

Parables of Jesus, pt.8

6.22.03

The Way of Repentance

Intro: 1. How many of you like hominy/dogfood . . . Bluebell? (Write it down on an easel) 2. Set up story; tell it; context. 3. Jesus application – One group changed their mind (repented) & followed the way of righteousness. They turned from something of lesser value (old values; beliefs) to something of greater value (the Good News; the kingdom of God). **40 Days of Prayer & Fasting: You're giving up something of lesser value for something of greater value. Prayer guide, building open, solemn assembly on July 1 & time of rejoicing on Aug.9.**

Two Key Phrases: “change of mind” & “the way of righteousness.”

How many of you would say you're a sinner . . . saint?

Repentance is all throughout the NT.

- John the Baptist, R for the kingdom of H is near
- Peter, R & be baptized every one of you, in the name of J
- Paul, In the past God overlooked such ignorance but now he commands all men everywhere to repent.
- Jesus, Repent and believe the GN

My background: Baptist & heavy condemnation preaching; good preaching was if you left feeling really bad about yourself. Given a list of 32 things to repent of – church attendance, reading Bible, repent of not praying, winning souls, giving, involvement in ministry, being a good parent, devoted child, pure thoughts, womanizing & drinking. Always focused on actions. Our religious spirit likes that/eats it up.

So we try & fail ----> greater levels of condemnation & guilt
So we try & succeed - - - > self-righteousness; "Why aren't you like me?"
Eventually, always leads to defeat, b/c belief never changes.

III. Like pulling nut grass without getting the root. It works for a while, but it always return. It's the same way spiritually . . . the actions will never permanently change until you deal with your mind.

Repentance is a "change of mind". (point at others and then me)

The biggest battle every believer faces is with your mind. . . not the Devil, not some addiction, not a person. It's with your mind. Paul says in Rom.12.2, "Be transformed by the renewing of your mind." When you begin changing your mind through the power of the Holy Spirit, that is when you experience repentance. When you begin to believe (not just assent but at the heart level) the Good News that is when you genuinely repent.

Illustration: Ever had a time when you were praying, seeking the Lord and suddenly God reveals to you a truth about yourself and it changes your way of thinking about yourself. On May 5, I had a monumental shift in my thinking (Had to do with selling house & buying in a less desirable area) but I can't share it b/c it would put some of you under false conviction. It had to do with an area of liberty. I repented - I had a **"change of mind"**.

What are some areas where we truly need a change of mind? When we change our mind we can walk in the way of righteousness. I believe there are three things we need to change our thinking about. I have spoken about these topics a # of times, but it still hasn't sunk into all of our thinking. Until you change your mind about these areas you will not walk in the way of righteousness fully.

Go to notes from Spread the Fire Revival – 5.9.00

Every time you believe the lie that God is not for you, that your not good enough, that God can't or won't use you, that you've gone one step too far, etc. Every time you believe those lies, it's like you're eating hominy/dogfood. (About the dogfood – It's not going to kill you, but it will make you think you're a dog.) Your saying, "God, I'd rather have hominy/dogfood rather than Bluebell. I'd rather believe the lie than the truth."

The Lord says, "Repent – change your mind about the hominy/dogfood – and believe the Bluebell – the Good News (go get Bluebell and eat some). What's the GN? my God is for me (that's good!), I am the friend of Christ (that taste great!), I have a purpose (yee-haw!).

Will you give up this (hold up hominy/dogfood) of lesser value to have this (hold up the Bluebell) of greater value! If so, that is repentance!

I promise you understanding who you are in Jesus changes your actions, the way you relate to people, deal with life's issues.

You finally need to change your mind about your **purpose in Life.**

Some of you think, you're too bad, you've messed up too many times, too old, too far away to do anything for God. Others think - God doesn't really need you, or he has no real plan for your life.

Jer.29.11, "For I know the plans I have for you," declares the Lord, "plans to prosper you and not to harm you, plans to give you hope and a future."

Eph.2.10 says, "We are God's workmanship, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do."

2nd Service: Youth & Leader share what God showed them about their purpose while at camp.