

Repentance and Forgiveness

Introduction:

Last week we learned about putting God first. Putting God's first is admitting that God is perfect and we are fallible and because we are fallible we need repentance and forgiveness to be who God wants us to be.

1) The problem of Sin.

Repentance and forgiveness are needed because of the brokenness brought by sin. Sin is for a soul what leprosy is to the body.

sin is not a behaviour attached to a good person. Sin is a distorted perception of reality.

Read Luke 1: 39-49 for an example a soul dedicated to God

³⁹ At that time Mary got ready and hurried to a town in the hill country of Judea,⁴⁰ where she entered Zechariah's home and greeted Elizabeth. ⁴¹ When Elizabeth heard Mary's greeting, the baby leaped in her womb, and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. ⁴² In a loud voice she exclaimed: "Blessed are you among women and blessed is the child you will bear! ⁴³ But why am I so favoured, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? ⁴⁴ As soon as the sound of your greeting reached my ears, the baby in my womb leaped for joy. ⁴⁵ Blessed is she who has believed that the Lord would fulfil his promises to her!"

Read number 22: 31-33 for an example of soul corrupted by sin.

³¹ Then the Lord opened Balaam's eyes, and he saw the angel of the Lord standing in the road with his sword drawn. So, he bowed low and fell facedown.

³² The angel of the Lord asked him, "Why have you beaten your donkey these three times? I have come here to oppose you because your path is a reckless one before me.^[a] ³³ The donkey saw me and turned away from me these three times. If it had not turned away, I would certainly have killed you by now, but I would have spared it."

- 2) Repentance: [it is not saying I am sorry, simply put, repentance is something like I need to change](#). It is the realisation of the hope in tomorrow and seeing that tomorrow won't be different until I change.

[It is God's initiative to restore brokenness](#); and it flows from his character. The Jewish concept of repentance is from Moses understanding of God's character.

Exodus 34: 6-9

⁶And he passed in front of Moses, proclaiming, "The Lord, the Lord, the compassionate and gracious God, slow to anger, abounding in love and faithfulness, ⁷ maintaining love to thousands, and forgiving wickedness, rebellion and sin. Yet he does not leave the guilty unpunished; he punishes the children and their children for the sin of the parents to the third and fourth generation."

⁸Moses bowed to the ground at once and worshiped. ⁹"Lord," he said, "if I have found favour in your eyes, then let the Lord go with us. Although this is a stiff-necked people, forgive our wickedness and our sin, and take us as your inheritance."

A practical way to be free from the influence of sin is to learn to name and confess our sins.

- 3) Forgiveness:

[It is a gift from God to humanity. The expression of forgiveness in Hebrew is a legal term applying to a lender of money who forgoes a debt another person owes.](#)

Psalm 32: 1-2

¹Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered.

²Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit.

Forgiving is a choice but it is also a must for as Christian. As God forgives us we need to forgive, ask for forgiveness and encourage others to do so. When we take communion, we remind ourselves of the gracious forgiveness from God.

A practical step for forgiveness is to pray for the person who offend us or to put ourselves in the shoes of the one we offended.

The practice of repentance and forgiveness for us as Christians, must be a valued way of life.

4) Baptism.

Connected to repentance and forgiveness is Baptism that is a public declaration that one belongs to God, an external symbol of entering into a covenant with God. The Israelite had to be circumcised. Paul associates Baptism to identifying with the death and resurrection of Christ. Baptism is a command of Jesus.

Romans 6: 3-4

Don't you know that all of us who were baptized into Christ Jesus were baptized into his death? ⁴We were therefore buried with him through baptism into death in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, we too may live a new life.

When we are baptised and we live a life of repentance and forgiveness, we are who we are called to be: ambassadors of Christ, shining the light of the kingdom of God in a broken world.