

True and False Repentance

*Calvin – a swift kick in the butt.

Matthew 15:7-8 ESV (Isaiah 29:13)

- I. False repentance.
 - a. A show of religion but not actually listening to God.
 - i. Isaiah 58:5-7 ESV “Is such the fast that I choose, a day for a person to humble himself? Is it to bow down his head like a reed, and to spread sackcloth and ashes under him? Will you call this a fast, and a day acceptable to the LORD? Is not this the fast that I choose: to loose the bonds of wickedness, to undo the straps of the yoke, to let the oppressed^[a] go free, and to break every yoke? Is it not to share your bread with the hungry and bring the homeless poor into your house; when you see the naked, to cover him, and not to hide yourself from your own flesh?” *Using their religion to hide from the people God is calling them to help.
 - ii. The good Samaritan – using their religion to hide from people in real need. 1John 4:20 Can’t love God who you can’t see and justify hating your brother who you can see.
 - iii. Joel 2:13 ESV “...rend your hearts and not your garments. Return to the LORD your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster.”
 - b. False repentance leads to spiritual death.
 - i. 2Corinthians 7:9-10 ESV “As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.” *One is about hurting God, the other is about what I may lose in the world because of my sins.
 - ii. Esau – Hebrews 12:14 NASB “(See that there be no) godless person like Esau, who sold his own birthright for a *single* meal.
17 For you know that even afterward, when he wanted to inherit the blessing, he was rejected, for he found no place for repentance, though he sought for it with tears.” He wanted to be blessed but wouldn’t own his godlessness for despising the eternal which he exchanged for the temporal.
 - iii. 2Timothy 3:5 ESV “...having the appearance of godliness, but denying its power. Avoid such people.” *No power that changes your life – if you live close to God you will be changed!!!
 - c. My religion growing up. Worship with my lips and wondering about the girl three pews ahead, or whether the Packers would win, or just wanting the

service to end. Confession every few months – never planned to change; never felt forgiven; but even I knew that saying five our fathers and five hail Mary's was not how it worked.

II. True repentance.

- a. Is only initiated by God. 2Timothy 2:24-25 ESV “And the Lord's servant^[a] must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, ²⁵correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth...” Grace teaches our heart to fear and then grace our fears relieve.
- b. How does God initiate repentance? By speaking the truth of His Word to us.
 - i. Isaiah 66:2b “But this is the one to whom I will look: he who is humble and contrite in spirit and trembles at my word.”
 - ii. Twice in Hebrews: “Today if you hear His voice, don't harden your hearts.” When God reveals we have a choice that will make us softer or harder.
 - iii. Jesus in Matthew 4:4 “Every word that proceeds from the mouth of God.” We're not consumers who pick and choose Bible verses we like, we're servants who seek to obey God in every area of our lives.
- c. The difficulty between what our hearts tell us (Jeremiah 17:9) and what the Holy Spirit tells us (John 16:13). He is the faithful friend who wounds us instead of the enemy who deceitfully kisses us.
 - i. Horses – “As prey and pack animals, horses are hyper-vigilant and instinctively read human body language, energy, and emotions. If a person feels anxious, angry, or closed-off, the horse often mirrors that behavior (e.g., pulling away or refusing to cooperate). This gives patients an immediate, honest "mirror" of their internal state. Horses live in the present moment. They do not judge, lie, or hold hidden agendas, which helps people with trauma, anxiety, or low self-esteem feel safe enough to open up.”
 - ii. The Holy Spirit doesn't convict to condemn, but to redeem. *The fitting over leaky plumbing – obey and stop trying to control outcomes! God can fix your plumbing.

III. A swift kick.

- a. Jesus know our deeds – He sees through the outward to the heart.
- b. Religion without works. Revelation 3:1b-3 ESV “I know your works. You have the reputation of being alive, but you are dead. ²Wake up, and strengthen what remains and is about to die, for I have not found your works complete in the sight of my God. ³Remember, then, what you received and heard. Keep it, and repent. If you will not wake up, I will

come like a thief, and you will not know at what hour I will come against you.”

- i. Jesus know our deeds – He sees through the outward to the heart. There are others that He commends in Sardis – please don’t allow condemnation if God isn’t speaking to you!
 - ii. Many in Sardis have a theology of burning and a testimony that they used to burn, but the flame has gone out. It’s not okay!
 - iii. You can serve without burning, but you can’t continue to burn without serving. (Church in Ephesus served but had lost their joy.)
 - iv. How to be rapture ready. Luke 12:35 NLT “Be dressed for service and keep your lamps burning...” *You can’t retire from service because you’ve been hurt (Someone criticized me) or feel unappreciated, or because you’re too old, or too unimportant. Do something even if you can’t have a platform! Who were you serving – man or God? Paul: “If I was still pleasing men, I would not be a bond-servant of Christ.” (Galatians 1:10b) Repent.
- c. Joel – Blow the trumpet, call for a solemn assembly – weep and grieve before God - who knows – He may relent and leave a blessing! If your heart is hard, go back and repent for not responding to what God was saying. Then obey Him starting today!