

The Importance of Repentance

In life, there are some things I believe are of necessities that need to be done. I will speak of two important ones that have had a big impact on my life. First jobs out of High School probably have a great influence on you, hearing ideas, thoughts, and beliefs outside your normal dwelling place for your first 20 years in life so. My first job started at minimum wage of \$2.65/hour. Not a whole lot now, but it would not always have to be that way. After that first year in retail, for some unknown reason to me, I found myself desiring to think about the future and not the present as our store manager talked about saving money in a 401K for the future with a dollar for dollar match up to 10% of your income. It sunk in then that that would be a great idea and a necessity later on in life. I did not know how fast time passes, but 41 years later I could look back and find that was a necessity in order to be able to someday retire.

Another, even more important of a necessity, not only to prepare for life here, but to prepare for life hereafter, would be that of repentance toward God. We will talk about that today. To be ready and willing and able to live eternally with our creator, there is no greater importance than to be right with God, to be able to glorify Him and enjoy Him forever. In one of the most fascinating and intriguing passages of Scripture that have gotten my attention about the necessities in life, Jesus, in His infinite wisdom, steadfast lovingkindness, and long-suffering patience, shares with us very heart touching, mind awakening, eternity securing words that take no time at all to capture our attention. He will take one of our human perplexities of life and grant us the one and only answer to promise us a place with Him one day, a place where sorrow cannot live and joy cannot die.

Often in Scripture, Jesus is asked a question, and often responds with a question of His own. I believe to take their eyes off others and their issues and put their eyes on their own selves and their own issues. Some examples of this would be Him fielding a question on "Is it lawful to heal on the Sabbath or not in Math.12:10-12, and Jesus responds, "What man is there among you who has a sheep and if it falls into a pit on the Sabbath, will he not take hold of it and lift it out? He answers their question with a question. In our text today, we will see not a question but a thought, about why the things that happened to other people happened to them. They will pry to get out of Jesus reasons to justify themselves by looking at what happened to other people, taking their eyes off of themselves. Let's look at the text. **Read Luke 13:1-5. Pray**

The event before us in Luke 13 is an obscure one. We have no history written down about it and nowhere else in the Scriptures is it mentioned. The Holy Spirit has caused Luke to write it down for our instruction, guidance, and help in looking at the not yet future portion of our lives. In the text, two events are mentioned, one brought by the people, one also added by the Savior. One an atrocity, brought about by humans, and the other we could call a calamity, a natural disaster, we have seen many of both over the years. Jesus knows exactly what this group needs to hear. And we could listen in and hear Him say things like, First, "The state of your own souls should always be of first concern. Do you hear of a sudden death? You would say to yourself, 'Will I have been found ready if this had happened to me.'" Second, "If you heard of an awful crime or deed of wickedness, you would say to yourself, 'Are my sins forgiven, and have I really repented of my own transgressions.'" Thirdly, "If you hear of worldly men running into every excess of sin, you will say to yourself, 'Who has made me to differ from another? What kept me from walking the same path? But by the grace of God. (1Cor.15:10)."

With the truth in front of us ,the Scriptures, God's Holy, Inerrant, Infallible word, we can surely believe that God's infinite power is directed by His infinite wisdom, His infinite wisdom is directed by His infinite knowledge, and His infinite knowledge is directed by His infinite truth. That we would not only trust His promises but also obey His commands. In verse one, the event is explained to the group, Pilate apparently being the culprit behind it. An awful, gruesome, ugly atrocity man is capable of, one we have seen over and over in society. Man is not as bad as he can be, but he surely is not good, Romans 3:10-18 explains the great indictment we are under, one of them is that there is not one that does good in God's sight. In verse two, Jesus gets their mind off of thinking about others and back on to themselves, "Do you

suppose that those Galileans were greater sinners than all other Galileans because they suffered this fate? Jesus knew that they were trying to get Him to admit to, that they were good and the ones that died were not, thinking all along more highly of themselves than they ought to. I have looked at these verses so often, I wanted to see and find if there was anything different in the NASV translation as compared to other translations. One word stuck out to me which helped me understand the text better. It is the word "THINK" as in Jesus saying "Do you think?", in the NASV it is "Do you suppose?", and that helped me. The word suppose I see simply as, a belief held without a proof, a belief held without a proof. It is in other places as you see the principle in John 9, where sin is held as the reason for bad things that are in people's lives. In John 9: we see a man blind from birth, and Jesus's disciples asked Him, "Rabbi, who sinned, this man or his parents that he would be born blind." Or in Job 4:7-8, Remember now, whoever perished being innocent? Or where were the upright destroyed? According to what I have seen, those who plow iniquity and those who sow trouble harvest it." Not just a few people believed, without proof, that bad things happen to bad people. Jesus will tell our group that that is not the reason, that is not the purpose they should see come out of such events like this that happen in life. English Puritan Thomas Boston, "Do not tell anyone that they were taken away by judgement for sin, no one knows and no one is meant to know." The secret things belong to the Lord. (Deu.29:29) We must remember that the Lord is slow to anger and abounding in lovingkindness(Psalms 103:8). Seeing judgement on the spot as in Ananias and Sapphira is the exception rather than the rule. All human suffering is meant to summon us all to repentance toward God, by reminding us that we all deserve to experience the same suffering or worse. Jesus begs us to know that if others suffer a lot, it is not that they must have sinned a lot. So, Jesus after asking Him the question, He does not look to finite minds, sinful beings, unregenerate souls to answer His question, He answers it Himself, and puts the onus on them with His response. The same future as they have seen in these people they brought to the Lord's attention, will affect them as well. The anecdote, medicine, cordial, for not having to face what these people faced in eternity would be to repent. These that suffered this fate Jesus said were not worse sinners, but those asking would suffer like them unless they repent. Ahh, REPENT. Point one then would be,

I-What is repentance

1) So, if Jesus, God incarnate, states twice in our short passage that if we don't do what He commands, we will surely perish, let us take a closer look at what he means so we get it right. There is too much to chance if we get it wrong, if we get anything right in our lives, it has got to be this. A good place to start is defining a big theological word like repentance. Repent or repentance as a word is found 47 times in the Scriptures. The great English Bishop J.C. Ryle simply states, "that repentance is a thorough change of a person's natural heart regarding the subject of sin." As a bird takes to flying, or a fish takes to swimming, so we take to sinning. As soon as we are born, sinning just comes naturally. It is just how we are wired. From the Bible we can grasp as to why this is. In Psalm 51:5, David asserts that, "I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." And this statement we can look into the past on by reading the Great Apostle Paul's words in Romans 5:12, "Therefore, just as through one man (Adam) sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men because all sinned." We are all in this category we can call sinners. Actions, words, conduct that does not display the glory of God. We often look for satisfaction in something or someone else instead of finding our satisfaction in God alone. He alone is our portion. We could turn to the great theologian and author A.W. Pink, as he states, "True repentance issues from a realization in the heart, wrought therein by the Holy Spirit, of the sinfulness of sin, of the awfulness of ignoring the claims of God and defying His authority. It is therefore a holy horror and hatred of sin, a deep sorrow of it, an acknowledgement of it before God, and a complete heart forsaking of it." English Puritan Thomas Manton states, "It is a turning of the whole heart from sin and Satan to serve God in newness of life, or a turning from sin because God hath forbidden it, to that which is good because God hath commanded it." And one more just for good measure, in the words of the great English Puritan Thomas Watson, "If a man loath that which makes his stomach sick, much more will he loath that which makes his conscience sick. Sound repentance begins in the love of God and ends in the hatred of sin." In the Scriptures, Paul mentions what this sorrow or hatred of sin produces, as Jesus does in our Luke passage, talking to the Corinthian church in 1 Cor.7:9-10, he knows of

their sinning tendencies and have rebuked them for some of the things he has heard about, and now sees some progress in their lives in how he comments. "I now rejoice that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance, for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death." As sinners, we live in an ongoing misery, but we begin a happiness by repentance. Acts 26:18, "To turn from darkness to light, from the dominion of Satan to God." You remember Judas, he did not show repentance after betraying Jesus with a kiss and receiving 30 pieces of silver, he regretted getting the 30 pieces and returned those 30 pieces of silver and threw them into the temple sanctuary, and departed, and went away and hanged himself (Math.27:5).

The incident before us in Luke 13 has no other record written down of it happening. There were some that were probably looking for a way and time to exalt themselves above others by bringing up this atrocity they had seen or heard of about a grizzly act of wickedness Pilate chose to inflict upon a group of people. That Pilate mixed their blood as he had them cut down with the sacrifices they came with to offer to God. How many atrocities have we seen in our age that will put chills up your spine as we recollect other leaders in our day or just plain human citizens. Remember the atrocities of Adolf Hitler, acts like the Oklahoma City bombing and many lives lost there, or the tragic events on nine eleven. The people do not put this to Jesus in question form, but in statement form. They are looking for some message of approval from Him that they were too good for this to happen to them. And Jesus, knowing what was in man, and knew all men, (John 2:24-25) He could give them a statement that would be true and would just as easily apply to them that are living now to those who once lived. For Jesus spells out what they were thinking as He finishes His question. "Do you suppose that these Gallileans were greater sinners than all the other Gallileans because they suffered this fate?" There is something that gets our attention when an atrocity like this happens. And in our day of social media, we find out real fast as to what all happened and how. John Piper mentions this about human events, "All human suffering is meant to summon us all to repentance toward God by reminding us that we all deserve to experience this suffering or worse." Jesus is here for us to clear up their assumption of why this happened to them. Jesus, as He often does, asks them a question. It will always bring an answer that displays the heart and the motives or the thoughts and beliefs that are in it. Examples such as Job's three friends, if you could call them that as they conclude that the sufferings he was having and all that he lost had to do with his sins. The disciples of Jesus in John 9 ask Jesus very much the same thing. "Rabbi who sinned, this man or his parents that he would be born blind." People suppose that good things happen to good people and bad things happen to bad people. If they suffer a lot, they must have sinned a lot. Jesus will not agree with their suppositions. There are purposes that only God knows as to what causes people's suffering and the reason behind it. Those things are not meant for us to know. But as we read time and time again, they are all for God's glory. Just ask Martha and Mary and the onlookers as Jesus was ready to raise Lazarus from the dead after he had just passed away a few short days earlier. Jesus is saying don't be amazed at how people just suffered and died, but be amazed at yourself, that you were not killed in those ways. That you have been given time to repent. Jesus makes it a lesson that you must repent. Remember when you see these things, it may have been you. The Greek word for repentance is META-NOEO, META-NOEO. It comes from two words, META meaning change, NOEO meaning mind. You have heard the word metamorphosis, it is a change in physical characteristics that the caterpillar goes through. And the word NOEO is Greek for the word mind. So, we can conclude and add the words together and come up with repentance being a change of mind. A different form of the word is used elsewhere in Rom.12:2, "Do not be conformed to the world but be TRANSFORMED". and in Math 17:2, "Jesus was TRANSFIGURED before them, and His face shown like the sun, and His garments became white as light." There should be different perceptions, dispositions, and purposes. Jesus's first words in ministry as He came on the scene in ministry were Math.3:2, "Repent for the kingdom of God is at hand." The disciples went out and preached that men should repent."(Mark 6:12) And Peter in his message to the early church once Christ had left to return to heaven," Repent and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins and you will receive the Holy Spirit."(Acts 2:38) And again Jesus re-iterates His point on needing repentance a second time as He recalls a natural disaster this time that took the lives of 18 people when a tower fell on them. You

could call this an accident or an act of God. You know of some, don't you? The great Sunami that happened years ago, Hurricane Ian in Florida a short while back, or the fires that devastated some areas on the island of Hawaii. Life may be here today and gone tomorrow. One must ask themselves why I am still here. We will soon cover that in the message as to keep from perishing. Thomas Watson states, "So we, knowing the shortness of our lives, and how quickly we may be called away by death, should fly so much the faster on the wings of repentance to Heaven. Remember Mike Mihalski.

So true repentance will entail what? Four things.

1) True repentance will begin with an acknowledgement of sin. The eyes of one will be opened to his doing not of things to the glory of God. Rom.3:23. One will see the enormity of his offense against a Holy God, recognizing that an infinite penalty must be given in offending an infinite Deity. After all, he comes to the conclusion he is not such a good person after all. He has fallen way short of God's standard for entrance into His eternal family. He sees in his heart that it is deceitful above all things and desperately wicked. This awakening to sin is brought about by the Holy Spirit, for one of the three things Jesus says He will do is convict the world concerning sin, and righteousness, and judgement. John 16:8.

2) True repentance produces sorrow for sin. Foolishness, evil, and wickedness have characterized his life and way of living. It is gnawing at him as to how to get rid of it and stay away from it. He has wasted his time, misused his abilities, and dishonored his Creator. It brings great pain and remorse about what he has done and what he has neglected. He thinks about a way, a remedy, a cordial of what will make his mind new, to change his current way of living. That there must be a way for sorrow according to the will of God that could lead to salvation. 2Cor.7:10

3) True repentance produces confession of sin. His tongue must be loosed to speak and admit of his exceptional shortcoming of his sin against a Holy God. A cry, a prayer to God, a reaching out to God about the condition of his own soul, an admission of not pleasing his Creator, like a weight on his back. Until he off loads that load of guilt, he will not be able to take even one more step forward. To conclude that his iniquity is great, that if the Lord were to count sins, he would not be able to stand. But if somehow He could confess his sins, that One would be faithful and just to forgive him his sins and cleanse him from all righteousness. 1John 1:9.

4) True repentance leads to a thorough breaking off and hatred of sin. A new direction, a new life, a new King leading and controlling and directing his life in righteousness and holiness instead of himself. That he would have a desire to avoid what God forbids. He would have a continual appetite for fighting against sin, to be killing sin, knowing that if he doesn't, it will be killing him, and a desire to have victory over sin. That he could abhor what is evil and desperately cling to what is good. That he could have a Spirit that could overcome the flesh. That he would cease to do evil and learn to do good. Isa.1:16-17.

In the words of the great English Puritan Thomas Brooks gives a summary of what true repentance looks like for us. He states, "True repentance is a continued spring where the waters of Godly sorrow are always flowing. He that turns not from every sin, turns not aright from any one sin. Every sin strikes at the honor of God, the being of God, the glory of God, the heart of Christ, the joy of the Spirit, and the peace of a man's conscience, and therefore a soul truly penitent strikes at all, hates all, conflicts with all, and will labor to draw strength from a crucified Christ to crucify all."

II-The consequences of not repenting

Jesus continues as He says, "Unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. Before we take a look at our other key word this morning, perish, let us take a quick peek at the word unless. In Math 5:20, He Says, "Unless your righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees, you will not enter the kingdom of heaven." in John 8:24, He says, "Unless you believe that I am He, you will die in your sins." And in John 3:3, He says, "Unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God." Jesus is consistent when He uses such language as words like unless. He is God, and His words are true, He re-iterates that as in John 3:3 we just mentioned, preceding the statement with Truly, truly, verily, verily, or in

the Greek, Amen, Amen. Jesus uses it as its meaning shows, that if something does not happen, something else will happen. And in all these verses I have mentioned and others, Jesus is dead serious about what He is talking about. Often it has to deal with where we will land up ultimately when we pass from this life we now have. He mentions not seeing the kingdom of Heaven, not seeing the kingdom of God, and in our text, the warning is that you will perish, meaning the same thing. We will be excluded from the presence of Jesus Himself forever, in a place Jesus called Paradise as He spoke to the thief on the cross. This is a great deal for our ears to perk up about, when Jesus states some words about where we will spend eternity.

The word we look at that Jesus uses is PERISH. The word in Greek is "APOLUMI", it simply means to render useless, to render useless. You may think of fruit perishing. It means it turns to something that it was not intended to be for. It was intended to be eaten and enjoyed. It is not that now, nor does it go out of existence. Like salt, once it has lost its flavor, it is useless and should be thrown out and trampled over by foot. It was not that for which it was useful for. For the Westminster Confession of Faith states that the chief end of man is to glorify God and enjoy Him forever. If we do not repent, we will not be used as we were designed to be by our Creator. When we come across a word in the Bible, we are not sure of the meaning of, we need to turn to other places to see how that same author uses it or where else it is used in the Scriptures. John 3:16, we see it is compared to where God's love and desire it is for us to be eternally, mainly in His presence. Very similarly, in John 10:28, about His sheep, Jesus says, "I give them eternal life to them, and they will never perish." and in Luke 15:6, another form of the word is used "APPOLUO", in the prodigal son passage, Jesus says the father would say of his son, "For this son of mine was dead and has come to life, he was LOST and has been found." The son was not where he was intended to be, in the presence of his father. The solution to this massive problem of sin isn't to improve one's behavior but to repent. What is needed is not a new resolution to do differently, but a total reorientation of life for all. We must turn from all the false promises of sin and aim our lives toward Him. But belief must always precede behavior. **THIS IS THE KEY.** To change the way a person responds to life, change what a person believes about life. And the great Apostle Paul tells us in his first few verses of the practical part of the greatest letter ever written, the book of Romans, in chapter 12 verse 2, "Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind." Transformed, a similar Greek word to repentance, it is "metamorphous" a change of state, or figure, Chris was transfigured, the same word. a change in appearance. And Paul's word renewed in our verse, he uses only one other time in the N.T., in Titus 3:5, "He saved us (GOD), not on the basis of deeds which we have done, in righteousness, but according to His mercy, by the washing of regeneration, and RENEWING by the Holy Spirit". Our word again, renewing, causing us to be born again, born from above, made a new creature in Christ, all by the power of the Holy Spirit. Jesus said to Nicodemus in John 3:5, "Unless one is born of water and the Spirit, he cannot see the kingdom of God. I remember Jesus and His warning in Math.10:28, "Do not fear those who kill the body but are unable to kill the soul, fear HIM who is able to destroy both soul and body in Hell."

Jesus is clearing up their assumption that they don't just assume that those others suffered a lot, that they must have sinned a lot. Don't be amazed at how people just died but be amazed that you were not killed in those events, but that you have been given time to repent. Sin must be dealt with. It has to be killed off, mortified, crucified. 1John 3:5, John states, "Jesus appeared in order to take away sin, and in Him there is no sin." The old English Puritan states, How then can anyone abide in Him, commune with Him, worship Him, and keep sinning as before? We could sooner light a fire under the sea or breath deeply on the moon. Christ holds no tinder for sin, He gives no oxygen to lawlessness. If we abide in Him, then, sin cannot abide in us, not persistently, not presumptuously, not peacefully." Remember that same Apostle John while at the cross, he had watched God's wrath against sin swallow the sun, he had seen the wages of sin stain the dirt red. He did it for me, He did it for you.

III-The fruits of Repentance

Thomas Manton states, "There is a repentance at our first conversion, which is our passing from death to life, or our entrance by the straight gate. There is also a repentance afterwards, which belongeth to our walking in the narrow way,

for after conversion we need it still, and not in our natural estate only. It is not only necessary for a sinner yet unregenerate, yet unreconciled to God, without which he cannot expect any peace with God or benefit by the new covenant, but also for a believer til his full and final recovery. "Peter in his second epistle, in 2Peter 3:9 mentions both our key words to today, repentance and perish, in the same verse, only here in our Bibles. "The Lord is not slow about His promise, (His coming again) as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance.: I believe he saw the beauty of John 3:16. So let's look at the fruits of repentance and what it looks like. When we turn from something, something should be put back in place. There should be results or fruit that is born out of this change of mind we have been talking about. Ephesians 4:22-24 paints a good picture of what this looks like. Paul states, 'If indeed you have heard Him, and have been taught in Him, just as truth is in Jesus, that, in reference to your former manner of life, you lay aside your old self,, which is being corrupted in accordance with the lusts of deceit, and that you be renewed in the spirit,(explain) of your mind, and put on the new self which in the likeness of God which has been created in righteousness and holiness of the truth. in Luke 3:14, we see exactly what John the Baptist is telling the crowds what to do, "Bear fruits in keeping with repentance. The crowds were questioning him saying what shall we do?, John says, the man who has two tunics is to share with him who has none, and he who has food is to do likewise, to the tax collectors John said, collect no more than what you have been ordered to, and to some soldiers John said, do not take money from anyone by force, or accuse anyone falsely, and be content with your wages." Putting off something and putting on something. Jesus really drives the point home with some serious language in Math.5:29,"If your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out and throw it from you, two verses later He states, if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off and throw it from you, for it is better for you to lose one of the parts of your body than for your whole body to go into hell." Jesus wants us to radically change our way of living with a very picturesque way of dealing with sin. He wants us to kill it, figuratively of course, He is not talking literally here. The Holy Spirit will make this abundantly clear to us.

Three examples of what this looks like, two from the Scriptures, one from a friend.

1) In 2Kings 23:4-7, King Josiah was serious about killing off sinful living. Read text

2)In Acts 19:18, the magic men were serious about killing off sinful living. Read text

3)In a friend's life, repentance can be shown in making restitution where possible. Story:

He worked at a manufacturing plant and had access to paint, gloves, supplies, etc. Over a course of time he took these items and when the Spirit had entered his life, one day in his garage, he just knew he had to return and make amends for these things. He had to take it all back and filled a Ford F-150 8-foot truck bed to overflowing and took it all back. I see Eph.4:28 right here, "He who steals must steal no longer, but rather he must labor, performing with his own hands what is good, so that he will have something to share with one who has need. Groans unutterable blossom into joys that are unspeakable.

In our text in Luke 13, Jesus wants to clear up their assumption that they must have sinned a lot to warrant this punishment. Jesus makes it a lesson that you must repent, remember when you see, that, it may have been you. G. Campbell Morgan states," We cannot forsake Jehovah, the fountain of living waters, and hew for ourselves cisterns of water. For that water is no longer living, it has become stagnant, and proceeds to deteriorate, much like perishing. But we must have living waters as in John 7:38, waters rising from springs, always fresh and always flowing." Acts 17:30-31

If you have yet to repent, call upon Him Who is the skillful Physician, for He can cure not only a cold or common aches, but also the leprosy and plague of sin on the soul. He calls out to you not only by the ministry of His spoken word you have heard outwardly this morning, but by an inward drawing of the Holy Spirit.

Imagine your final day, your final moment, your final breath, with Christ as your Friend, and Heaven as your home, the

day of death becomes sweeter than the day of birth, ask Solomon in Ecc.7:1. For there is a place where sorrow cannot live and joy cannot die. Jesus called it Paradise.