

The What, Why and How of Repentance

Hope Chapel Honolulu

Romans 2:1-11

³ Do you suppose, O man—you who judge those who practice such things and yet do them yourself—that you will escape the judgment of God? ⁴ Or do you presume on the riches of His kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God's kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
(Romans 2:3-4, ESV)

Introduction

While God's original directive--to be fruitful and multiply, to resemble and represent God in loving dominion (Ge1:26-31)—hasn't changed, when we work past our capacity of faith and hope, without returning to rest, that stress results in despair. If we continue to push ourselves without real faith and hope, doubting God or other's ability to love us, we begin to demonstrate destructive behavior—thinking, feeling, speaking and acting out in ways that can damage our relationships. Should we begin to doubt God's motivation or that of our significant others, relationships begin to disintegrate. Repentance is the right judging of ourselves, and always begins where we have doubted God.

1. The discipline of repentance is not just for others. (Romans 2:1-5)

- a) Repentance is not something for “the other guy,” it's a spiritual discipline for all of us.
- b) God's judgment falls upon those who judge others while excusing themselves.

2. A cycle of repentance, reconciliation, restoration and rest. (Romans 2:6-8)

- a) We must forgive when someone repents, but restoration is a process (Mt18:15-35).
- b) While faith with works leads to reward, “faith without works is dead” (Ja2:14).

3. Tribulation and distress; or glory and honor and peace? (Romans 2:9-11)

- a) “It is appointed to men to die once and then to face judgment” (Hebrews 9:27).
- b) While there is forgiveness with God there is no partiality (Psalm 130:1-8).

Conclusion

Psalm 130:3-4 says, “If you, O Lord, should mark iniquities, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness, that you may be feared” (ESV). Romans 1:16-17 says, “For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith for faith, as it is written, “The righteous shall live by faith”” (ESV). The key to accessing this kind of forgiveness, this kind of relationship, this kind of power, this kind of faith, is repentance.

For our prayerful study, discovery and application:

1. What are the respective meanings of repentance, reconciliation and restoration?
2. Why is repentance key to the health of our souls and relationships with God and others?
3. What did the Word and Spirit of God remind you of or teach you anew?

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