were these kind of people that could just do this. It just seems they do it so easily, doesn't it? Doesn't it seem that way? My, repentance is turning away from anything that you're putting your trust in more than the Lord Jesus Christ.

Number three, repentance is turning away from the esteem and approval of men. It is the willingness to be the King's fool. Repentance is finding our complete and absolute approval in Christ.

Jesus is going deeper, isn't He? First, the message of the Kingdom just touches their external life, their sin, the ugly stuff. Then Jesus even touches the good stuff that they serve as King. Now Jesus reaches in a little farther and wants to define repentance as the thing, how we even recognize ourselves as just being a man or a woman, just how we view ourselves on a deeper, inner core level.

You'll see what I'm talking about right here. At that time, in Matthew 18, 1 through 4, at that time the disciples came to Jesus saying, Who is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven? They're wanting to know how this Kingdom works. Who's the people that really make this Kingdom work? Then Jesus called a little child to Him, set Him in the midst of them, and said, Assuredly, I say to you, unless you repent and become as a little child, you will by no means enter the Kingdom of Heaven.

Therefore, whoever humbles himself as a little child is the greatest in the Kingdom of Heaven. Wow, Jesus, I thought, you know, I could be a rough and tumble strong man, you know, as a fisherman first. Now you take that away from me.

Surely I can be a macho man in the Kingdom of God, can't I? Can't I strut around and, you know, stick out my chest in the Kingdom and be a mighty man of God? He says, No, I don't need that. I need a bunch of little children. I want you to take the posture of a servant and humble yourself.

Humble yourself. Become little in your own sight. Recognize that I'm everything, everything.

Do you see where this is going? Do you see the deeper level? Jesus is penetrating to a different place. Guys, have you ever let Jesus go there? Maybe you've let God redefine your values, your morals. Maybe you've let Jesus even redefine what you're going to do with the rest of your life.

But if you let Jesus redefine how you carry yourself, how you present yourself, how you walk, the approval that you want from other people, for them to think that you're something special, something neat. Have you come to the place of repentance where you don't care if people notice you, if they see you, if they hear you? Do you hear what I'm talking about, you guys? Every place of ministry that I have ever understood or known comes after on the heels of a place where you say, Jesus, I don't care if anybody ever sees me. I don't care if anybody ever hears me.

I am willing to be hidden in you, Lord. I will bow and get out of the way. I will be little.

That's the place where God can use you. It's not your ability that He needs. It's not your cuteness.

It's not your good looks. It's not your education. It's your availability.

He needs humble little children. Have you ever went there? Do you see how God is going deeper? In Mark 10, verse 13, it says, Then they brought young children to Him that He might touch them, but the disciples rebuked those who brought them. You know, disciples are clueless, aren't they? They're always getting in the way.

Jesus wants to bless people, heal people, touch people, and they're always trying to keep the ones that Christ came to touch away from Jesus. He's always having to rebuke them, you know? The church still does that, doesn't it? But when Jesus saw it, He was greatly displeased and said to them, Let the little children come. Stop it.

Let them come to Me. And do not forbid them, for such is the kingdom of God. Do not forbid them.

Assuredly, I say to you, whoever does not receive the kingdom of God as a little child will by no means enter it. My buddy Frank Kelsey, always preaching on this message. Some of you guys have heard this.

He always uses the illustration of, you know, you ever been to McDonald's or Burger King? They got the thing out there in the playground. It's got all the balls in it and the nets. It's got a little doorway about this high.

It says if you're any taller than this, you can't get in here. You ever seen that? That's the kingdom of God. No big kids allowed inside.

You got to be little to get in, and you got to be little to play in God's kingdom, to walk in God's kingdom. Some of us are too big for God's kingdom, too full of ourselves. We got an itch to be heard.

Hey, I know all about it. I know all about it. Man, it seems like pride is the thing that we have to repent of more than anything, isn't it?

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