

# Does Doctrine Matter - Part 11

by Derek Melton

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*The sermon explores the nature of repentance as a divine grace that requires a responsive heart from believers.*

**Duration:** 49:11

**Scripture:** Psalm 30:5, Matthew 6:33, John 8:32, Romans 3:23, 2 Corinthians 5:17, 2 Timothy 2:24

**Topics:** "Doctrine"

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## Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes that the gospel of Christ serves as an indictment against the wickedness within mankind. He explains that before coming to Christ, humans are espoused to evil and wickedness. The gospel reveals the guilty status of all individuals before God, but it also provides a way of escape through the righteousness of Jesus Christ. The preacher highlights the importance of Godly sorrow and how it is temporary, leading to tears at night. He emphasizes that grace not only exposes the condition of the human heart but also reveals the excellencies of truth. The sermon concludes by emphasizing the significance of having a solid theological foundation and the freedom that comes from knowing the truth and being set free from the lies of the enemy.

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## Transcript

Today we're going to talk about the means whereby repentance is granted, or whereby it's attained. And so, I want you to bear with me. We don't want to lose our zip concerning desire to hear about the truth of the Word of God.

Don't let the word doctrine frighten you. I know that we're living in a time and a dispensation when it seems like when you talk about doctrine, people all of a sudden identify you with some crusty professor in some theological seminary somewhere that really doesn't count or matter. It's not that at all.

These are the life-giving, the vital oracles of God that we're preaching, that we're talking about that will keep you from falling prey to heresies and lies that are really rampant in our culture and our society. So we're going to pray and then we're going to launch forth into this and we'll see what the Lord will do. You ready? Father, speak to us concerning your Word.

Lord, we don't only need knowledge of repentance, but Lord, the experience of repentance. Lord, give us a teachable spirit today, and Father, give me the ability to teach. Father, anoint me from on high with power that comes from you and your throne, and Lord, not of my own strength nor of my own intellect or my own willpower, but Lord God, by yours, by your strength, Lord, by your anointing, Lord, by your

sovereign will, and Lord, by your grace.

Lord, let my tongue be used as a pen in the hand of the Almighty to inscribe the doctrinal tenets of the faith upon the hearts of the people of God that have been called by name. Help me, Lord. In Jesus' name, I pray, amen.

Most generally, I go and listen to these messages to see how I can improve. And one thing I've noticed in my preaching is that I'm loud. I say, not only do you have to listen to me, I force myself to listen to me, and that is very grievous.

But I'm looking for ways and seeking God to be better. I don't want to try to become who God has not purposed me to be. I want to fully experience and live up to the grace that God has appointed unto me and to be who God has ordained me to be and not try to be who God has not ordained me to be.

And so it's just seeking God to operate within the gift that God has placed inside of me by his wonderful, unmerited favor, and then to flow with that gift and with that grace to the benefit of the Lord's church. I was doing some teaching Wednesday night with the Thunderbird kids about the new life that Christ has given us. And we're born again to the kingdom of God with a little faith, but as we're hearing the word of God and as God has given us pastors and prophets and teachers, we know the five full ministry to to perfect the saints, that the saints might grow up to where we be no more children tossed to and fro.

My job is, by the grace of God, to raise you up in the kingdom of God that you might be prepared to do and begin to function within the work of the ministry. That's my job. And in so doing, the Lord must give me grace and ability to be able to discourse, teach and expound upon doctrinal matters, because it's the doctrinal truths of the word of God that will cause you to grow and to mature in the faith along, mingle with them.

I'm not saying we don't need the Holy Spirit, but with the work of the Holy Spirit, the spirit of God confirms the word of God on the inside of us. And so it was all working together for the good of those that love God. We're going to talk again about repentance today.

We're going to talk about the means of repentance. We have got past, even though I could talk much more about the need of repentance, I'm going to talk about the means of repentance and as necessary as it is for me to instruct and to teach you, the people of God, upon your need for repentance, it's equally as important for you to know the means whereby repentance is granted or attained. And so when I use terms like the term means, simply what I am relating to is the how of repentance.

What I'm talking about, the means is the how we get to that place, how we can achieve, how we can receive, how we can attain a repentant heart and how this repentance occurs. So the first thing I want to start off with noting, and if you're taking notes, you might note this down, that repentance is not a choice. Repentance is a grace.

Repentance is not something that you choose to do for yourself. It's something that God gives you by his sovereign grace. And I'm going to prove this with some scriptures today.

And there's been debating over this for centuries. But it doesn't take very much theological savvy to figure out that repentance is not something that you perform for yourself. It's not something that you initiate.

It's something that God works in you by his grace, something by his favor. He does this by his initiative and not by yours. Our part is responsive.

God's part is initiative. Are you with me? God is proactive. And then we are reactive in repentance.

And I want you to bear with me in this. Repentance is by the grace of God. It's not initiated by the human will, but it's initiated by the divine will.

It's initiated by the will of God. Now, listen to the word of God. If you want to turn to 2 Peter chapter 3 in your Bibles, you should bear with me.

I'm going to go over several scriptures this morning. We have a mighty need of repentance. Unless you repent, you shall all likewise perish.

The Bible says in 2 Peter chapter 3, verse 9, that the Lord is not slack concerning his promises of some men count slackness, but is long suffering to us. Word not willing that any should perish, but that all should come unto repentance. It's not God's will for men to die in their sins.

It is God's will to grant them repentance unto life. God is willing, and it is the will of God for his people to be a repentant people. I want to clear up another misnomer.

Repentance is not a grace that we experienced once in our life to never revisit or to experience again. We are in need of repentance throughout the course of our lives because this battle that we have on the inside of us, sometimes we, we shrink back and we need to repent of things that we through weakness have allowed to come into our lives. We always are going to need the wonderful grace of repentance.

Always. You're never going to attain a lofty position in your Christian walk to where you do not need repentance any longer. Write this in your heart, inscribe it in your imagination that you will always need God's wonderful gift of repentance as long as you dwell in that body up on this earth.

First of all, we must conclude that the depraved heart of man is absolutely and wholly incapable of anything that is spiritual because of his separation from all life that comes from God. But let me think about this. If you are dead in your sins, are you and do you have, and are you equipped with the capability to initiate something that is spiritual and grace rot, such as repentance? Beloved, when you're dead in sin, you're dead in sin.

There is no work of grace in your life because you are dead because of it and dead to it. Dead because of sin and dead to everything. That's of, of God, everything that's of, of God's life and everything that is divine.

You cannot initiate repentance for yourself because there is no divine life on the inside of you. We are taught, talked about the, the, the, the, the, the very truth of depravity and how depravity is, is, is a gross darkness on the inside of all of us. We've all been born with this sense of degeneracy on the inside of us.

We are dead to cut off from alienated from all hope, all divine life. And we're stuck in this rising condition of absolute moral collapse and degradation. There is not one glimpse of life in this darkness, not one ray of light, not one deviation from the darkness and the blackness of, of the abhorrence of depravity in us.

We are wholly incapable of initiating anything godly or divine, such as repentance. That brings a whole new realm of thought. You just can't repent whenever you want to repent.

It's given by the very grace of God. You might struggle with that. God's commanded you to repent.

Has he not? God has commanded all men everywhere to repent the beloved. Let me tell you something. Repentance is a response to the work of God's grace in your life.

God doesn't withhold, withhold grace. God makes grace available. Amen.

But we have to learn all of us doctrinally. It'll help us in our witness. Why someone is not responding that, listen, that there may be a time coming when God begins to work by his grace, but that season may not be now.

And I'm not off track in saying this. There's an appointed time of salvation. There is an appointed time of salvation.

Now, there are those out there in, in, in the newness of religious fanfare that will have a hard time swallowing that capsule, especially the charismatics that have a hard time swallowing that cast capsule, that truth, but there is an appointed day of salvation. We can back it up with scripture. And so we see here that repentance is by the will of God and not by the will of man, not willing that any should perish, but that all should come under repentance.

The effects of death are not of the will of God for his people, but not only the effects, but the act of repentance is the will of God for his people. The act of repentance, the effects of repentance, God is willing and beloved. If God is willing, there is grace.

And if there is grace, there is hope. If there is grace, there is repentance, grace and repentance work together just as a, as a, as a team and a plow. They work together to plow the ground, grace and repentance works together.

Repentance is through God's grace. Now, second Timothy, please. Chapter two, I'll read this out of the King James and then I'll render it in the American, the new American standard and second Timothy chapter two.

Are you there? Verse 24 and the servant of the Lord must not strive, but be gentle unto all men, apt to teach patient in meekness, instructing those that oppose themselves. If God peradventure will give them repentance to the acknowledging of the truth and that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the devil who are taken captive by him at his will. I want you to notice the terminology.

If God peradventure will give them repentance, love it as repentance or grace. Is it initiated by the wisdom and the grace of God, or is it initiated by the will of man is initiated by the will of God. The initiative is on the part of God.

The response is on the shoulders of man. Beloved, if just because grace is abounding, does it mean that people are responding? The beloved God is initiating this whole work of repentance peradventure. If God will grant them or God will give them repentance.

So, so as to infer. That God is initiating, God is giving at a specific time during a specific season of grace unto the rescuing of a specific people in a specific situation. The new American renders it this way.

This is the new American standard with gentleness, correcting those who are in opposition. If perhaps God may grant them repentance, leading them to the knowledge of the truth. That they may recover

themselves out of the snare of the devil.

Oops, I'm reading the wrong one. With gentleness, correcting those who are in opposition. If perhaps God may grant them repentance, leading them to the knowledge of the truth.

That they may come to their senses and escape. Does that remind you of the prodigal son? Remember, he came to himself. He came to him senses.

So God grants them repentance. Leading them. Do you see the initiative on the part of God here? God is granting them.

God is giving them the gift of repentance. The wonderful grace, the wonderful gift of repentance. God is leading them to the knowledge of the truth.

Now, beloved, listen. I want you to recognize here the order. There is no knowledge of the truth.

There's no revelation of the truth without a repentant heart. Do we realize that our sins separate us from divine knowledge, divine revelation? Repentance is a prelude, a forerunner to the knowledge of the truth being given. And that they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil.

And beloved, so I want you to see that repentance gives birth to the knowledge of the truth. The knowledge of the truth gives birth to the power of God in our lives to escape from the snare of the devil to whereby he has held us as a captive soul to do his own will. Do you see that? And so there is a progression here.

God grants repentance. There is a wonderful work of God's grace established in our heart. We respond to that repentance.

And we'll talk about other means momentarily, but we respond to that repentance. Repentance is granted. God leads us in and through the process and the grace of repentance unto an unveiling or a revelation of the powerful truths of the word of God, which give us victory over the powers of the devil, which has held us in captivity and bondage.

You want to be free from the power of darkness? You want to be free from the power of sin? Do you want to be free from the yoke of slavery? When God begins to move in our heart and to give us grace and opportunity under repentance, we must run forward into repentance that we may have the knowledge of the truth revealed into our hearts. It is in the very knowledge of the truth that we are set free from the power of the enemy because the enemy's power is lavished upon us through lies, deceit, lies, and the knowledge of the truth breaks the power of the devil's grasp because all of his trickery and deceit is laid bare. And the truth has set us free from those lies.

And then we began to travel in the pilgrim's way upon that straight and narrow way of life, of life and godliness. And if this last passage that we read didn't convince us that repentance is a grace, something that's divinely initiated and not achieved by human effort or will, this one should. And it's in Acts chapter 11, speaking about the Gentiles being grafted in to Christ.

And I'll just read one verse because I'm going to just to bring out, not out of context, within context, but illuminate the subject matter in this truth. Verse 18 says, When they heard these things, they held their peace, and they glorified God, saying, Then God also to the Gentiles granted repentance unto life.

Beloved, we must come to grips with the fact, the biblical truth, that repentance is of divine initiative.

It is a wonderful grace, something that God initiates through his sovereign grace in our lives that we can turn to him. And it's by the working of his grace in our life. It's not something achieved by human works, human strength, human merit.

Human ability is something divinely worked in our lives by the grace of almighty God. Say amen. Now, I don't want us to be confused in this, but it's imperative that we understand that God's grace works in us, repentance in contrast to the merit of man.

Repentance is not attained or achieved on the part of man by his own merit or under the power of his will. And you may ask, what is man's position in repentance? What's required of man to achieve repentance? And in 2nd Timothy, we see here, it indicates that repentance is granted by God to the acknowledging of the truth and to recover from the snare of the devil are parts that man cooperate with. The power of grace brings us into a wonderful experience of repentance.

God leads us into the revelation of the divine truths of the word of God. But beloved, it says that they may recover themselves out of the snare of the adversary. So we see now the divine initiative working in us, the divine grace of God working in us.

And now we see that something is required of man because truth is illuminated within us. But beloved, we have to make conscious decisions and choices to walk according to the light that God's revealed and to escape from the snare of the adversary. The walking away from darkness, the putting off of the old man, the hating the deeds of evil, the taking those garments that are spotted with the flesh and to hate them is our decision.

God initiates repentance. God through repentance leads us to revelation of the truth of the word of God. And beloved, we must cooperate with the spirit of grace and to flee from all evil, all unrighteousness into what? To follow peace with all men.

We do have a responsibility. We do have a responsibility. There is a part that God does require of us.

Try not to get too wordy. I'm trying not to cloud this topic here, but the grace of God, the unmerited favor of God begins to work deep inside the human heart, to deep, to work deep inside our will, to awaken the will, to awaken the heart or to quicken it, to give it life that had not life before to its dreadful condition. We run into the very bosom of Christ, who is our hope.

He grants us repentance. The repentance works within us. God loves a broken and a contrite heart.

God begins to illuminate things we've never seen with our eye, things that we've never conceived or pondered in our heart. God begins to reveal these glorious truths to us that set us free from the lies that we've been believing and following our whole lifetime. And then we have ability and a call and a command to walk worthy of the vocation.

We're with God's called us to walk, to flee from evil, to pursue righteousness. Does it make sense to you? So grace not only illuminates the condition of the human heart, but it also illuminates the excellencies of truth, grace. So in this grace-wrought awakened state, the heart of mankind is empowered to acknowledge the truth and to respond to its hope by faith, to the recovery of their very lives out of the snare of the devil who has taken them captive.

Hallelujah. This is very theological, but it's important. I think that you all will agree with me that there are certain theological principles that you must have down pat in your life.

Do you agree? Beloved, theology is the knowledge of God. That's all it is. There are theological principles that you need to know and understand and to have your life built upon.

Otherwise, you're going to be an open prey for every devilish doctrine that's on the surface of religious fanfare in this nation. God's called us to stand in truth, to not cower down to these doctrines. Beloved, if you don't have the doctrine or the theology in you, the knowledge of God, the truth, the foundational tenets of the faith, you'll believe anything.

You'll believe anything. And beloved, I'll tell you quite frankly, these religious tendencies come and they go as fast as they've come, and they change every year or two. One day, we're chasing the wind to the left.

The next day, we're chasing the wind to the right. One day, we're attending these camp meetings because of this name. Well, that name fails and falls, and we start chasing this one, and we start chasing, and all the while, we never mature.

We never grow up in Christ because we're constantly chasing every fad that comes in the name of religion. I have found in my years of being in the body of Christ that people that chase meetings are people that refuse to follow Christ. It's inadvertent, but they refuse to follow Christ, and they have this need to go into chasing, to find the newest thing out there because the things of God, the following Christ, the disciplines of the true Christian walk are grievous and burdensome to them, and they've chosen to forsake them.

And because they've chosen to forsake them, they have deemed the grievous and the burdensome mandates of Jesus Christ, they're going to go after something else. No matter what tribe you find on the face of the earth, God has put inherently within man the desire to worship something, whether it's Jesus Christ, the spirit of truth, or whether it's the lies of the adversary that change every 10 minutes. And then we find people that call themselves by the name of the Lord that reject the cross of the Lord.

And being they've rejected the cross of the Lord, they're still searching and chasing after phantoms, after phantoms, after lies. Romans chapter four, I'm sorry, Romans chapter two, verse four says, or despises thou the riches of his goodness and the forbearance and long suffering, not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance. Listen, it's not the merit of man.

It's not the will of man. It's not the desire of man. It's not the decision of man that leads man to repentance.

It's the goodness of God that leads man to repentance. Was that too loud for you? It's the goodness of God. It's on the merit of God.

It's the decision of God. It's the lavish love of God. It's the character and nobility of the stature of God that leads us to repentance.

Every good and perfect gift comes from the father of lights in whom there's no variableness of turning. It's the benevolent heart of God almighty towards mankind that grants grace under repentance. God leads man under repentance.

Repentance is not merited. What is merited? Death, separation, alienation, hopelessness for eternity. That's what man deserves.

Repentance is not merited, nor is repentance sought by man. God leads man into repentance by his character. God leads man into repentance by his benevolence, by God's goodness, and by God's kindness.

Amen. Established. Let me talk about another means that God uses.

God uses sorrow to bring us to repentance. Sorrow, that word that we don't like to talk about, an experience that we don't like to experience. Yesterday was a bad day for me on the earthly plane of sorrow.

And I'm just, y'all know I'm struggling with my baby getting married. And I just boohooed like a baby all day long. And I had friends coming over to take the dinner, choose his birthday.

And I told Stacy, I'm not gonna be able to quit. I'm gonna cry all the way through dinner. I'm gonna ruin it all.

And it wasn't, I couldn't even control it. And there's just this sorrow upon me. And like, well, she's marrying a God.

I know that. I know she's only gonna be two miles away, but she's not gonna be at home. And it's tough.

It is tough. And so that sorrow, we don't like sorrow. I didn't like sorrow.

I told Stacy, someone pray for me to stop. Get us to quit. My eyes were puffed out to hear.

Thank God I'm preaching her funeral. It's the beginning, not the end. But let's go to 2 Corinthians chapter seven.

Let's receive. 2 Corinthians seven, we're starting in verse seven. And not by his coming only, but by the consolation wherewith he was comforted in you.

When he told us your earnest desire, your mourning, your fervent mind toward me, so that I rejoice the more. For though I made you sorry with a letter, I do not repent, though I did repent. For I perceived that the same epistle, as a letter have made you sorry, though it were a bit for a season.

Now, I rejoice not that you were made sorry, but that he sorrowed to repentance. For you were made sorry after a godly manner that you might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation, not to be repented of, but the sorrow of the world worketh death.

Now here, the apostle speaks of godly sorrow. Now, let me define this term. Godly sorrow is a sorrow that is within our hearts that is God wrought.

It's a sorrow that we have within us that is brought upon us and seized upon us by the sovereign will and sovereign work of God. Amen. It's a true sorrow for sin, not only a sorrow for the act of sin, but a sorrow for the nature of sin as well.

Then this sorrow will seize the human heart as the sinfulness of sin is illuminated by the holiness of God. And then the penalty of this condition is revealed unto us by the justice of God, causing us to cry out, oh,

wretched man that I am, who shall deliver me from this body of death? This sorrow, this godly sorrow works within us a contrition, a brokenness, a repentance that I've put in my notes is absolutely miserably beautiful. It's miserably beautiful.

The heart, my friend, listen, I'm talking about things that you need to listen to. A heart that has not felt the enormity of the weight of sin in light of the justice of God that holds man personally responsible for his sin has not, nor can that heart experience true repentance. Can I say that again? The heart that has not felt the enormity of the weight of sin.

We're talking about sins that beset us, sins that are within us, sins of omission, sins of commission, sins that not only by conduct, but sins by nature. If we've not felt the enormity of the weight of sin in light of the holiness and the justice of God that holds each of us personally responsible for our sin has not, nor can it experience repentance. The repentant heart always is awakened to the sinfulness of sin, the enormity of sin, the justice of God and the punishment of the wicked.

Always. And if our heart has not ever experienced in measure and the measure will be different. But if our heart has never experienced a measure of a revelation of how evil sin is, the weight of sin, the effect of sin, the justice of God concerning sin, the judgment of God awaiting sin.

But we have not, nor will we experience repentance until we feel that weight. There are two kinds of sorrow expressed here in this passage. I believe it's important that we illuminate and speak about.

One is godly sorrow. The second is worldly sorrow. I don't want to camp out here too long, but I believe it's important that we understand the difference between the two.

Worldly sorrow has its origin in means outside of the sovereign framework of God. Let me say that again. Worldly sorrow has its origin or has its beginning in the means that are outside of the framework of God.

Sometimes we have sorrow for decisions that we have made on our own. Are you with me? We began to experience the consequences of those decisions and we're sorrowful that we're experiencing the situation that we are experiencing without the sorrow of the sin itself. Does that make sense to you? Worldly sorrow is a sorrow that is dispensed by methods such are ordinary and in contrast to those which are super ordinary or divine, divinely wrought.

There's a sorrow for actions or there's a sorrow for sins that finds its origin in utter selfishness. The adulterer that's been caught in his sin may have sorrow, but his sorrow may only be because in that he was caught. Also, his sorrow may be that his good name has now become tarnished and his reputation has become marred.

His sorrow is self-initiated, not grace wrought. He's simply sorry that his sin was found out to his own damage, but he's yet wholly unrepentant. But yet the repentant begins to sorrow for the damage they've heaped upon the name of the Lord.

In 2 Samuel chapter 12, verse 13 and 14, David said to Nathan, I've sinned against the Lord. And Nathan said to David, the Lord has put away your sin, you're not going to die. How be it because this deed, you've given a great occasion to the enemies of the Lord to blaspheme.

Are you with me? The repentance, the true repentant begins to see that his sins are against God. Just like David cried out in the 51st Psalm, he said, against thee, thee only have I sinned and done this evil in thy

sight. And the sorrow is godly in that God reveals to the heart the injustices against God's law and the injustices against God's character.

The injustices against God's love, the injustices against God's word, the injustices against God's person. And God begins to press that down and seize that upon us to produce a contrition and a sorrow for sin. Amen.

So then godly sorrow is marked by the deep grieving over sin as it is revealed as an offense against God himself, as well as God's lofty standards. Worldly sorrow is a sorrow that is seized by an occasion whereby sin begins to damage the sinner. And the consequences are grievously burdensome to that center.

They're burdensome to him with no thought to the damage or insult against the spirit of grace. Amen. And so we see that the grace of God as well as the sorrow of God are means whereby we repent.

Yet we know that the apostle by the Holy Spirit's unction wrote a letter to the sinful condition. Have you all ever read the first letter to the church of Corinth? First Corinthians? These people were not nice. I mean, it was a church setting similar to what we see here, but the people were all living in fornication.

Sexual sin, licentiousness. I mean, every evil that was named is named. The Corinthian church was ungodly and wicked.

And so he writes them a letter reproving them by illuminating the holy righteous standards of the almighty. And they began to sorrow. This letter was a means, a God ordained means to work sorrow, godly sorrow in the hearts of the Corinthian church that did indeed lead them unto repentance.

Well, you have to understand something. The Corinthian church didn't have a Bible. You have a Bible.

They did not have a Bible. They did not have the written gospel of Jesus Christ. So the apostle wrote them a letter in his own handwriting as he was inspired by the Holy Spirit of God to bring sorrow upon them for their sin.

And as they read Paul's letter, they were convicted. They were sorrowful in this letter. Beloved was a means towards their repentance.

Beloved today, you and I have the gospel of Jesus Christ as God's means ordained to bring about this, this godly sorrow in our hearts. And it's done so by God's grace. This is where so many pulpits in America work against the grace of God.

They avoid every text and every subject matter and every topic that would work together with the Holy Spirit of God to produce godly sorrow in the hearts of sinful men. These men are nothing other than hirelings. They're hirelings.

And they give themselves unto the applaud of man and not unto the glory of our God. They refuse to work with the spirit of grace and the presenting of the true gospel of Jesus Christ to their audience lest they offend their carnal members. Amen.

The anointed preaching, friend, of the gospel of Jesus Christ is God's ordained means unto repentance unto salvation. The anointed preaching of the whole counsel of God, the gospel of Jesus Christ is God's ordained means to bring sorrow for sin into our lives, for us to experience the high and lofty standards of

our God, to reveal the low condition of man, but yet to point away the Jesus Christ that bridged that gap that he might deliver us from that which has destroyed us. Amen.

Amen. Paul said this in Romans 1, 15 to 17. So as much as in me, I am ready to preach the gospel to you that are in Rome also, for I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ, for it is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that believeth, the Jew first and also to the Greek, for therein is the righteousness of God revealed from faith to faith, as it is written, the just shall live by faith.

Beloved, the gospel of Jesus Christ, as it is preached, proclaimed and heralded faithfully by those that have been called of God to preach the good news is a revelation of the righteousness of God. And the revelation of the righteousness of God, my friend, is also in turn a revelation of the abhorrence and the wickedness of man. The gospel of Jesus Christ as God's ordained means to bring godly sorrow into our lives.

We're living in a culture that hates this. Churches that preach the gospel instead of talk about the gospel, are you with me? Or are despised by culture, despised by the powers of darkness, my friend. It's through the anointed gospel message that the righteous standards of God are revealed.

The righteous character and nature of God is revealed through the gospel of Jesus Christ. The righteousness of God and the requirements of God illuminate the sinful acts, also the sinful nature within us, causing us therefore to writhe, to writhe within us in deep contrition and in godly sorrow. Beloved, this is a gift.

This is a gift. Paul made his audience sorry through his letter. The church that is faithful to God and faithfully declares God's letter to mankind will make them sorry, a godly sorrow under repentance.

But beloved, it's the gift of God, it's the call of God. The church is to be not only living testaments of the gospel, but we are to proclaim the gospel, to preach the high and lofty standards and the righteousness of God that's revealed through the gospel and to a generation, my friend, that is serving itself. When we begin to preach the gospel and the righteousness of God, this is where even the religious system begins not only to shrink back, but begins to vehemently oppose the true gospel of Jesus Christ.

And that's why we hear another gospel today. The gospel is an indictment. I mentioned this last week.

The gospel of Christ is an indictment against the wickedness of mankind. It's an indictment against evil that is within us, that we are espoused to. We, beloved, before Christ have been espoused to evil and wickedness.

The gospel addresses the guilty status of man before God, but yet it stops the mouth of the lion. It declares us all to be guilty and offenders. The same gospel, though, that passes a death sentence of guilt upon us all, also makes a way of escape for us through the merit of Jesus Christ and the merit of his righteousness.

Now, stay with me, I'm about done. Let me also explain something, that godly sorrow is seasonal. It lasts for a season.

Tears come at night, joy comes in the morning. The apostle Paul said, for I perceive that the same epistle hath made you sorry, though it were for a season. Well, the godly sorrow works in us for a season as a means to produce an effect of repentance in us.

A repentance not to be repented of, a repentance that bursts forth the glorious rays of light of God's glorious and wonderful salvation and joy and liberty and peace and fullness of him. Beloved, it's not going to happen, though, until we've been sorry. Amen.

The sentence of death through repentance will be revoked, annulled, and we are granted or we're imputed a right standing, a righteous standing before God through Jesus Christ, through repentance. So I think the appropriate question before us this morning is. Have we sorrowed after a godly sort? Over our sins, I propose to you, my friend, that it would be beneficial for all of us to get before God with a pen and a pencil and ask God to reveal the sins of our heart, sins of commission, sins of omission.

God revealed to us our sins. Search me, oh God, and know me and reveal to me anything that might be within me and to write them down in your own handwriting on sheets of paper. Ask God to illuminate the sins that are still yet in your heart.

Listen, friend, take the time to write them down. You'll be utterly surprised what God will show you. I heard one brother say that he did this thinking that he was only going to jot down two or three sins and he filled the whole notebook up.

God kept naming and kept naming, kept naming, kept pointing out sins that he had in his heart. This brother was completely broken at the sins that were within him at the end of this time of asking the Lord Jesus to reveal the sins of his heart. Now, when the pages get full, it's imperative that we get before God and that we beseech God for the wonderful grace of repentance.

We've been promised by God's promises the gift of the Holy Spirit that will convict us of our sins, have we not? And we need this work of the Holy Spirit to deeply convict us of sin that we might sorrow over sin after a godly sort and then subsequently repent unto life. Repent unto life. Now, let me ask you, my friend, what is it that you are harboring in your heart? Unforgiveness towards an offender in your life, unbridled lust, wandering eyes, a lying tongue, a slothful work ethic, a gossiping mouth, a haughty spirit, a confidence in the flesh, a lack of faith, a lack of prayer, a neglect of the word.

What is it we have? And beloved, why carry these sins even into our destruction when the glorious grace of repentance awaits us? Amen. Beloved, it's imperative that we all as the body of Christ seek the Lord while there is yet time. Don't think for a moment that the repentance is only for the unjust.

I'm talking about those outside of the covenant of hope. Repentance is even for those that are in Christ. I want to reiterate that wonderful passage by the prophet of God.

Consider thy ways, saith the Lord of hosts. Consider thy ways, saith the Lord of hosts. No, we're not going to go any further today.

We're not going to talk about the marks of the repentant today. But beloved, there can be no marks until there's a means. There can be no marks until there's a means.

The means will always go before as a forerunner to the work of repentance in our life that will produce fruit. The fruit of repentance. We're going to talk about the fruit of repentance next week.

Godly sorrow that we talked about today is the means of repentance. Listen to me. Sorrow is not indicative of repentance.

Did you hear what I just said? Sorrow is not indicative of repentance, but only sorrow after a godly sort. Sorrow after a godly sort. And then repentance is noted by or marked by fruit consistent with the nature of repentance.

And that will be our final message upon the doctrine of repentance. Let's stand.

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