

Repentance

October 1, 2023

Welcome to the Beamsville Church of Christ online ministry. This week's message is titled "Repentance." The scripture reading is Luke 15 8 to 10. Thank you to Paul, Jon, Gloria, and Don for being part of the video. Happy birthday this week to Allie.

Welcome, Announcements & Prayer

Good morning! Welcome to service today. I hope we can all have a wonderful time worshiping God and learning a little more of Him. I'm Paul, in case you don't know. I have a couple announcements and then we'll start off with a prayer. We have a birthday, Ernie L. this week and prayer for those affected by severe weather out on the East Coast. Let's go to God in prayer as we open our service this morning.

Dear Lord, thank you for all you've given us and all you've blessed us with. Thank you for this time. Lord, help us to worship you well today. Help us to worship you with open hearts, open minds, and come away from this experience encouraged and perhaps challenged. We thank you for all that you have done. In Jesus' name, amen.

Communion

Over the last while, I've been watching too much television, too many movies. One thing that has jumped out at me is how many times people say "the universe." The universe will lead me. The universe will guide me. The universe will answer my stuff. I go, hmm, that's kind of strange. The universe, what is that all about? I also watch these Indigenous shows of people going hunting and whatever. They shoot a rabbit. They put a little tobacco on them and thank the rabbit for the life that they have and for the food they're going to eat. Hmm. We hear terms like Mother Earth many, many times lately. So I got thinking about this.

In Romans chapter one, beginning in verse 21, "For although they knew God, they did not honor him as God or give thanks to him, but they became futile in their thinking and their senseless minds were darkened." And then in 25, it says, "Because they exchanged the truth about God for a lie and worshipped and served the creature rather than the Creator who is blessed forever, amen." I'm kind of making a lot more out of this probably than I need to, but I get thinking about this. You read this in context. You know God has declared himself to people from the beginning of time through his creation, yet we narrow it down now to the universe, to animals, but who do we give credit to? Who do we thank for all these things?

In Acts chapter 17, Paul, he was talking in Athens and he says this, "So Paul, standing in the middle of the Areopagus, said, "Men of Athens, I perceive that in every way you are very religious, for as I pressed along and observed the objects of your worship, I found also an altar with this inscription to an unknown God, but therefore you worship as unknown. This I proclaim to you." I think the world in general has kind of drifted away from God the Father, God the Son, God the Holy Spirit, and we kind of placed our thanks and worship, etc., on other items instead of God himself, and so we become people who worship the creation or creature rather than the Creator.

And so this morning as we gather about the table, Jesus paid it all, we just say. There's only one perfect sacrifice and that was the Lamb of God who gave us life that we could live. So we need to be people who come back to God a little tighter and worship Him in spirit and in truth. Yes, it's okay to do some of these other things. That's what people believe to be right. That's for them to do. But for us, we need to concentrate this morning on the body and the blood of the Lamb, which makes our life complete in every way and gives us extreme hope for the future. And so we go to God now in prayer to thank Him for loving us.

Father, we thank You so much for Jesus, Jesus who is the way, the truth, and the life. We thank You, Father, for all the blessings we received. We thank You for all Your creation. We thank You for this opportunity to remember Jesus through His body that was given and the bread that symbolizes this. And for the cup, His precious blood that was shed for us. We ask, Father, that You watch over us, help us to do Your will, and be always honoring You for all that we have. For we pray in Jesus' name, amen.

Scripture Reading

Luke 15:8-10

The scripture reading this morning is found in Luke 15 verses 8 to 10. It's about the lost coin. Suppose a woman has 10 silver coins and loses one. Doesn't she light a lamp, sweep the house and search carefully until she finds it? And when she finds it, she calls her friends and neighbors together and says, "Rejoice with me. I have found my lost coin." In the same way, I tell you, there is rejoicing in the presence of the angels of God over one sinner who repents.

Sermon

Good morning, everyone. Thank you very much for being with us. Last Sunday, we talked about baptism. And part of baptism is repentance, where we ask God to forgive us our sins, that we're sorry for the many things that we have done, sorry for some of the things that we have said, sorry for some of the things that we have thought. And the majority of the New Testament was written by one man, the Apostle Paul. And that is remarkably amazing, because Paul was a person who used to persecute Christians. If you were to ask Saul, who later becomes Paul, what do you think about Christians? He would say, throw them in jail and execute them. That man changed his life completely. Repentance was part of his life. Acts chapter eight, on that day, a great persecution broke out against the church. And all except the apostles were scattered throughout Judea and Samaria. And Saul, who will become the Apostle Paul, began to destroy the church. He would go from house to house, dragging off men and women and children and put them in prison. So Paul goes from a nonbeliever to become a great preacher. And he always carried the memory of the past, persecuting Christians. But his life changed completely.

So in Acts chapter nine, it's a bit lengthy, but let me read this to you. Meanwhile, Saul, who becomes Paul, was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord's disciples. He went to the high priest and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the way, meaning Christians, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem. As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him. He fell to the ground and he heard a voice say to him, Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me? And Saul asked, who are you, Lord? And the answer is, I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting. Now get up and go into the city

and you'll be told what you must do. The men traveling with Saul, who becomes Paul, stood there speechless. They heard the sound but didn't see anyone. So Paul got up from the ground, but when he opened his eyes, he could see nothing. So they led him by the hand into Damascus. For three days, he was blind and did not eat or drink anything.

Now on a sidebar for three days, does that signify something? The death, the burial, the resurrection of Jesus. And so in verse 10, in Damascus, there was a disciple named Ananias. The Lord called to him in a vision, Ananias. Yes, Lord, he answered. The Lord told him, go to the house of Judas on straight street and ask for a man from Tarsus named Saul. For he is praying in a vision. He was seen a man named Ananias come and place his hands on him and restore a site. Lord Ananias answered, I have heard many reports about this man and all the harm he has done to your saints in Jerusalem. And he has come here with authority from the chief priest to arrest all who call on your name. But the Lord said to Ananias, go. This man is my chosen instrument to carry my name before the Gentiles and their kings and before the people of Israel, I will show him how much he must suffer for my name. Then Ananias went to the house and said, Brother Saul, the Lord Jesus, who appeared to you on the road as you were coming here, has sent me so that you may see again and be filled with God's Holy Spirit. Immediately, something like scales fell from Saul's eyes and he could see again. He got up. He was baptized. We talked about baptism last week. And after taking some food, he regained his strength. And then from then, Saul spent several days with the disciples preaching in the synagogues.

This story for me is quite remarkable. He always carried the weight of his past. However, Paul didn't allow that weight of sin to overwhelm him. And I think that's true for all of us, that we can sometimes be so overwhelmed and ashamed that we can't even ask God for forgiveness. And that is the soothing repentance that God gives us. Forgiveness as a father loves a child. So Paul incredibly carries this weight in his past. He tells the story over and over again to different congregations, but he didn't allow that to overwhelm him. Repentance was part of his teaching. And repentance is throughout scriptures, all the New Testament alike. Listen to some of these Old Testament scriptures. Way back in the Book of Job in chapter 36, he says, and he makes them listen to correction and commands them to repent of their evil. And then Isaiah in chapter 30, this is what the sovereign Lord, the Holy One of Israel says, in repentance and rest is your salvation. Or in Acts 20 and 21, the Apostle Paul said, I have declared to both Jew and Gentile that they must turn to God in repentance and have faith in our Lord Jesus Christ. And then in Romans 2, Paul says, don't ignore all the amazing goodness God gives to us. And I think that's something that we should take hold of. Don't ignore, do not ignore the amazing goodness God gives us. Kindness that leads you toward repentance. I want to change my life. I want to change the way I think. I want to honor God, God who created me, who knew me even before we were born for all of us. Sometimes we're sorrowful for some of the things that we have said or done or thought. So we do repent. We ask for forgiveness.

It says, Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to our salvation and leaves no regret. Meaning we're so sorry for what we've said, for what we've done, but we want to move forward. We're talking to God, knowing that he forgives us, continually repenting of our sins. So in our baptism, we demonstrate the death, the burial and resurrection being in the water and up out of the water. And we repent of our sins. We want to change our life. We want to go in a different direction, a positive direction, knowing that God is with us every moment of the day, that even while we're sleeping, God is with us. I will never leave you. I will never forsake you. I am with you always. And it may seem strange, but if you can just picture yourself, God sitting beside you, because he does. I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. I

am always with you. And then the apostle Peter, who wrestled with lots of things, he experienced repentance many times. God is patient and wanting everyone to come to repentance. And then in the very last book of the Bible, the revelation, John reminds us to repent. He says, repent and do the things you did at first. Do you remember when you were first becoming a Christian? You did a lot of praying, did a lot of praising, asked forgiveness often. So how are you doing today? Are we praising God? Are we praising Jesus? Are we thanking the Holy Spirit? Are we talking to them? Are we reminding ourselves what Jesus told us? That I'll never leave you. I'll never forsake you. I'm always with you. Do you think of God several times during the day? Do you think of Jesus several times during the day? Do you think the Holy Spirit thanking him for everything he's done for us? Do we remember the Holy Scriptures and how we want to live because of this promise? I am always with you. Is repentance bringing us closer to Jesus? If so, there will be peace in your life. Your heart will be changed. You won't be so anxious any longer.

Do you remember this old hymn? Let me read the words to you. Peace, perfect peace. In this dark world of sin, the blood of Jesus whispers peace within. Peace, all perfect peace, by thronging duties pressed. To do the will of Jesus. This is rest. Peace, perfect peace, with sorrows surging all around. On Jesus' bosom, naught but calm is found. Peace, perfect peace, our future all unknown. Jesus we know and he's on the throne. Peace, perfect peace, death shadowing us and ours. Jesus has vanquished death and all its powers. It is enough. Earth's struggles soon shall cease and Jesus call us to heaven's perfect peace. Someone once said, "In repentance comes peace." The promise of Jesus, he said these words. And if you will, just picture Jesus sitting beside you and saying these words. Peace, I leave with you. My peace, I give you. Not as the world gives. Let not your heart be troubled. Neither let your heart be afraid. Let the peace of God rule in your hearts. Thank you, Lord Jesus, for repentance and forgiveness.

So Saul's conversion is powerful. He's strengthened and encouraged by the Holy Spirit and without fear he's pronouncing the gospel of God. And all throughout the book of Acts and all throughout all of Paul's writings, he's encouraging us to receive the peace that God gives us. You see in our baptism, we repent of our sins. We ask God for forgiveness and based on the things that we've read today, does God forgive us of our sins? Oh yes. And in our baptism it's signifying a death, a burial, and a resurrection of Christ Jesus. And there's peace, this beautiful peace of God living in us every day. Maybe it would be a good thing and it's just an encouragement for all of us today just to think a little bit about repentance, a change of life, moving closer to Jesus, wanting to know him better, remembering that he is our heavenly Father. He knew us before we were born, he knows us now, he will always know us. Let's get closer to him and if we could ask Jesus in a powerful way, I know he will answer. Let's pray.

Father God, we're so thankful to you for the message of peace and patience. We're so grateful that you have called us to the peace that we can have in you. We thank you for what you give us, your love, your joy, your peace, your patience, your kindness, your goodness, your faithfulness, and helping us in controlling our lives that exonerates you. We fall at your feet with a love and thankfulness. We thank you that you're such a loving God who offers us peace. Amen.

Closing Prayer

2nd Thessalonians 3 verse 16 as our adjourning prayer. Now may the Lord of Peace himself give you peace at all times in every way. The Lord be with all of you. Amen.

Copyright & Contact

Thanks for watching or listening. The Beamsville Church of Christ meets at 4900 John Street, Beamsville, Ontario. Scripture quotations marked NIV taken from the Holy Bible New International Version. NIV. Copyright 2011 by Biblica Inc. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. Scripture quotations marked (ESV) are from The ESV® Bible (The Holy Bible, English Standard Version®), copyright © 2001 by Crossway, a publishing ministry of Good News Publishers. Used by permission. All rights reserved. Scripture quotations marked NRSV are from New Revised Standard Version Bible, copyright © 1989 National Council of the Churches of Christ in the United States of America. Used by permission. All rights reserved worldwide. You can find out more about the congregation on our Facebook page or at www.beamsvillechurchofchrist.ca