

Reckoning
Internal Reckoning
Joel 1:1-14

Reckoning – A Calculation OR a Settling of Accounts

The book of Joel is one of the minor prophets (minor due to length, not importance) with a powerful message of repentance. Joel calls for this repentance by describing the Reckoning (Calculation & Settlement) of sin internally, externally, and eternally for his people. According to Joel, a reckoning has happened, it is happening and will happen in the future. There is only one appropriate response to this: Repentance!

“Yet even now,” declares the LORD, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the LORD your God, for his is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.”
Joel 2:12-13

Our Plan: Over the next three weeks, we will focus on three things together:

- 1) Repentance:** Return to the Lord
- 2) Brokenness:** Weeping and Mourning
- 3) Sincerity:** Don't go through the motions (rend your heart...)

Messages, Devotions, Fasting, Solemn Assembly & Potluck Feast.

Primary Text: *“The word of the LORD that came to Joel, the son of Pethuel: Hear this, you elders; give ear, all inhabitants of the land! Has such a thing happened in your days, or in the days of your fathers? Tell your children of it, and let your children tell their children, and their children to another generation. What the cutting locust left, the swarming locust has eaten. What the swarming locust left, the hopping locust has eaten, and what the hopping locust left, the destroying locust has eaten. Awake, you drunkards, and weep, and wail, all you drinkers of wine, because of the sweet wine, for it is cut off from your mouth. For a nation has come up against my land, powerful and beyond number; its teeth are lions' teeth, and it has the fangs of a lioness. It has laid waste my vine and splintered my fig tree; it has stripped off their bark and thrown it down; their branches are made white. Lament like a virgin wearing sackcloth for the bridegroom of her youth. The grain offering and the drink offering are cut off from the house of the LORD. The priests mourn, the ministers of the LORD. The fields are destroyed, the ground mourns, because the grain is destroyed, the wine dries up, the oil languishes. Be ashamed, O tillers of the soil; wail, O vinedressers, for the wheat and the barley, because the harvest of the field has perished. The vine dries up; the fig tree languishes. Pomegranate, palm, and apple, all the trees of the field are dried up, and gladness dries up from the children of man. Put on sackcloth and lament, O priests; wail, O ministers of the altar. Go in, pass the night in sackcloth, O ministers of my God! Because grain offering and drink offering are withheld from the house of your God. Consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly. Gather the elders and all the inhabitants of the land to the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.”* **Joel 1:1-14**

I. **Devastation of Sin – Joel 1:1-4**

“But each person is tempted when he is lured and enticed by his own desire. Then desire when it has conceived gives birth to sin, and sin when it is fully grown brings forth death. Do not be deceived, my beloved brothers.”
James 1:14-16

II. **Acknowledgement of Sin – Joel 1:5-12**

“Indeed, human joy has dried up.” **Joel 1:12b**

Creation – Fall – Redemption – Restoration

“Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.” **Matthew 5:4**

III. **Repentance of Sin – Joel 1:13-14**

Fasting: The most misunderstood, feared and ignored spiritual discipline. Yet it is mentioned 77 times in scripture (more than baptism – 75). It is a *Christian's voluntary abstinence from food for spiritual purposes.* (Whitney) This means it cannot be forced and must not be a crash-diet to lose weight. We are going to practice a congregational fast periodically over the next three weeks, but it is purely voluntary and must be medically appropriate.

“Announce a sacred fast; proclaim an assembly! Gather the elders and all the residents of the land at the house of the LORD your God, and cry out to the LORD.” **Joel 1:14**

Sacred Fast – This Saturday, fast from dinner. Next Saturday/Sunday, fast from Dinner and Breakfast. The following Saturday/Sunday, fast from Diner, Breakfast and Lunch. A devotional guide will be provided to you and your family to participate with us!

Solemn Assembly – Sunday (11/21) at 5:30pm we will gather in the worship center at our Clove Lakes Facility for a Solemn Assembly. During this time, we will pray, mourn, confess, and repent of sin. Immediately following this solemn assembly, we will break our fast together as we enjoy dinner together.

Conc: Our sin usually falls into three categories:

- **Sins of Commission** – God says don't do it, we do it anyway.
- **Sins of Omission** – God says do it, we don't do it.

“So whoever knows the right thing to do and fails to do it, for him it is sin.”
James 4:17

- **Sins of Disposition** – Sins beyond what we do and don't do.

“Judge not...everyone who looks at a woman with lustful intent has already committed adultery with her in his heart...love your enemies...”
Matthew 5:32

Good News: No matter how sinful we are, in Christ, our forgiveness is guaranteed. While most other religions require their adherents to confess and repent of their sins in “hopes” they will be forgiven by their deity. But Jesus is so much better than that. The beautiful promise is this...

“For our sake he made him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in him we might become the righteousness of God.” 2 Corinthians 5:21

Inv: Jesus never sinned by Commission, Omission or Disposition. He lived the perfect life you couldn't live and then died the death you deserved to die on the cross. Three days later he rose from the dead and offers forgiveness for everything you've ever done in an amazing act of grace.

Disciples of Jesus don't Confess and Repent of our sins to Get Forgiveness, We Confess and Repent because We've Been Forgiven!

Internal Reckoning – While forgiveness is guaranteed, the internal consequences of our sin still ravage our lives like swarming locusts. But regular confession and repentance will mitigate the devastation and help you enjoy the abundant life Christ promises!

Sources and Further Reading Opportunities:

- *Bible Exposition Commentary* – Warren Wiersbe (1996)
- *IVP Bible Background Commentary* – Craig Keener (1993)
- *Tyndale Bible Dictionary* – Walter Elwell & P.W. Comfort (2001)
- *Joel: Only One Thing is Wrong* – J.D. Greear (2015)
- *Locust Hordes and the Day of the Lord* – John Piper (1982)
- *Prophet of Judgment* – Joseph Parker (1902)
- *The Minor Prophets* – James Montgomery Boice (2006)
- *Who will God Save: The Message of Joel* – Mark Dever (2003)