

Westboro Baptist Church

June 15, 2014

Back in February I spoke about repentance and the faulty assumptions that our apostate generation makes about this important topic. The first faulty assumption I noted was that: Most of the Things People Do Are Not a Sin to Begin With. I will cover the other three faulty assumptions today.

Faulty Assumption 2: Man is ENTITLED to Repentance from God

The fallen angels, the Amalekites, Cain, Achan, Jezebel, Judas, Ananias, and Sapphira were not permitted to repent. This generation frames repentance as something they are entitled as a matter of being. The mere framing of repentance as an entitlement is a great sin. They say the name of Christ and believe they can behave in any manner and in the most offensive manner to Christ and that He must save them or not be a forgiving God.

Keeping mercy for thousands, forgiving iniquity and transgression and sin, and that will by no means clear the guilty; visiting the iniquity of the fathers upon the children, and upon the children's children, unto the third and to the fourth generation. (Exo. 34:7.)

Esau found no place of repentance though he sought it carefully with tears. (Heb. 12:17.)

Beloved, even the Churches of God in Revelation were not entitled to repentance. If they fail, then certainly all lesser claims fail. Christ had something against five of the Churches, that unless they repented of their sins He would take their candlestick. Beloved, these Churches were not ELCA churches. These were Churches of the Living God. It did not matter what good things they had done – and they had done a lot – but there no entitlements here. There is no pride-driven demand of God for an outcome we desire. Repentance for those Churches was like Brother Charles said several months ago:

1) Acknowledgement of their behavior as sinful;

- Ephesus – They left their first love;
- Pergamos – They held the doctrine of Baalam and of the Nicolaitans
- Thyatira – They suffered that woman Jezebel to teach and to seduce His servants to commit fornication and to eat things sacrificed to idols.
- Sardis – They were not watching for His return and had defiled people (dead wood) in their membership;
- Laodicea – They were lukewarm and prideful and arrogant due to their great riches and increases of goods and could not see they were wretched, miserable, poor, blind and naked.

The Lord willing, I will cover in detail each of the seven churches in the future.

2) Godly sorrow for the behavior

3) A departure from the behavior.

Beloved, if it could happen to those Churches, it could happen to us.

Wherefore it shall come to pass, if ye hearken to these judgments, and keep, and do them, that the LORD thy God shall keep unto thee the covenant and the mercy which he sware unto thy fathers: And he will love thee, and bless thee, and multiply thee: he will also bless the fruit of thy womb, and the fruit of thy land, thy corn, and thy wine, and thine oil, the increase of thy kine, and the flocks of thy sheep, in the land which he sware unto thy fathers to give thee. Thou shalt be blessed above all people: there shall not be male or female barren among you, or among your cattle. (Deut. 7:12-14.)

Beware that thou forget not the LORD thy God, in not keeping His commandments, and His judgments, and His statutes, which I command thee this day: Lest when thou hast eaten and art full, and hast built goodly houses, and dwelt therein; And when thy herds and thy flocks multiply, and

thy silver and thy gold is multiplied, and all that thou hast is multiplied; Then thine heart be lifted up, and thou forget the LORD thy God, which brought thee forth out of the land of Egypt, from the house of bondage. (Deut. 8:11-14.)

Repent; or else I will come unto thee quickly, and will fight against them with the sword of my mouth. (Rev. 2:16.)

Beloved, we must continually watch and pray for the appearing of Christ and be ready for his return. We must not be weary in well doing and be surprised when the Master returns like the five foolish virgins (Matt. 25:1-13.) There are no entitlements here, not even for a Church of God. We must constantly be making sure we are walking right and doing right and being respectful of God and His statutes.

I had a boss once that when she gave a speech she could look over the entire room of people and even when she was talking she could tell you the people that were talking when she was talking, or whispering to each other objecting to what she was saying, or otherwise being disrespectful, such as rolling their eyes. She would end those meetings with a list of people that needed an attitude adjustment and then she made sure they were appropriately counseled. I think of the Lord of Heaven and Earth, the only power in the universe and that we must always be careful to act toward God in a respectful way, in a thankful way – praying and giving constant thanks and sincere appreciation for all that we have and all that He is doing for us knowing He is watching all that we do and taking note of it. We should take nothing for granted.

Praying always with all prayer and supplication in the Spirit, and watching thereunto with all perseverance and supplication for all saints. (Eph. 6:18.)

I will therefore that men pray everywhere, lifting up holy hands, without wrath and doubting. (1 Tim. 2:8.)

Make a joyful noise unto the LORD, all ye lands. Serve the LORD with gladness: come before his presence with singing. Know ye that the LORD he is God: it is he that hath made us, and not we ourselves; we are His people, and the sheep of His pasture. Enter into His gates with thanksgiving, and into His courts with praise: be thankful unto Him, and bless His name. For the LORD is good; His mercy is everlasting; and His truth endureth to all generations. (Psalm 100:1-5.)

And above all these things put on charity, which is the bond of perfectness. And let the peace of God rule in your hearts, to the which also ye are called in one body; and be ye thankful. Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly in all wisdom; teaching and admonishing one another in psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord. And whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus, giving thanks to God and the Father by Him. (Col 3:14-17.)

Beloved, we do not want to provoke our God, like the reprobates.

Behold, I send an Angel before thee, to keep thee in the way, and to bring thee into the place which I have prepared. Beware of him, and obey his voice, provoke him not; for he will not pardon your transgressions: for my name is in him. But if thou shalt indeed obey his voice, and do all that I speak; then I will be an enemy unto thine enemies, and an adversary unto thine adversaries. (Ex. 23:20-22.)

Harden not your hearts, as in the provocation, in the day of temptation in the wilderness: When your fathers tempted me, proved me, and saw my works forty years. Wherefore I was grieved with that generation, and said, They do alway err in their heart; and they have not known my ways. So I swear in my wrath, They shall not enter into my rest.) Take heed, brethren, lest there be in any of you an evil heart of unbelief, in departing from the living God. But exhort one another daily, while it is called To day; lest any of you be hardened through the deceitfulness of sin. (Heb. 3:8.)

It is man's pride that believes he is entitled to anything from a sovereign God, let alone the most important gift God can give us. God owes us nothing. We owe him everything. We are not provoking God that I know of, it is just something to be aware of and to be mindful of Beloved.

Faulty Assumption 3: Repentance is a trivial thing that is an easy work and easily obtained by all.

Adapted from Thomas Brooks:

Repentance is a mighty work, a difficult work, a work that is above our power. Repentance is a gift that comes down from above. Men are not born with repentance in their hearts, as they are born with tongues in their mouths. It is not in the power of any mortal to repent at pleasure. Some ignorant deluded souls vainly conceit that if they utter a few words "I repent" that those words will be efficacious to send them to heaven.

Repentance is some other thing, than what vain men conceive. True repentance is a thorough change both of the mind and life. If you repent and yet continue in your sin, God will pardon you... but send you to hell. Repentance for sin is nothing without repentance from sin.

The heart must be changed from the state and power of sin, the life from acts of sin...but both unto God; the heart to be under His power in a state of grace, the life to be under His rule in all new obedience.

Unto now I send thee, to open their eyes, and to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins, and inheritance among them which are sanctified by faith that is in me. (Acts 26:18.)

...Thus saith the LORD... Why then is this people of Jerusalem slidden back by a perpetual backsliding? they hold fast deceit, they refuse to return. I

hearkened and heard, but they spake not aright: no man repented him of his wickedness, saying, What have I done? (Jer. 8:4-6.)

Now, souls, tell me whether it be such an easy thing to repent as Satan would have you believe. We must turn from the most darling sin and not only that, but we must also turn from sin, and toward God.

But if the wicked will turn from all his sins that he hath committed, and keep all my statutes, and do that which is lawful and right, he shall surely live, he shall not die. All his transgressions that he hath committed, they shall not be mentioned unto him: in his righteousness that he hath done he shall live. (Eze. 18:21-22.)

It is not enough that the tree does not bear bad fruit; but it must bring forth good fruit, else it must be 'cut down and cast in the fire.' (Luke 13:7.) *Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. (Matt. 3:8.)*

We must turn from all our sins (Ex. 18:21). Every sin strikes at the honor of God, the being of God, the glory of God, the heart of Christ, the joy of the Spirit, and the peace of man's conscience; and therefore a truly penitent person strikes at all sin, hates all sin, conflicts with all sin, and will labor to draw strength from a crucified Christ to crucify all sin.

True repentance includes a sorrowing for sin, as it is an offense to God, and against God. *For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter. (2 Cor. 7:10-11.)*

Repentance is a continued act of the soul, a continued turning, a repentance never to be repented of, a turning never to turn again to folly. A truly penitent sinner always has something within him, to turn from.

For I know that in me (that is, in my flesh,) dwelleth no good thing...I find then a law, that, when I would do good, evil is present with me... But I see another law in my members, warring against the law of my mind, and bringing me into captivity to the law of sin which is in my members. O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? (Rom. 7:18-24.)

To truly repent of sin is a great work of grace that comes from God and it is a work that must be timely done, or you will be utterly undone forever.

Now souls, sum up all these things together, and tell me whether it would be such an easy thing to repent as Satan would make the soul believe... to every day turn from sin and toward God, and I am confident your heart will answer that it is as hard a thing to repent as it is to make a world, or raise the dead!

Faulty Assumption 4: **Repentance is a single act.**

But when he (John the Baptist) saw many of the Pharisees and Sadducees come to his baptism, he said unto them, O generation of vipers, who hath warned you to flee from the wrath to come? Bring forth therefore fruits meet for repentance. (Matt. 3:7-8.)

Whereupon, O king Agrippa, I was not disobedient unto the heavenly vision: But shewed first unto them of Damascus, and at Jerusalem, and throughout all the coasts of Judaea, and then to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, and do works meet for repentance. (Acts 26:19-20.)

Being filled with the fruits of righteousness, which are by Jesus Christ, unto the glory and praise of God. (Php. 1:11.)

Matthew Henry: *They that profess repentance, as all that are baptized do, must be and act as becomes penitents, and never do anything unbecoming a penitent sinner (this is a lofty goal). It becomes penitents to be humble and*

low in their own eyes, to be thankful for the least mercy, patient under the greatest affliction, to be watchful against all appearances of sin, and approaches towards it, to abound in every duty, and to be charitable in judging others.

Trapp: See therefore that your graces be of the right stamp, an effectual faith, laborious love, and patient hope. See that your performances and whole course be such as becomes repentance, and may justify it... Labour, therefore, to have a "heart full of goodness," (Rom. 15:14 And I myself also am persuaded of you, my brethren, that ye also are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish one another), and a life "full of good works," as Tabitha (Acts 9:36 Now there was at Joppa a certain disciple named Tabitha, which by interpretation is called Dorcas: this woman was full of good works and almsdeeds which she did), These shall receive a full reward, (2 John 8 Look to yourselves, that we lose not those things which we have wrought, but that we receive a full reward.)

True spiritual repentance is a lifetime's work that comes from God and that is void of man's pride, entitlements and thumbprint. It is a heavenly gift (Heb. 6:4.)

I love you all. Amen.