

Proper Response to Jesus: Repentance

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Date: 04 March 2018

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[0 : 00] Who needs a handout this morning? It's number five, proper response to Jesus' repentance.

! If you'd hold your hands up, we'll make sure you get one.! We're exploring Christianity and not what other people say about it.

This is such an important topic that you want to know for yourself. What is Christianity all about? And so you're wanting to hear it, as it were, from the horse's mouth.

I don't know where that saying came from. Does anyone know where that came from? Mr. Ed? Yeah. The idea is you want to go back to the source.

And so if we want to... I mean, Christianity is talking about eternal realities, where we live forever and ever. And so these are huge issues.

[1 : 00] We don't want to go on what someone says, someone else thinks. We want to get back to the source and see for ourselves, what did Jesus say?

After all, Christianity is all about Jesus. What he said, what he did. And here in Luke's Gospel, as we're studying it, we have the record of those who saw him and who heard him.

Eyewitnesses and earwitnesses. So far, we've asked four questions in our exploration in Luke's Gospel. See if you can give them to me in order. What's the first question we want to know?

Who is Jesus? Second? Why did he come? Third? Why did he die? Fourth?

Did he really rise from the dead? And this morning we come to the fifth question. Before we do that, any questions about those earlier questions, especially the bodily resurrection of Jesus from the dead?

[2 : 06] That was last week's study. Remember, that was the ultimate sign that Jesus gave to his generation. The sign of Jonah.

That is, Jonah was in the belly of the fish for three days and then came out onto life on earth, on land. So the Son of Man will be three days in the belly of the earth.

That was the sign of all signs. And Jesus is willing to hang the whole of his claims, all of them, upon that one claim that I will rise again.

Any questions about that? All right. In our first session, we said that Christianity is about Christ, but it's not just a detached list of facts about Jesus.

These have to do with us. Indeed, Christianity puts its arms around every one of us and pulls us into the discussion and into the issue.

[3 : 10] We don't sit on the sidelines. There's no mere observers in this exploration of Christianity. Christianity, it involves us all because it demands a fitting response from us to those questions, those four questions that we've seen.

Those aren't just to tickle our fancy or our thoughts, but they're meant to draw out a response that's appropriate to the things that we have learned about Jesus.

So it is a demand upon all men to respond to this Jesus. You see, not every sinner. Why did Jesus come?

To save sinners from endless judgment. But not every sinner is saved. Only those who make an appropriate response to this Savior are saved.

So according to Jesus, what is the appropriate response that we are to make? To who he is and what he's done. The response is twofold. It's repentance and faith.

[4 : 15] And we're going to look just at the first this morning at repentance. They're really just two sides to the same coin. They're like Siamese twins. That wherever you find the one, you always find the other.

So if you find faith, you'll always find repentance. And if you find repentance, you'll also find faith. They're one two-sided response to who Jesus is.

So repentance this week and then faith next week. And our study is done. Now, this word repent in some form is found 14 times in Luke's gospel.

So it's not a minor thing. Indeed, Luke is telling us this is the response Jesus demands from you. Repent. All but two of those 14 times come from Jesus' own mouth.

The other two come from John the Baptist. So we're going to look at Luke. But before we do, I just want you to look at two verses in Matthew's gospel. So, chapter 3, to begin with, remember in our earlier studies that John the Baptist was sent to Israel to prepare the way for the coming of the Messiah, the anointed King Jesus.

[5 : 33] And his message, John the Baptist's message, is summarized in just a few words for us here in Matthew 3, 1 and 2.

Matthew 3, 1 and 2. Dave Grenner, do you have that for us? In those days, John the Baptist came preaching in the desert of Judea and saying, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.

So there's the summary. What did John come preaching? Repent. Why? Because the kingdom of heaven is at hand. It's near. It's come. It's coming.

Why? Because the King is coming. So get ready for him. And the way to get ready for him is to repent. Well, after John the Baptist bore witness to the coming Jesus, Jesus came.

And as he began his public ministry, we see it succinctly summarized in chapter 4 and verse 17. 4, 17.

[6 : 38] Again, Dave, if you'd read that for us, please. So that time when Jesus began to preach, repent for the kingdom of heaven is near. Okay.

And so we notice right away that Jesus' message was not different from John's in that regard. It, too, was calling men to repent because he was now here.

The King was now here. This anointed King that God had promised. Now, what is the response then that all men owe to this Jesus?

It is repent. From the very beginning, we see that. To repent means to change one's mind about God, about sin, about myself, about the world, about Jesus.

My mind needs to be changed. It's also a change of direction. It's an about face. We saw when we studied sin that we all are sinners.

[7 : 44] We all break God's law. So we've got our back toward God as we're born and we're just seeking our own way. We're dismissing God and what he has to say, just doing what we want. And Jesus says it must stop.

You must stop and turn around. You must renounce this way that you're on. You must renounce your way and turn your back on that sin. So it's a change of mind.

It's a change of directions. It's a change of allegiance. Who calls the shots in your life? Well, we're born choosing our own way, as I said, and not caring what Jesus wants and says and commands. But repentance is to renounce this me-ism, this living by my wisdom, by my will. And so repentance is to say, I renounce that way and I turn around and say, no longer my way, now your way.

So that's just in short what repentance looks like. A change of mind. A change of directions. And a change of allegiance.

[8 : 59] So let's look then in the Gospel of Luke for this kind of response, both demanded and explained and seen, where instead of choosing what I want and checking with my desires and my will and my mind, I check with God and say, what do you want?

It's a whole different allegiance, direction, and mindset. Well, chapter 3, verse 3, we're seeing Luke's account of John the Baptist's ministry.

And Luke 3.3. Dan, would you read that for us? Dan Philpus. And he went into all the region around the Jordan, proclaiming a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins.

Baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins. So their baptism was a sign of a repentance that they had turned. And what's the result of those who repent?

What's the result? The forgiveness of sins. And so remember we saw, why did Jesus die? He died to take the punishment for sinners. That their sins might be forgiven.

[10 : 21] Removed. Canceled. And yet not every sinner's sins are forgiven. Only those who repent have their sins forgiven. And that becomes clear as we go further.

So in chapter 3, we see John then preaching to the crowds coming out to be baptized by him. And in verse 7, he says, you brood of vipers, who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? That's what we all need to be saved from. The coming wrath. Produce fruit. Verse 8. Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. Repentance. And don't begin to say to yourselves, we have Abraham as our father.

For I can tell you that out of these stones, God can raise up children for Abraham. The axe is already at the root of the trees. And every tree that does not produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.

The fire of God's wrath. So notice what he's after. What does John say? Produce fruit in keeping with repentance. Repentance. So there's two parts to repentance.

[11:26] There's initial repentance. Where you stop going your own way. You stop your allegiance to self. And you turn around and you swear allegiance to Jesus Christ and to his way.

That's the initial repentance. And then there's the ongoing repentance. And that's what John is talking about here. Produce fruit in keeping with your repentance.

repentance. So you are coming out to be baptized saying that I have repented. Okay, that's the initial. You're saying that you have had an about face.

Now, don't stop there. Produce the fruit that is fitting for someone who has repented.

Repentance. Repentance. Repentance. So. What we find is that a lot of folks claim to have repented. But the only proof of whether that repentance is true and real is if it produces the fruit.

[12:30] How do you know if a tree is really an apple tree? Really alive? Well, it produces apples. And the fruit proves the life of the tree. The kind of the tree.

So with repentance. The one proof is fruit. So don't just say you repudiate your way of sin.

Let it be seen in your practice. Repentance. Well, the crowd immediately starts asking, well, what what will that mean for us? What will it mean for us to produce the fruit of repentance?

And what does John tell them in verse 10 and 11? What's what's the fruit of repentance for the crowd? Go ahead and read it and then tell us what you see.

What is the fruit of repentance? What kind of works? Good works. Specifically, what kind of works?

[13:33] Sharing food and clothing with the needy neighbor. OK. Well, then others, tax collectors. Remember them? We've studied them in this course. They were standing around chatting and they said to John, well, what will that mean?

For us. And what did John tell the tax collectors repentance will look like for them? OK. Remember, that was their problem.

Everybody knew it. Tax collectors are thieves and they're taking more than they should collect. So what does repentance look like for this group of people? Not collecting any more than what is just and right.

And what about the soldiers? What should we do to produce fruit of repentance? What was it? Sorry?

Stop giving false testimony. Stop giving false testimony. And extort money. To extort money from people. And be content with your wages.

[14:37] So, again, the tax collector would often take along a Roman soldier to collect the tax. And the Roman soldier carried the spear and the sword for Rome and demanded payment.

And it was a helper in extorting, taking what was not rightfully the tax collectors who would then pass on some extra bucks to the soldier.

They were in this thing together. And so, you see how repentance touches upon their very life. Even their hard attitudes, like contentment. You must be content with your wages so that you don't go out and steal what's not yours and so on.

So, repentance is seen in very practical ways of forsaking sin and love of self to being obedient to God and loving others.

You remember Zacchaeus, the chief tax collector? We looked at him in Luke chapter 19. In study number 2 on why did Jesus come when we saw he came to save sinners.

[15:40] What kind of sinners? Even the worst of sinners, like tax collectors. Like Zacchaeus. And in chapter 19, verses 9 and 10, Jesus said, Today salvation has come to this house.

For the Son of Man himself came to seek and to save what was lost. Jesus is saying salvation came. Is there any evidence that repentance had come to Zacchaeus' house?

To his heart and his life? Do you remember? Yeah. Look, Lord, here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor.

And if I've cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay them back four times. Well, that was what the law of God required. You see, there's obedience to God's law. No longer was Zacchaeus saying, what do I want?

God, what do you want? Well, let the thief pay back four times. Okay. He's doing it, you see. He's bringing forth the fruit of repentance. And in so doing, he's giving proof that his repentance is real. [16:54] He's not just claiming to have turned. He has turned. Just follow him around and see what he does. He's now giving half of his goods to the poor instead of grabbing and clinging to what he has.

He's paying back what he stole. He's obeying God's law. That's the fruit of repentance. So, chapter five. Those were evidences or the words of John the Baptist.

Now we come to the words of Jesus. The words of Jesus, 29 to 32. 29 to 32.

Mark Aikens, if you'd read that for us. Then Levi called the great pastor for Jesus at his house. And the large crowd of tax collectors and others were eating with them.

But the Pharisees and the teachers of the law who belonged to their sect complained to his disciples, Why do you eat and drink to tax collectors and sinners? Jesus answered them, It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick.

[18:01] I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance. Why has Jesus come? To call sinners to repentance.

You see, the gospel includes the call to repentance. The gospel doesn't just say, Look at Jesus. Look who he is and what he has done. Dying and rising to save sinners.

The gospel includes the call to repent. To respond to this Jesus. So much so that Jesus can say, That's why I've come. I've come to call sinners.

Like Levi and Zacchaeus and other tax collectors. To repent. Alright? Any questions then on tax collectors and their need to repent? And what it looks like?

And that being the response of repentance that is to be made to Jesus. Alright? Chapter 10 and verses 13 and 14.

[19:02] Chapter 10, 13 and 14. Angie, do you have that? Amen. Okay.

So, why will people from cities like Chorazin and Bethsaida have a greater punishment in the day of judgment? That's what...

Jesus is fast forwarding to the day of judgment. He knows about these things because He is God. And He knows better than anyone how it's going to go. And He says, It's going to be harder for you. You're going to have a greater punishment in that day than these other cities of Tyre and Sidon. Why so? Miracles had been done in their presence by Jesus.

They had heard Jesus preach to them. They had seen demonstrations that this is no ordinary man. This is indeed God's Christ. God's anointed King with authority over diseases, death, sin, and all the rest.

[20:28] What did they fail to do? With repentance. You see our word there. You see our word?

They would have repented long ago if these works would have been done in those wicked cities of Tyre and Sidon. So, they were done in your presence and you didn't repent.

That is the response required of those who have received the gospel, who have received the truth of God. The privilege of having heard and seen carries along with it the responsibility to repent.

And where that doesn't happen, there's a heavier punishment in hell. Now, a similar text in chapter 11 and verse 32.

Again, Jesus is talking about this wicked generation, right? That he was living among. He's always asking for more miraculous signs.

[21:29] And he says to them in verse 32. The men of Nineveh will stand up at the judgment with this generation and condemn it. For they repented at the preaching of Jonah.

And now one greater than Jonah is here. Jesus is greater than Jonah. Nineveh repented at Jonah's preaching. What had this generation not done?

They'd not repented. That's the response that is always expected, demanded from those who have heard the light of the gospel.

So, chapter 13. We're looking at the original source to Jesus himself to tell us, what is it that I am to do in response to who you are and what you've done?

Chapter 13, verses 1 to 5. 13, 1 to 5. Dave Richards, if you have that, please. There was some present at that very time who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices.

[22 : 42] And he answered them, Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans because they suffered in this way? No, I tell you, unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.

Or those 18 on whom the tower of Siloam fell and killed them, do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem?

No, I tell you, but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. So, the obvious, who's going to perish under the judgment of God?

All who do not make the fitting response to Jesus of repentance. So, we find that these calamities that took place in their day caused some of these Jews to think, Well, they must have been really wicked people to have these things happen to them.

Did a tornado fall on their heads and kill them? They must have been really wicked to receive such punishment. And Jesus just puts the finger right at every one of them and says, No, unless you repent, you too will perish.

[24 : 00] We are all sinners. We all must repent. And he doesn't say it just once, but you notice he says it twice. It's repeated for emphasis. If you don't get anything, get this, Jesus is saying.

You must repent in order to be forgiven of the damnation that you deserve. Well, then we come to chapter 15, and these are three parables, stories that Jesus tells.

And we won't take time to read the entire parables, but you have the parable of the lost sheep, followed by the parable of the lost coin.

They each teach the same lesson. Read verses 7 and 10 to yourself, and then I've got a series of questions for you. Verses 7 and 10.

So what causes joy in heaven? Joy in God. Joy in the presence of God with him and his angels. What is it, Jim?

[25 : 07] A sinner repenting. Just one sinner is enough to set heaven rejoicing. Just one sinner who stops and renounces the way he's living and turns around and says, I'm going God's way now.

Heaven rejoices. What does that tell you about Jesus? What does that tell you about Jesus, this one who's telling the parable?

Does he enjoy seeing people damned in hell? Or does he not rejoice to see sinners turning?

There's destruction. And he rejoices to see sinners turning, repenting, and that they might be forgiven. He has no pleasure in seeing people continue on in sin to be damned.

He delights to seek and to save and rejoices when just one sinner repents and is forgiven. And that's why he befriends bad sinners.

[26 : 14] That's where this whole chapter begins. Now the tax collectors and sinners were all gathering around to hear him. But the Pharisees and teachers of the law muttered, This man welcomes sinners and eats with them.

Why did he? Because he delights. He rejoices to see just one of these bad guys repenting. To miss that is to miss the heart of Jesus.

In making this demand for repentance, he's delighting in the good that comes to sinners through salvation. Chapter 16, verses 27.

He tells about a rich man who was an unrepentant sinner who had not cared about the beggar Lazarus at his door.

And Lazarus was a believer and was taken immediately into paradise upon death. And now the rich man is in torments and in agony.

[27 : 16] He cries out. Verse 27. He's talking to Abraham. Father Abraham, I beg you, Father, send Lazarus to my father's house for I have five brothers.

Let him warn them so that they will not also come to this place of torment. And Abraham replied, they have Moses and the prophets. Let them listen to them. No, Father Abraham, he said.

But if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent. And he said to them, if they do not listen to Moses and the prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.

Why is the rich man in hell? Not because he's rich, but he never repented of his greed. And his covetousness that refused to share and love his neighbor.

What is he concerned about? His five brothers who are also living as he did, heading to the same hell.

[28 : 15] He wants someone to go warn them so that they'll what? So that they will repent. They're on the road to destruction. Send somebody back so that they'll turn and not come to this place.

Again, we're seeing that repentance is required to escape God's judgment, to partake in the forgiveness of sins. Chapter 17, verses 3 and 4.

17, 3 and 4. Donnie Engel, do you have that for us? So watch yourselves. If your brother or sister sins against you, you can.

Does God forgive you every time you repent?

Then what is your duty? To forgive others every time they repent. Again, do you see the tying of forgiveness to repentance?

[29 : 18] Not every sinner has their sins forgiven. It's only those who make the fitting response of repentance. And then one last verse here in Luke, chapter 24.

And this was the day of our Lord's resurrection from the dead when he appears to the 11 disciples. And this is what he told them.

Chapter 24, 45 to 47. Tim, will you? Read that for us. Then he opened their minds so they could understand the scriptures.

He told them, this is what is written. That Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day. And repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in his name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.

And you're witnesses of these things, he says. Now what two things will be preached to all nations? Repentance and forgiveness of sins.

[30 : 20] Those two, we keep finding them together, don't we? Thank you, Dan. They go together. They go together. There is no forgiveness where there is no repentance. And so it's the same message that Jesus is giving to his 11 disciples now to preach.

What is different is that where are they now to preach it? To all nations. To all nations.

So Jesus has confined himself chiefly to the nation of Israel in his ministry. Now that he is crucified, risen and going to ascend into heaven, he's now giving them this great command to preach this same message of forgiveness to all who repent.

To all the nations. And notice to do it in Jesus' name because forgiveness only comes to repentant people because of who he is and what he, Jesus, has done.

Well, this message has reached our land. And we have heard the joyful sound that Jesus saves, but he only saves those who repent.

[31 : 28] Have you repented? Have you turned from going your way and go and returning to God's way? So Luke's gospel began with the call to repent and it ends with this command to extend that call to repent to all nations.

And the last verses of our gospel just tell us that Jesus went up into heaven right in front of the disciples. He ascended into heaven.

And that's just what he had said he would do when he stood on trial. From now on, the Son of Man will be seated at the right hand of the mighty God.

That's what happened as he ascended. He ascended up to God's throne. He's God's king, God's anointed king with all authority in heaven and on earth. And he reigns and he's coming again.

So the story doesn't end with Jesus' death, does it? Neither does it end with his resurrection. That's what we see here at the end of the book. Even now, Jesus is living.

[32 : 34] Jesus is reigning. Jesus is working. He is working on the earth through his apostles. So Luke writes a sequel to his gospel.

It's called the book of Acts. You have John next and then you have the book of Acts. And that book of Acts is written by our author Luke that we've been studying to the same Theophilus to now go on with the story and tell what happened after Jesus went back into heaven.

He came. He accomplished redemption by his death and resurrection. He left a command to his people. And back up into heaven he went. Now what? And the book of Acts carries on that history to tell us exactly what happened.

And so I want you just to turn over there and I want you to see what these disciples of Jesus did.

Chapter 2, we find the apostle Peter standing up and he proclaims the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus Christ.

We don't have time to read a sermon, but that's what he's proclaiming. Where is he? He's in Jerusalem. Where just seven weeks earlier they had slaughtered Jesus Christ on a cross.
[33 : 55] Now Peter is standing boldly proclaiming that this Jesus that they had killed is none other than God's anointed king. Verse 36 to 38.

36 to 38. Catherine, do you have that for us? So Jesus says on the day of his resurrection, Men, I want you to go and preach repentance and forgiveness to all nations.

Now we're just seven weeks later. And the nations have come to Jerusalem for the feast of Pentecost. And there are Jews there from all over the lands, the nations.

And they're there. And each of them hears Peter preaching in their own language. And the others proclaiming the works of God in their own language. And then Peter stands up and preaches.

And what does he preach? Repent and be baptized, every one of you, for the forgiveness of sins. Do you see it? That's the continuity. And Luke records it.

[35 : 04] Not only do we find the command at the end of Luke, but we find the obedience beginning in Acts chapter 2. And carrying right on, you could turn back to chapter 20 of the book of Acts.

And see, actually look at verse 20 and verse 21.

This is the apostle Paul speaking. And he says, I have declared to both Jews and Greeks. Greeks are the nations. Greeks are the non-Jews. And I've declared to both of them that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

We're going to look at faith next week. But notice you find them both here. This is the message of the gospel. You must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus.

And then in chapter 26, toward the end of Luke's account of the Acts of the Apostles, 26 and verse 20, Paul is giving his testimony and telling what he had done.

[36 : 11] And he says, You hearing echoes of anything that we've heard earlier?

John the Baptist, bring forth fruit, fitting of repentance. And here we see Paul says, That's what I preach, that all men should repent and turn to God and then prove the truthfulness, the genuineness of their repentance by their actual deeds.

So they did what Jesus told them and preached repentance for the forgiveness of sins. Now, we'll conclude with chapter 17. And it ties last week's lesson together with this week's lesson.

Acts chapter 17, the Apostle Paul is in a pagan place in Athens, talking to people unfamiliar with Jesus of Nazareth.

And he preaches to this crowd of philosophers. And he says, You know, God let the nations go their own way.

[37 : 37] But now, he's given a command in the gospel. Verse 30 and 31. In the past, God overlooked such ignorance, all the idolatry.

But now, he commands all people everywhere to repent. For he has set a day when he will judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed.

He has given proof of this to all men by raising him from the dead. So Paul announces to these pagan philosophers that the God who created them in all things has set a day on his calendar.

What is that appointed day for? For judgment. There is a judgment day. There is an accounting to give for the way you've lived. You've lived on God's earth.

You've taken in his sunshine and his rain and his gifts of family and food and friends and everything else. Now, you must give an account of your life before the judge.

[38 : 40] That's written on the consciences of every man. And Paul's just throwing it right in their teeth. And he knows that he's got a conscience inside that's bearing witness to that truth. That they must give an account for how they've lived.

So death is not the end for Jesus. But neither is it the end for anyone. All people will be raised from their graves to be judged for what they've done.

And then be assigned their eternal destinies of heaven or hell. So there's this day appointed on God's calendar. Who is the man God has appointed to judge the world?

How is he described? The man he raised from the dead. He'll judge the world with justice by the man he has appointed. The man that he raised from the dead.

That's Jesus. So there's no question as to who he's going to judge the world by. It's Jesus. And what is the proof that this appointed day of judgment is still on schedule and will happen just as God planned?

[39 : 49] What's the proof? Jesus has been risen. Remember that was the sign of all of his claims. Jesus claimed that he would judge the world in righteousness.

And he's willing to hang that claim on the ultimate sign. I will rise again. He did rise. And now Paul says that proves. That the appointed day will happen.

The Jews didn't like the judge. They didn't like his laws. So they killed him. And they thought that was the end of him. But he rose. He now reigns. And at God's appointed time he's coming again to judge the world in justice.

And assign eternal destinies. The proof? He's raised his judge from the dead. Want more proof? Want more signs? He's not giving it. That's enough he says.

So you see how Christianity has everything to do with you and me. It doesn't let us stand by as casual observers. We're headed to judgment. The road we're on is leading to hell.

[40 : 59] And God is calling us to repent. Jesus is calling us to repent. Does that not reveal the heart of Jesus? You're on the way that leads to hell.

And Jesus is calling you. Turn. Turn to me. Why will you die? Why will you not rather turn and live? What a heart Jesus has for sinners.

Not only that he would die to suffer the punishment of sin. But that then he would preach and call and say through his preachers and through his Christians to all in the world.

Come to me. Turn. And live. Well that's the first of two responses. We'll see the second next week. And that being faith.

We're dismissed then. We're dismissed then.