

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

## *Infinite Value of Repentance*

**Acts 3:17-21**

**Keywords:** Acts 3, Repentance, Repent, Forgiveness, Hope of Israel

**PowerPoint Presentation included:** none

**SermonAudio Blurb:** Sin brings so much destruction within creation, especially in the human heart. The result is so much shame and regret that cannot be shaken and cannot be left behind. Like unreasoning animals so many find themselves in a cycle of destruction that is both hated and loved at the same time. Is there a way out? Is there hope? Can a person find both a peace of mind and a cleanness of soul? This sermon seeks to point us to that hope that is bound up in Jesus Christ.

### **I. Introduction.**

- A. Last sermon we saw how Peter looks at this crowd of onlookers who are amazed at the miracle of healing.
  - 1. Shifts the focus off of him and the man healed.
  - 2. Confronts them with the One who truly did the healing, Jesus. How he did this is key. He contrasts various Old Testament titles and terms that spoke of the promised One from God who would bring Israel salvation and would make all things right again.
    - a. He invoked titles that every Jew knew and loved. These are Old Testament stories of hope in the midst of judgment and suffering due to the nation's rebellion.
    - b. The Servant of God who was the Anointed One. The Prince of life who is the Holy and Righteous One.
    - c. All which referred to the salvation found in YHWH, the one, true God.
  - 3. The God of their fathers sent you the promised savior and servant and you delivered Him to be killed.
  - 4. God sent the One who is holy and righteous to you and you chose the murderer instead.
  - 5. God sends you the Author of life and you kill Him.
  - 6. God sent you the Messiah, the Christ so that you might find all that is wrong in the world made finally right, but you turn away.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

7. God sends you the perfect Prophet so that you might listen and live, but you reject Him and therefore place yourself in the certainty of eternal, divine judgment.
- B. This moved the message to a crisis point.
1. He had to try to break them out of their self-righteous thinking and the only way to do it was to be brutally blunt. He did not just berate them; rather, he merely stated what was true.
  2. If you want to see this in our context go on YouTube and watch videos by Ray Comfort. Search “This Is What Happens When You Evangelize in Compton” and “living waters” for a good example.
- C. It is easy to bring guilt, but we must also bring hope.
1. A child who has sinned greatly at home or school. The result is discipline and part of that is a loss of fellowship with the others. This is hard and it is seldom fun.
    - a. It is like a man who was disciplined in Corinth. But he is now repentant.
    - b. Paul tells the church to now forgive him and comfort him or he might be overwhelmed with excessive sorrow.
  2. Many people stand on the edges of the Christian faith wanting to be a Christian and wanting to follow Jesus, but their guilt is a burden too great for them. They are not debating their sin. They just don’t know what to do with it.
    - a. These are often people who grew up going to church. They once claimed to believe but they never really did. Others are intensely aware of ways they have lived that are wrong.
    - b. They are haunted by choices that whisper in their ears that they are guilty. And so they stand there like a stray animal outside some picture window looking into the warmth of a home. They are there, but not there. They belong, but they don’t belong. They ache and groan quietly within their soul because they think that there is no hope.
  3. This message of Peter is both painful and beautifully hope-filled.
    - a. Painful because it exposes our guilt. Like the Jews we are not lacking information about who is Jesus. Literally a countless number of books, articles, sermons and such exist all around us

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

which tell us who He is and what He has done and shall do. But we do not see and believe these records.

b. But hope-filled because he tells them what they need to do and the promises of God if they do obey what he says.

D. The answer is to repent and we want to begin to explore that today.

E. Read Acts 3:13-21.

## **II. The Infinite Value of Repentance.**

A. The issue: *“And now, brethren, I know that you acted in ignorance, just as your rulers did also”* (Acts 3:17)

1. What is meant by this? In light of strong words by Peter.

a. Vs 13 “you delivered.”

b. Vs 13 “you disowned.”

c. Vs 15 “put to death the Prince of life.”

d. Vs 14 “you disowned” and “asked for a murderer.”

2. And yet, vs 17, “I know that you acted in ignorance.”

a. Old Testament speaks of sins that are out of ignorance vs high-handed or defiantly.

(1) There were sins of presumption. Depending on your translation it is rendered “with a high hand,” “presumptuously,” or “defiantly.” There was no forgiveness offered here; rather it was an act of apostasy. The person would be cut off from Israel in every way or be put to death.

(2) Those in ignorance would be forgiven. But only once you realized it was sin and then you went and made the proper sacrifice. On the day of atonement the high priest would enter into the Holy of Holies to make a sacrifice on behalf of all of the nation of Israel for sins of ignorance.

b. New Testament passages about ignorance in actions.

(1) Key is Luke 23:34

(2) Acts 13:16-30.

(3) Acts 17:17-30.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

(4) 1 Timothy 1:13.

c. And what we have here in Acts 3 is a word by Peter of great hope for these Jews. It was not a sin of defiance but of ignorance.

B. Observations about being ignorant before God.

1. It is not a saving excuse.

2. It is not the same as being innocent.

a. The bible makes it clear that the problem we possess is a heart issue. The bible tells us that our heart is the most deceitful and desperately sick. And it makes us guilty before God.

b. We read that there are none who are righteous, not even one. None who do good before God. All of us have gone astray.

c. Without Jesus we are a people who are swift to pursue sin, invent evil and give approval to others as they sin.

3. It is often the result of not paying attention.

a. For the Jew the problem was not a lack of knowledge. But it was a lack of attention.

b. For the Gentile in those days it was for lack of knowledge. Still true in many parts of the world. As we continue toward the paganization of America we find more who simply do not know.

4. It is only ignorance until truth is given.

a. Acts 13:44-46. He preached and re-preached the gospel and call to repent in the vss above. Now they were willfully resisting it.

b. Romans 2:5.

5. Repentance is absolutely necessary.

a. Remember the Old Testament requirement that you had to recognize it now as a sin and go make a sacrifice.

b. 3:19

c. Acts 17:30, "Having overlooked the times of ignorance, God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent."

C. What is repentance?

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

1. Literally means to change one's mind. It is a heart issue before it is a lifestyle issue. But a heart change will always work itself outward into the life.
2. At the very core of this issue is the need for man to have a new mind. This is built into the very meaning of the word *metanoeo*, which has *meta* (new) and *noeo* (mind).
  - a. Colossians 1:21.
  - b. Ephesians 4:17-19.
  - c. Titus 1:15, *"To the pure, all things are pure; but to those who are defiled and unbelieving, nothing is pure, but both their mind and their conscience are defiled."*
3. It involves a turning or returning to God.
  - a. This term is where we get the word "conversion."
  - b. Acts 14:15.
  - c. 1 Thessalonians 1:9.
4. There is an intimate connection between repentance and faith because saving faith is a drawing of hope and life upon God and not anything thing else. This is the essence of what repentance truly is. It cannot ever be merely a mental acceptance of some truth; rather, it is complete reversal of a mind set and its attendant lifestyle. To believe in Jesus as Lord, King, Son of God, and Savior means that you no longer can tolerate any other lord, king, or savior in your life. And that is repentance.
  - a. Repentance is never hard to see for it is like a blind person who now sees or a deaf person who now hears. It has repercussions in how they react and live.
  - b. It is the first command John the Baptist and Jesus both preached. And it is now preached to you.
5. Notice that three things are promised if they would repent. Not just individuals, but this is actually a call to the nation to turn back to God.
  - a. This is what Peter meant in this gospel sermon: Acts 3:26 *"For you first, God raised up His Servant and sent Him to bless you by turning every one of you from your wicked ways."*
  - b. The first promise is: your sins will be blotted out.

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

**III. Conclusion.**

- A. This first promise of sins being blotted away is good and lovely. But it is not the end goal.
1. Are you that one I mentioned at the beginning who is standing on the edges of the Christian faith but your sinfulness is holding you back? Your choices in life haunt you and the fear of rejection keeps you back? Then this promise is for you.
  2. You hear about Jesus dying on the cross for sin. You hear about Jesus rising from the death on the third day. But can you not see that this applies to you? Can you not by faith embrace that He didn't just die, He died in your place and for your sins?
  3. But will God accept you?
  4. And the answer is yes. Yes, not because of you but because of the One who took your place, your sin, your guilt.
  5. And if you therefore cast all your hope on Jesus. You claim Him alone to be your way of salvation then the promise is as simple as it is astounding. Your sins are blotted out.
  6. You sit there waiting for some feeling or some way to clean yourself up before you come to Jesus. What a waste of time. It is like trying to wash a window but all you have is the muck of a swamp to use as water.
  7. But God says, turn back, turn to Jesus and those very sins that hold you back shall be wiped away. Nothing shall remain but the pure righteousness and perfections of Jesus.
  8. No trace of sin shall be found that shall be held against you. This is the offer to the people of Israel and many simply heard it and walked away. Shall you?
  9. No sin stands outside that promise. Not one. It is forgiven and it is removed. It is taken away upon the shoulders of the One you have spent your life ignoring and rejecting.
  10. Beloved, hear me and hear me well. The way of salvation shall remain closed to all who wishes to keep his sin. But that way shall be open wide, wider than the heavens to the one who leaves his sin and takes Jesus as his life and hope.
- B. Next week, Lord willing, we will see the other two promises and they are mind blowingly big. And they are why you need your sins forgiven and washed away.

# M i s s i o      D e i      F e l l o w s h i p

*Missio Dei Fellowship exists to glorify God by delighting in Him and making Him known through the proclamation of the gospel of Jesus Christ.*

1. The second promise is: the times of refreshing will come from God.
2. The third promise is: Jesus Christ will return.

## **Benediction**

**May the God who gave us the Word sanctify us in it so that we might find ourselves strengthened in the truth, humble of heart, able to encourage one another toward love and good deeds, especially as we see the day of our Lord's return drawing nearer. Amen.**

---

---

## **Community Group Questions**

- **Continue to encourage one another to talk to that one that each person identified. Take even a moment to have people pray in pairs for a short bit for the other person to be bold and kind to their "one" with the gospel.**
- **Take the time to watch one or two videos by Living Waters. Then discuss what you saw and what was eye-opening and what was learned.**