

## None to perish, but why repentance?

1/15/2017

Last week,

we saw that God was clear about what He wanted-

He wanted us praying, but praying so that

conditions were enhanced for “all people to be saved.”

We thought back to people who had enhanced faith for us,

made it easier, instead of harder,

for us to come to God through Jesus.

This morning we have a similar statement to start off with,

but different in some very important ways.

(II Peter 3:3-9)

<sup>3</sup> First of all, you must understand that

in the last days scoffers will come,

scoffing and following their own (evil) desires.

<sup>4</sup> They will say, “Where is this ‘coming’ he promised?

Ever since our fathers died,

everything goes on as it has

since the beginning of creation.”

<sup>5</sup> But they deliberately forget that long ago

by God’s word the heavens existed

and the earth was formed out of water and by water.

<sup>6</sup> By these waters also the world of that time

was deluged and destroyed.

<sup>7</sup> By the same word the present heavens and earth

are reserved for fire,

being kept for the day of judgment

and destruction of ungodly men.

<sup>8</sup> But do not forget this one thing, dear friends:

With the Lord a day is like a thousand years,

and a thousand years are like a day.

- <sup>9</sup> The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise,  
as some understand slowness.  
He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish,  
but for everyone to come to... (Are you ready?)
1. Salvation...No, although that WAS our thought  
from last week, and is still true.
  2. Forgiveness...nope.
  3. Reconciliation... still not it.
  4. For everyone to come to...repentance.

Now there is a word we probably haven't heard in a while,  
except when applying it to other people  
who don't conform to our standards of behavior.

But it is a word with a fine, Biblical tradition.

Mark 1:4

John appeared, baptizing in the wilderness and proclaiming  
a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Repentance was observable  
in the behavior changes that resulted from it.

(Luke 3:8, :10-14)

Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.

<sup>10</sup> And the crowds asked him, "What then shall we do?"

<sup>11</sup> And he answered them,

"Whoever has two tunics is to share with him who has none,  
and whoever has food is to do likewise."

<sup>12</sup> Tax collectors also came to be baptized and said to him,  
"Teacher, what shall we do?"



<sup>29</sup> But Peter and the apostles answered, “We must obey God rather than men. <sup>30</sup> The God of our fathers raised Jesus, whom you killed by hanging him on a tree.

<sup>31</sup> God exalted him at his right hand as Leader and Savior, to give repentance to Israel and forgiveness of sins.

#### Acts 11:17-18

If then God gave the same gift to them as he gave to us when we believed in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God’s way?” <sup>18</sup> When they heard these things they fell silent. And they glorified God, saying, “Then to the Gentiles also God has granted repentance that leads to life.”

(And Paul sharing about his behavior post-conversion)

#### Acts 26:19-20

“Therefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, <sup>20</sup> but declared first to those in Damascus, then in Jerusalem and throughout all the region of Judea, and also to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds in keeping with their repentance.

Some folks teach that it’s only “all about grace,” primarily from the teaching of Paul. But when I read about Paul’s defense of his ministry, repentance sure seems to occupy a pretty prominent place.

Did you notice that over and over again, repentance is connected with forgiveness of sins.

And where we started in II Peter 3:9,

“God is not willing that any should perish, but for ALL to come to... repentance.”

**THAT'S what "God wishes"... So what IS that?**

**(Please bear with me because I think this is important.)**

**(from TDNT)**

**It can mean**

- 1. "to change one's mind,"**
- 2. "to adopt another view,"**
- 3. "to change one's feelings"...**
- 4. "to change one's resolve or purpose..."**
- 5. "to come to a different opinion,"**
- 6. if the change of mind derives from recognition that the earlier view was foolish, improper or evil, there arises the sense "to regret," "to feel remorse,"**
- 7. It bears witness to a sense of committed faults which must be corrected.**
- 8. It expresses pain or grief at what has happened...**

**God's definitive revelation (in Christ) demands final and unconditional decision on man's part. It demands radical conversion, a transformation of nature, a definitive turning from evil, a resolute turning to God in total obedience (Mk. 1:15; Mt. 4:17; 18:3). He who does not convert (repent) falls under divine judgment...**

**This conversion is once-for-all. There can be no going back, only advance in responsible movement along the way now taken. It affects the whole person, first and basically the centre of personal life, then logically their conduct at all times and in all situations- their thoughts, words and actions.**



**THAT is what God wants, or “wishes” from us, and for us.**

**There is nothing better FOR us than this.**

**It is a JOY to be around those people.**

**That is the life Jesus came to bring us, when he says,**

**“I have come that you might have life,**

**and have it to the full,” in John 10:10.**

**That was supposed to happen**

**when we committed our lives to Christ**

**and were baptized in his name.**

**It was supposed to happen for the Corinthians, too,**

**but apparently they missed something, as we do.**

**They needed reminders to live holy, “set apart” lives.**

**The Romans missed it, too.**

**Make a note to read the whole 6<sup>th</sup> chapter of Romans**

**to see Paul’s reminders to them.**

**I used to think repentance was going down a list of specifics,**

**and saying,**

**“OK, I’m willing to give that up, and that, and that...”**

**But it is so much more, and different than that.**

**It is choosing to place God’s Kingdom first.**

**Anything that gets in the way of that,**

**between God and me, needs to go.**

Notice I did not say that you pick for me, or I pick for you.  
God's Word and my conscience, and your conscience-  
 we each need to figure that out  
 between ourselves and God.

And it is pursuing whatever God WANTS me to be doing,  
 even if it is inconvenient, or uncomfortable for me.

Repentance is the change of mind,  
backed up by the behaviors consistent with  
 my new thinking.

I believe we grow into our Repentance, or conversion,  
 just like we grow into being married.

A decision is made- we say "I do" during the wedding,  
 and then we learn and adapt  
 and mature into the relationship.

The Commitment is made-  
from there it is learning how to live,  
consistent with the commitment.

Repentance says-

Based on the goodness of God, a choice HAS been made.  
God, I'm in, I'm ALL in.

God is not willing, God does not wish-  
 for ANY to perish, but for ALL to come  
 to a radical change of mind, heart and behavior.

What is He calling for from you this morning?

We sing a song- I have decided to follow Jesus...

## More on Repentance (Metanoia) from the Theological Dictionary of the New Testament

The point at issue here is a new attitude to sin, not explicitly a new attitude to God and His will. The pastoral emphasising of responsibility may be seen clearly in this setting of action above the inner attitude...

What John advances is the ancient prophetic summons for conversion, for a break with the ungodly and sinful past, for turning to God, because God, active in history, turns to man...

For as the call μετανοεῖτε which Jesus issued in the steps of the Baptist is construed as an emotional appeal: "Feel sorry," or as a stirring of the whole consciousness: "Change your mind,"<sup>145</sup> or as a demand for acts of expiation for wrongs committed: "Do penance," or as a summons to a radical change in the relation of God to man and man to God: "Convert," "be converted,"<sup>147</sup> so according to these various interpretations there will be radically different understandings of the message of Jesus. Investigation of the history of the term up to NT days has shown us, however, the only path which may be followed, and exposition of the theological usage of the NT will pursue this to its destination, namely, that μετανοέω and μετάνοια are the forms in which the NT gives new expression to the ancient concept of religious and moral conversion...

The term which John makes his slogan is familiar to his Jewish contemporaries. It is the epitome of their unwearied and manifold exertions to throw off sin and to fulfil the commandments. But the slogan gives the word a wholly new significance. Conversion is once and for all. It must be genuine and not in appearance only. It is demanded of all, not just of notorious sinners (Lk. 3:12 f.) or Gentiles (Lk. 3:14). Conversion is required of righteous Jews who do not think they need it (Mt. 3:7 ff.). It implies a change from within. This change must be demonstrated in the totality of a corresponding life (Mt. 3:8: ποιήσατε ὃν καρπὸν ἄξιον τῆς μετάνοιας, cf. v. 10), a life of love and righteousness in accordance with the will of God (Lk. 3:10–14). With the preaching of conversion John connects the baptism of conversion (βάπτισμα μετάνοιας, Mk. 1:4 par.; Ac. 13:24; 19:4), a sacramental act of purification which effects both remission of sins (εἰς ἄφεσιν ἁμαρτιῶν, Mk. 1:4 par.) and conversion (ἐγὼ μὲν ὑμᾶς βαπτίζω ἐν ὕδατι εἰς μετάνοιαν, Mt. 3:11). The meaning is that the complete change of man's nature for the coming aeon is God's work in baptism. Through the eschatological sacrament of John's baptism God fashions for Himself a community of the converted who are given a place in the coming salvation. μετάνοια is both God's gift and man's task. God grants conversion through baptism, man is summoned by the call thereto to let it be given him, "to maintain and authenticate it as the divine basis of his own existence so long as this aeon lasts." At the portal of the NT we thus find a concept

of conversion which transcends Judaism and renews the ultimate insights of the prophetic piety of the OT (cf. Jer. 31:33; Ps. 51:10), but with a new eschatological certainty...

God's definitive revelation demands final and unconditional decision on man's part. It demands radical conversion, a transformation of nature, a definitive turning from evil, a resolute turning to God in total obedience (Mk. 1:15; Mt. 4:17; 18:3). He who does not convert falls under divine judgment (Mt. 11:20 ff. par.; Lk. 13:3, 5; 19:40 ff.; 23:28 ff.). This conversion is once-for-all. There can be no going back, only advance in responsible movement along the way now taken. It affects the whole man, first and basically the centre of personal life, then logically his conduct at all times and in all situations, his thoughts, words and acts (Mt. 12:33 ff. par.; 23:26; Mk. 7:15 par.). The whole proclamation of Jesus, with its categorical demands for the sake of God's kingdom (the Sermon on the Mount, the sayings about discipleship), is a proclamation of *μετάνοια* even when the term is not used...

It calls for total surrender, total commitment to the will of God: God, be merciful to me, a sinner (Lk. 18:13). It is a conversion to the God who seeks out sinners rather than the righteous (Lk. 15:7, 10, cf. 17ff.; 5:32; 13:3, 5, → I, 303 f.). Jesus brought out the radicalism of His summons to conversion in His mortal conflict with the Pharisees. In the preaching of Jesus faith grows out of conversion (Mk. 1:15; → *πίστις* → *πιστεύω*), not as a second thing which He requires, but as the development of the positive side of *μετάνοια*, the turning to God. Conversion as Jesus understands it is not just negative. It is more than a break with the old nature in face of the threat of eschatological judgment. It embraces the whole walk of the man who is claimed by the divine lordship...

To convert is not just to give one's life a new direction but in practice to reorientate oneself continually to the goal by the radical setting aside of evil. In Ac., too, the goal of conversion is the final salvation (11:18: *ζωή*, → II, 864), and especially the forgiveness and washing away of sins (Lk. 24:47; Ac. 3:19, cf. 8:22, → I, 511). Remission of sins is connected with baptism in Ac. 2:38 and with faith in 10:43. But as a blessing of eschatological salvation it is also found alongside *μετάνοια* in 5:31. There is no binding of forgiveness to conversion such as we find in Judaism, → 997...