

The Blessed Gift of Repentance

by Eli Brayley

Eli Brayley's sermon highlights repentance as a divine gift for the humble, contrasting it with the self-righteousness of the Pharisees.

Scripture: Matthew 23:27

Topics: "Repentance", "Righteousness"

Description

Eli Brayley preaches on the profound truth revealed in Mark 2:16-17 where Jesus dines with sinners, sparking criticism from the Pharisees. Jesus' response highlights the purpose of His ministry, emphasizing that He came to call sinners to repentance, not the self-righteous. This challenges the Pharisees' false sense of righteousness and exposes the importance of humility and recognizing one's need for repentance as a gift from God.

Transcript

"And when the scribes and Pharisees saw him eat with publicans and sinners, they said unto his disciples, How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners? When Jesus heard it, he saith unto them, They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick: I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance." - Mark 2:16-17

Here in this Scripture we find a remarkable truth of the gospel of Christ; one to be laid hold of by all men everywhere. Recorded in three separate accounts (Matthew, Mark and Luke) is the story of Jesus eating amongst the sinners of His day, and the Pharisees calling His antics into question.

"How is it that he eateth and drinketh with publicans and sinners?"

This seemed odd to the religiously 'pious' Pharisees, who prized themselves on being set apart from the men of ungodliness. I'm sure they were thinking Psalm 1:1: "Blessed is the man that walketh not in the counsel of the ungodly, nor standeth in the way of sinners, nor sitteth in the seat of the scornful." Who did this Jesus think He was?

But see how Jesus responds: "They that are whole have no need of the physician, but they that are sick." Was Jesus implying that the Pharisees were indeed whole then? He goes on to say:

"I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance."

This statement is vital. Was Jesus then saying that the Pharisees were righteous, without need of repentance? Absolutely not! Elsewhere, Jesus declares: "Woe unto you, scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! for ye are like unto whited sepulchres, which indeed appear beautiful outward, but are within full of dead men's bones, and of all uncleanness." (Matthew 23:27) The Pharisees only appeared righteous, to others and to themselves, but inwardly they were tombs of death and sin, blinded by their own self-conceit. Jesus was revealing an important truth, that the gift of repentance is only given to those who humble themselves under God's mighty hand and admit to their folly and sinfulness.

I want to emphasize gift of repentance. By Jesus' statement He was saying that those who claim to their own self-righteousness are not called to repentance. This is a scary thought! There are people who are not called by Jesus to repent because of their spiritual blindness. Repentance is not some obligatory chore which the Christian must undergo... it is the gift of God to the humble in heart! A gift not given to the haughty and proud: "for God resisteth the proud, but giveth grace unto the humble." (1 Peter 5:5) Devour this truth!

Oh brethren, let us look upon repentance in a whole new light: no longer as a painful obligation but as a precious blessing to those that are called! Because of Christ's victory over sin at His death on the cross, we now can be forgiven and freed from the guilt and power of the dominion of sin! Now, when Jesus calls you to repent, say: "Yes Lord! I will gladly give up all for You, who freely gave up all for me!" Amen.

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