

Genuine Repentance

by Erlo Stegen

True repentance requires a change of heart, a willingness to distance oneself from sin, and a demonstration of that change through deeds.

Scripture: Matthew 3:1

Topics: "Genuine Repentance", "Transformation in Christ"

Description

Erlo Stegen emphasizes the significance of genuine repentance as demonstrated by John the Baptist, who called people to confess their sins and be baptized. He highlights that true repentance involves a heartfelt change and remorse for one's sins, contrasting it with the insincere actions of the Pharisees and Sadducees. Stegen explains that baptism symbolizes dying to sin and being raised to new life, and that without true sorrow and a change of heart, one cannot truly repent. He urges listeners to reflect on their own repentance and to demonstrate their faith through actions that align with their commitment to change. The sermon calls for a deep understanding of the transformative power of genuine repentance in the life of a believer.

Transcript

The words in Matthew 3 v 1-6 contain so much. John's clothing and food was different to other people but he was sent before the Lord Jesus to prepare the way of the Lord. No-one brought forth of a woman was greater than he was but the least in the kingdom of heaven is greater than he was. Take note of what he said. In verse 5 it says that people from Jerusalem and the whole region went out to him to confess their sin and be baptized. His was the baptism of repentance which was different to the baptism of the Lord Jesus. Paul asked some believers about what baptism they received. They had only received the baptism of repentance and not the baptism of the Holy Spirit.

The Greek word Hupo means power and authority. The people were driven by power and authority to confess their sins. Baptiso means to be emerged in water. If you confess your sin, you die to that sin. A corpse is dead. It cannot lie, be immoral, gossip or shout. If you are baptized, you are dead to sin and raised to new life. If you are baptized but nothing happens in your heart, then you are like a brood of vipers. The Pharisees and Sadducees also went to be baptized but John called them sons of snakes. Repentance is not cheap. 2 Corinthians 7 v 10 says than Godly sorrow brings repentance leading to salvation. You have to experience real remorse and grief for what you have done. John did not respect the Pharisees because they were not sorry about what they had done. Repentance means to change your

mind. This is like a car that stops and goes in reverse. You distance yourself from the old way like boozing. You do not rewind and repeat what you did before. You have remorse and are contrite and penitent. Have you really repented and experienced John's baptism? Then you will receive grace from God.

The Pharisees came but how can you be baptized if you are not truly sorry and repent from your sin? Confessing sin with the wrong motive also does not help. In Luke 3 v 10, people were touched. They asked, "What should we do?" John said that the person with two tunics should give to the one who had none and share their food with those that didn't have. Such deeds show that you have repented. The tax collectors were told to only take what was appointed and soldiers were told not to intimidate any one. Others were told to be content with their wages. It is a tragedy if you are a Christian and you do not turn from your old ways of bitterness, lack of forgiveness, slander and finding fault.

May God help us to understand the message of John the Baptist: that you have experienced the power and authority to truly repent. Have you distanced from sin? If you have not experienced this regret and repentance, you are to be pitied.

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