

Four R's of the Gospel:repentance

by E.A. Johnston

E.A. Johnston emphasizes the critical need for repentance in the Gospel to ensure true salvation and submission to Christ's Lordship.

Duration: 20:36

Scripture: Matthew 3:8, Matthew 7:19, Matthew 19:16-22, Luke 5:32, Luke 15:7, Acts 17:30, Romans 6:23

Topics: "Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of preaching the four arms of the gospel: rune, redemption, repentance, and regeneration. He argues that before sinners can be led to Mount Zion, they must first be brought to Mount Sinai to confront their sins. The preacher emphasizes the need for individuals to submit to the lordship of Jesus Christ and allow Him to rule in their lives. He warns against a superficial confession of faith and emphasizes the importance of living a holy life under God's authority. The sermon concludes with a reminder that the Gospel must be preached in its purity and proper order, and that sinners must repent and bear good fruit to receive salvation.

Transcript

We are in our series of the Four R's of the Gospel, Rune, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration. We're preaching that the Gospel must be preached in its purity and proper order, and that the law must be preached before grace. Well, Sam Jones, the great evangelist, used to say that repentance was quitting your meanness.

We should take his advice. You see, friends, somewhere along the way in America, some big preachers held a committee meeting, and they decided to omit repentance from the Gospel. This caught on like wildfire, and soon few in the pulpits of our land preached the need for repentance in relation to salvation.

They just got out the razor and cut the words of Christ out, which clearly state, Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. And that statement became prophecy in modern day America, as hell has been filled with millions of church members who saw no need of repenting of their sins. They just swallowed the modern Gospel and accepted Jesus as their personal Savior, and then they died and fell into hell and fulfilled that statement of our Lord.

Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish. And perish they did. What we've done today in your day and mine is gotten out our pocket knives and have both carved out of our Bible the word repentance and

thrown it away in the trash bin, and then we took that same pocket knife and whittled out for ourselves a little bitty God that's our size or smaller, one we can live with, one we can be comfortable with, one that won't have any demands on us, one we can take for salvation and be left alone for living right.

For we want to go to heaven, but we still want to hug our sins, so we murdered the doctrine of repentance and buried it, and we've looked the other way, hoping no one has seen us commit this high crime against our Bibles and the God of our Bibles. Listen, friends, when it became popular to omit repentance from our vocabulary, it gave us a popular Gospel which has been swallowed hook, line, and sinker, and we're sunk. Jesus is a risen Lord who sits on a heavenly throne.

Jesus Christ is not in the grave, friends. He is risen, and He sits at the right hand of the Father, and He earned that right by way of a bloody cross. And if we want Him, we will have to take Him there on that throne and bow to His throne rights.

He is a risen Lord. God made Him Lord. You don't make Him Lord, friends.

He's already Lord. Your job is to bow to Him, to throw down your shotgun of rebellion, and submit to the claims of Christ as found in the Gospels. But we don't like that kind of preaching today because it offends people.

We don't want to give up our filthy sins because we love them, but we don't want to go to hell, so we just change the message of the cross a little bit to suit us a little better so we can say with the Jews, we will not have this man rule over us. When we preach a watered-down Gospel, it may be easier to swallow, but the day that the American church said goodbye to the doctrine of repentance has become one of our darkest days in the history of our land. For not one to offend man, we have offended a holy God who hates sin, who must punish sin, and who demands all who come to Him bow to Him and submit to His rule.

Listen, friends. The undiluted Gospel is a stumbling block to the natural man and an offense to the Jew and the Greek. It's high time in this country of America we get back to preaching the true Gospel, and that includes a demand for repentance, not a diluted one.

We don't see many getting saved today because the bleating of the goats in our assemblies drowns out the shuffling of the sheep. The modern Gospel has damned its millions, and it's high time to get back to the original before it's too late. The modern Gospel kept me a lost church member for decades, and I fear it's done the same for many of our church members today.

You can't have Christ and hug your sins. You must repent of your sins. Repentance is a fact of the Gospel.

The demand for repentance is clearly stated by John the Baptist, our Lord Jesus Christ, and the Apostle Paul. If you want to take out your knife and cut all three of them out of your Bible, then go ahead, but you won't have much of a New Testament left. But for many, the fragments of any Gospel is easier to live with than the entire Gospel of our Bibles, because there are many today in our churches who just won't let their profession interfere with their daily living.

John the Baptist said to bring forth fruits worthy of repentance. If you have truly repented, it will reflect itself in your conduct. We don't see many poor repentance sinners today begging for mercy, wondering if God would save a wretch like them.

No, sir. But we do have many smiling individuals walk the aisles of our churches during invitation time, and they are happy to join the church, happy to accept Jesus, but they get very unhappy if you bring up the fact that God demands repentance from a sinner if that person is to be saved. There is no Lamb of God, no sacrifice of sin, no calvary for the man who will stay in his sins.

The axe must be laid to the root of the tree, and every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is cut down and cast into the fire. You may say now, preacher, that's the way John the Baptist preached, but it's not the Gospel for our day. You need to give the people a touchy-feely Gospel today, one they can live with.

Do you mean that my Lord would shut out the rich young ruler for one defect and let him go to hell? And in our day, Jesus would lower his terms so you can get in without turning from anything that stands between you and a holy God? Someone else has lowered the terms of the Gospel in our day, and it wasn't Jesus Christ, friends. Somewhere back yonder, some Bible scholars put a moratorium on the need to preach repentance in the Gospel offer, but we need to dust off the doctrine of repentance and bring it back right now. The Gospel is a call for wicked men to throw down their arms and cease their willful violation of God's holy law and submit their lives to the rule and reign of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Yes, I said, Lord, Jesus is Lord. If he's not your Lord, then he's not your Savior, friend. You can fight that, buck that, and reject that, but God Almighty will not accept any rebel into heaven.

He commands all men everywhere to repent. Your ignorance will not excuse you. And in the times of this ignorance, God winked at, but now commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

The Scriptures nowhere separate repentance and faith. Just because some Bible teachers have adopted a philosophy that puts repentance in another dispensation just for the Jews, and today the Gentiles need only to receive Jesus as their Savior, repentance is not necessary today to be saved, they tell us. Well, I believed that for years, and for years I remained a lost church member until I repented of my sins and was converted.

Jesus came to save his people from their sins. I think the famous Bible expositor, Dr. Harry Ironside, was right when he said the following words. Shallow preaching that does not grapple with the terrible fact of man's sinfulness and guilt.

Preaching that does not call on men everywhere to repent. That kind of preaching results in shallow conversions. And so, we have myriads of glib-tongued professors today who give no evidence of regeneration whatsoever.

They go about praying about being saved by grace, but they manifest no grace in their lives. Well, old Harry Ironside knew better, and he knew the gospel was a command to repent. But there are those in our churches today who want to be saved from the consequence of their sin, but not from the love of it.

The gospel does not make light of sin. Rather, it reveals to us the terrible sword of God's justice when he smote his beloved son in order to deliver us both from the penalty and slavery of sin. Calvary stands as a spectacle to all ages of God's hatred of sin.

The great British preacher, Charles Spurgeon. Spurgeon had a training college for preachers and this was his instruction to them in regard to the need for repentance. Listen to how he warned his students.

If the professed convert distinctly and deliberately declares that he knows the Lord's will, but does not mean to attend to it, you are not to pamper his presumption, but it is your duty to assure him that he is not saved. Do you imagine that the gospel is magnified or God glorified by going to the worldlings and telling them that they may be saved at this moment by simply accepting Christ as their Savior while they are wedded to their idols and their hearts are still in love with sin? If I do so, I tell them a lie, pervert the gospel, insult Christ, and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. Well, old Spurgeon was right, friends.

And that, friends, is what we've done from our pulpits and seminary classrooms in your day and mine. We've lied to folks about what the gospel is. We have perverted the gospel, insulted Christ, and many have turned the grace of God into lasciviousness by their rebellion to the command to repent.

It is safe to say that the gospel is a proclamation of a full and free salvation to every repentant sinner through the work of the Son of God on the cross of Calvary. Notice I emphasize every repentant sinner. No repentance, no salvation.

Listen to Luke chapter 15 and verse 7. I say unto you that likewise joy shall be in heaven over one sinner that repenteth more than over ninety and nine just persons which need no repentance. Notice Jesus says they will be joy in heaven when a sinner repents. Jesus said, I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.

And we cannot offer peace, friends, and rest to those rebels who are not ready to meet the conditions laid down by the Prince of Peace, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is Lord. But many today don't like that.

And they will follow Bible teachers who say, well, that's not for us today. Many ignore what God clearly says in His word on the doctrine of repentance in regard to salvation. We rather stick ourselves with a theological hypodermic needle so we can go out and sin some more and still be able to sleep at night.

Yet the fact remains that the God of the Bible still demands that men surrender to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in every single area of their lives. We need men today to call other men to repentance. But today in our churches, we have the most lawless bunch of church members who ignore repentance and the need for holy living.

Even if the Bible does say without holiness, no one will see the Lord. People fight against that kind of preaching. That kind of preaching upsets too many people.

And you mustn't upset people, they say. But the need of our friends in this sad chapter in the history of America is a desperate cry and need for a John the Baptist to come along and cry out about this God-dishonoring, Christ-rejection, law-breaking generation of men and women who are falling into hell, still kicking up their heels against the law of God and the claims of Christ. To be saved means to be converted to the rule of God and Jesus Christ where one's heart is freely given to God, sitting on the throne.

You can't sit on the throne of your life and rule there and still claim to be a follower of Jesus Christ. No, sir. You'd better bend the knee, friend, to the Lordship of Jesus Christ in your life.

Men must be made captives of Christ to be made free. Man is made to be governed and any salvation that doesn't submit to the claims of Christ as Lord is not the salvation of the cross. The claims of Christ's Lordship will slay you and self will be dethroned and another will be enthroned, the Lord Jesus Christ.

God will not share His kingdom with another. God will have no rebels in His kingdom. There will be none there who live by self-rule, who live in rebellion against the will and authority of God.

Few today want to be under any authority other than their own. The big issue of the hour of your day and mine is who is boss? God or me? Lawless church members drag the gospel beneath their feet and say with their lips they want Christ as Savior, but with their daily living they refuse to be subject to Him as Lord. Many in our churches today have a profession that has not interfered with their daily living and it's a sham because they have refused to repent of their sins and pursue a life of holiness unto God.

They live for self. Self is on the throne of their lives, but two cannot walk together unless they be agreed. Listen friends, hear me loud and clear that God's term of salvation for man is this, repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

Acts 20, 21 clearly states, testifying both to the Jews and also to the Greeks, repentance towards God and faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Nobody is ever saved apart from that. Christ is Lord and Savior, plain and simple.

God made Him Lord. Your duty is to bow to Him, sinner, submit to Him, throw down your shotgun of rebellion and come under His rule. He is the Lord of all mankind.

He dictates the terms of salvation and that is repentance and faith. Christ is sitting on a throne and He sits there in virtue of His shed blood and if you want a vital union with the Lord Jesus Christ, you cannot, you must not, ignore the Lordship of Christ for He is sitting on a throne and He must have the throne rights to your life. We've cheapened the gospel in your day and mine and have cheated many out of real salvation by feeding them a partial substitute for the only substitute for sin, the Lord Jesus Christ.

I repeat, a man cannot be saved unless he surrenders to Jesus Christ as its Lord and Savior. Until we start preaching the truth about Jesus Christ and His claims on His followers, we deceive many and do injustice to the gospel of the Son of God. There is a cross in the life of a follower of a crucified Savior.

We've got to get back, friends, to preaching the gospel in its purity and proper order. Why don't we see many people crying out for mercy today? Why don't we see many saying, Oh God, is there mercy for such a wicked sinner as me? No, sir, you see themselves as sinners because we preachers have told them that there was no need for repentance to come to Christ. So they walk a church aisle with a smile on their face and chew their gum and make a mental assent to some facts about the death of Christ and we pat them on the backs and we call them Christians and we welcome them into our assemblies.

Heaven help us! And there is no change within them. They hang on to their sins and hang on to a hope of seven, help of heaven, which is nothing more than a hole in the wall. You see, friends, a real Christian hates sin and loves righteousness.

He loves the Lord and wants to obey Him. He has a new nature implanted within. Therefore, if any man be in Christ, he is a new creature.

Old things are passed away. Behold, all things are become new. Listen, friends, if you don't remember anything else, I said today, remember this, you cannot get saved by accepting Jesus as your Savior unless you surrender Him as your absolute Lord and ruler in your life.

And if He doesn't rule you completely, it is because you have never, ever surrendered to His Lordship through repentance and faith. This is the dividing line between the new gospel, which omits repentance, and the old gospel, which falls from the lips of Christ Himself. Unless ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish.

The saddest thing I see in our churches today is multitudes who have a confession. They've made a profession, but they do not possess Christ. Christ does not possess them.

They are not in a living union with the risen Lord. They are not living holy lives unto God, but they live unto themselves where they still sit on the throne of their lives. And that, friends, is not salvation.

You can claim Jesus all day long as Savior, but unless others can see a mark of His rule in your life, you are sitting upon a false foundation. But if you are a subject of grace, you have allowed the Holy Ghost to break your wicked heart to make you bow to the King, to make you bow to King Jesus, and you delight to do the will of the Father. Jesus says, If you love me, you will keep my commands.

We must preach the gospel in its purity and in its proper order. Sinners must be brought to Mount Sinai before they are led to Mount Zion. We must preach the four R's of the gospel, which are Rune, Redemption, Repentance, and Regeneration.

And that is where we will pick up next time with the Doctrine of Regeneration. Until then.

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