

Attitude #2 - Repentance

Matthew 5:4 - Jesus said, "Blessed are those who mourn, for they shall be comforted.

I believe that Jesus can and will create in me a new way of life.

Biblical repentance is the saving grace created in the soul by the Spirit of God, whereby a sinner is made aware of his sin, is grieved and humble before God on account of it, not so much for the punishment to which the sin has made him accountable, as that by his sin God is dishonored and offended and His laws violated. This grief arises from love to God, and is accompanied with hatred to sin, a love to holiness and a fixed resolution to forsake sin followed by an expectation of favor and forgiveness through the merits of Christ. This is Gospel repentance!

Repentance for the unsaved man is the regret and reluctance that arises when he has done something that he ought not to have done. This most often takes place when his offence has been made known and his regret is based on the things concerning his punishment and is not accompanied by the awareness and hatred of the sin. We know this to be true based on our personal experience to go back to that which has caused us and others pain not considering our opportunity for forgiveness and healing.

When we have a real relationship with God through His son Jesus Christ, we then have the opportunity to know God in a personal way. We discover that many of our preconceived notions of God become adjusted to the truth of God's word. What we may have thought God to be may not be the way that He is at all. We find that there may have been many opinions about God that we have bought into over the years that do not line up with God's word. When it pertains to the truth of God we cannot trust anything said or taught about God that does not line up with the God of the Bible. God is not like I want Him to be, God is like He is. God is not like I think He should be, God is like He is.

There are many scriptures in the Bible that teach us that God is forgiving. It would be safe to say that the entire theme of the Bible is forgiveness and redemption. God desires to have a relationship with His creation and by His grace He has made a way for us to personally experience that relationship. The Psalms are full of cries to the Lord. We will look at one of these cries with the intent that we might learn that this cry can indeed be our cry as well.

Psalms 130:1-5 - Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. 2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications. 3 If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4 But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared. 5 I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

1. Vs. 1,2 - A desperate cry. Out of the depths have I cried unto thee, O LORD. 2 Lord, hear my voice: let thine ears be attentive to the voice of my supplications.

Whatever condition that we find ourselves in we can learn from this example that we are to continue to call upon God. In the lowest of times and the most dreadful situations in life, it is our privilege to call upon the Lord. Peter prayed while sinking in a raging sea, Daniel out of a lion's den, Jonah out of the belly of a whale, Paul out of prison and Jesus from a bloody cross.

Always remember that it our responsibility to pray. James said it best when he said that, "**we have not because we ask not**" (James 4:2). He also said, "**The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much**" (James 5:16). Someone wisely said, "Our prayers must mean something to us if they are going to mean anything to God." Prayer will always be the best way to prevent us from sinking any lower and to recover us out of the pit of despondency. Desperate measures call for desperate prayer!

Psalms 119:58 - I intreated thy favour with my whole heart: be merciful unto me according to thy word.

Psalms 86:7 - In day of my trouble I will call upon thee: for thou wilt answer me.

Following two verses not in their outline at Jackson:

Proverbs 15:8 - The sacrifice of the wicked is an abomination to the LORD: but the prayer of the upright is his delight.

Proverbs 15:29 - The LORD is far from the wicked: but he heareth the prayer of the righteous.

2. Vs. 3 - A serious question. If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand?

If we were tried upon the justice of God we would all stand guilty and condemned before Him. In other words, if we acknowledge our sin we cannot justify ourselves before God and say, "Not guilty". If we were to stand before the Lord and give an account for all of our sin we would find them to be many and great. If upon that account He were to proceed accordingly we would be shut out of all hope to experience the favor and mercy of God.

By the grace of God the justice of God is not the only attribute of God. The love, mercy, compassion and patience of God are also a part of the nature of God. We could not escape the wrath of God were it not for the mercy of God.

Lamentations 3:22 - It is of the LORD'S mercies that we are not consumed, because his compassions fail not.

Psalms 103:8 - The LORD is merciful and gracious, slow to anger, and plenteous in mercy.

Psalms 116:5 - Gracious is the LORD, and righteous; yea, our God is merciful.

Psalms 117:2 - For his merciful kindness is great toward us: and the truth of the LORD endureth for ever. Praise ye the LORD.

God's goodness should always remind us that none of us have gotten what we deserve. God never overlooks or condones sin in the life of His children; He knows all and He sees all. His love for us is demonstrated by His patience for us. He knows, with His help, we can be forgiven and freed from the judgment and bondage of sin and His desire is that we might experience that.

Romans 2:4 - Or despisest thou the riches of his goodness and forbearance and longsuffering; not knowing that the goodness of God leadeth thee to repentance?

3. Vs. 4 - An honest assessment. But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

David concluded that in spite of the depth of his cry or the length of his cry, he knew that with God there is forgiveness. If we do not know anything else, that is the greatest thing that we can know. All of the wheels of heaven are put into motion when God forgives. A new life cannot begin until the old life is washed away. Like many of us, David may have found out the hard way but praise God he found out that with God there is forgiveness.

This declaration that we read is before us also as an offer. The offer is for anyone and everyone to trust the words of the Bible that "with God there is forgiveness." To believe means to agree something to be true. God's offer is forgiveness and our response is to believe. Believe that God's word means what it says and says what it means. With God's help, if you have not done so, trust God's word as His word to you personally.

Psalms 86:5 - For thou, Lord, art good, and ready to forgive; and plenteous in mercy unto all them that call upon thee.

Psalms 85:2 - Thou hast forgiven the iniquity of thy people, thou hast covered all their sin.

4. Vs. 5 - A safe position. I wait for the LORD, my soul doth wait, and in his word do I hope.

No one really likes to wait, but when we do wait we would do well first to wait on the Lord. David's waiting not only involved waiting on the Lord; it also involved waiting on a word *from* the Lord. He knew that his hope was found when he found a word from God. God's word is the only thing that will give us lasting, genuine hope. There is a great difference in waiting for something and waiting for something from the Lord. When we have waited for the Lord we know that we have waited for what is best and what is right. Waiting for anything or anyone else may result in disappointment and discouragement.

When David said that his "hope was in God's word" he teaches us that he was hoping only for what God would promise in His word. When we hope for what God has promised we can be confident based on God's character and not our own merit.

Psalms 119:65 - Thou hast dealt well with thy servant, O LORD, according unto thy word.

David truly had this part of God's dealing in his life figured out. He knew that the only way that God would deal with him was "according to His word". So it is with us, we are spinning our spiritual wheels when we think that God will deal with us anyway other than by His word. What He says He *will* do, what He says we *should* do, what He has we *will* get.....all according to His word and His word alone.

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