

The Narrow Door

Luke Series #36

Luke 13

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I encourage you to turn to Luke 13 where we will continue our journey with Jesus. Luke is telling the story of Jesus—the Lamb of God—the Savior and King Who came to usher in the Kingdom of God and be the Savior. We noted in Luke 9 that there was a point where Jesus set His face toward Jerusalem. It literally says He set it “like flint” (Luke 9:53). He was absolutely focused on getting to Jerusalem. For the last several messages, we have been watching Jesus as He makes His way toward Jerusalem where He will carry out His mission as the Savior.

He is focused on Jerusalem, yet He is stopping to help people and teach them Who He is as Savior and King. He is calling them into allegiance to His Kingdom to come under the rule of Christ as Savior and King. We are going to see that also in our passage from Luke 13.

Before we read God’s Word, let’s ask His blessing on the hearing of His Word.

God, we do thank You for Your Word. Your Word tells us that Your Law is perfect. We pray it would revive our souls. Your testimonies are sure and we pray they would make us wise. Your precepts are right and we pray our hearts would rejoice in them. Your commandment is pure. Holy Spirit, would You open our eyes to the purity of Your Word that we might fear You, grow in holiness and endure to the end. God, Your rules are true and altogether righteous. We thank You for Your Word and pray it would have its intended effect on each one of us through Jesus Christ. Amen.

Please follow along as I read the entire chapter of Luke 13. I am not necessarily going to dive in depth into every verse. But I want us to get the full sweep of what is going on in this chapter. We are at a place in our series through Luke where we are sometimes looking at larger passages of Scripture. We are diving deeper at points, then coming to the surface and seeing the landscape in front of us. Let’s listen to God’s Word:

¹There were some present at that very time [when Jesus was making His way toward Jerusalem, teaching large crowds of people] who told him about the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices. ²And he answered them, “Do you think that these Galileans were worse sinners than all the other Galileans, because they suffered in this way? ³No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish. ⁴Or those eighteen on whom the tower in Siloam fell and killed them: do you think that they were worse offenders than all the others who lived in Jerusalem? ⁵No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.”

⁶ And he told this parable: "A man had a fig tree planted in his vineyard, and he came seeking fruit on it and found none. ⁷ And he said to the vinedresser, 'Look, for three years now I have come seeking fruit on this fig tree, and I find none. Cut it down. Why should it use up the ground?' ⁸ And he answered him, 'Sir, let it alone this year also, until I dig around it and put on manure. ⁹ Then if it should bear fruit next year, well and good; but if not, you can cut it down.'"

¹⁰ Now he was teaching in one of the synagogues on the Sabbath. ¹¹ And behold, there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit for eighteen years. She was bent over and could not fully straighten herself. ¹² When Jesus saw her, he called her over and said to her, "Woman, you are freed from your disability." ¹³ And he laid his hands on her, and immediately she was made straight, and she glorified God. ¹⁴ But the ruler of the synagogue, indignant because Jesus had healed on the Sabbath, said to the people, "There are six days in which work ought to be done. Come on those days and be healed, and not on the Sabbath day." ¹⁵ Then the Lord answered him, "You hypocrites! Does not each of you on the Sabbath untie his ox or his donkey from the manger and lead it away to water it? ¹⁶ And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?" ¹⁷ As he said these things, all his adversaries were put to shame, and all the people rejoiced at all the glorious things that were done by him.

¹⁸ He said therefore, "What is the kingdom of God like? And to what shall I compare it? ¹⁹ It is like a grain of mustard seed that a man took and sowed in his garden, and it grew and became a tree, and the birds of the air made nests in its branches."

²⁰ And again he said, "To what shall I compare the kingdom of God? ²¹ It is like leaven that a woman took and hid in three measures of flour, until it was all leavened."

²² He went on his way through towns and villages, teaching and journeying toward Jerusalem. ²³ And someone said to him, "Lord, will those who are saved be few?" And he said to them, ²⁴ "Strive to enter through the narrow door. For many, I tell you, will seek to enter and will not be able. ²⁵ When once the master of the house has risen and shut the door, and you begin to stand outside and to knock at the door, saying, 'Lord, open to us,' then he will answer you, 'I do not know where you come from.' ²⁶ Then you will begin to say, 'We ate and drank in your presence, and you taught in our streets.' ²⁷ But he will say, 'I tell you, I do not know where you come from. Depart from me, all you workers of evil!' ²⁸ In that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth, when you see Abraham and Isaac and Jacob and all the prophets in the kingdom of God but you yourselves cast out. ²⁹ And people will come from east and west, and from north and south, and recline at table in the kingdom of God. ³⁰ And behold, some are last who will be first, and some are first who will be last."

³¹ At that very hour some Pharisees came and said to him, "Get away from here, for Herod wants to kill you." ³² And he said to them, "Go and tell that fox, 'Behold, I cast out demons and perform cures today and tomorrow, and the third day I finish my course. ³³ Nevertheless, I must go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following, for it cannot be that a prophet should perish away from Jerusalem.' ³⁴ O Jerusalem, Jerusalem, the city that kills the prophets and stones those who are sent to it! How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!"

³⁵ *Behold, your house is forsaken. And I tell you, you will not see me until you say, 'Blessed is he who comes in the name of the Lord!'"*

May God add His blessing to the reading, preaching and hearing of His Word.

In last week's passage from Luke 12, Pastor Sunday talked about being ready for Jesus' second coming. We see the same sense of urgency and need to be ready in this passage as well. There is an overarching theme of judgment going through this section of Luke as Jesus makes His way toward Jerusalem. The Kingdom is coming and people need to be ready.

When we think about the end times—often called 'eschatology' in Biblical studies—we tend to think about things we read in the book of Revelation. We may try to figure out what is meant by the 'Millennium' or what the signs of the times are. Those things fit into the category of eschatology but especially as we read the Gospels, we need to remember that Jesus' coming to this planet was an eschatological event. It signaled the beginning of the end. The Old Testament prophets predicted and were looking forward to the Messiah—a King Who would deliver the Kingdom of God in all its glory, righteousness, holiness and justice. He would stomp out evil, ruling like King David over a kingdom of mercy, justice, goodness and worship of the one living, true God.

All of that starts to happen once Jesus came onto the scene. Jesus is the King and wherever the King is, there the Kingdom of God has come. It's already come in the Person of Jesus and we see it as He ministers to those with whom He comes in contact. There is Kingdom power flowing from Him. The Kingdom is already here but not yet here in its fullness. We look forward to Jesus' return to put all things right and eventually create a new heaven and new earth where He will reign without competition or opposition.

Jesus goes on His way to Jerusalem. When you read 'Jerusalem,' you need to think about Jesus' atoning death, resurrection, suffering and everything that will happen in Jerusalem. It is Jesus accomplishing His mission to die in the place of sinners and purchase their freedom. As He is heading toward Jerusalem, He is calling people into His Kingdom and warning them.

The theme of judgment overarches this passage. I want to look at it and understand what it means for us today. Let's take a bird's eye view of the theme of judgment in Luke 13.

We see it right away in the first few verses. Jesus is teaching crowds of thousands of people (we learned last week). Some in the crowd ask Jesus a question. We don't have the question recorded but apparently the question had to do with judgment on some Galileans. Aside from what we read in Luke, we don't know anything about this story. Apparently, there were some Galileans worshipping at the temple

and Pilate—the Roman Governor over Judea—was fed up with them for some reason. Perhaps they were insurrectionists who had rebelled against the Roman Empire. Pilate had them put to death on the temple grounds—slaughtered so that their blood mixed with the blood of their sacrifices.

You can imagine how, in the Jewish context and thought, the violent nature of being killed in the temple and the uncleanness of blood mixing with the sacrifices would have indicated that judgment had fallen on those Galileans. The Jews would have thought, “Those folks must have done something really awful to be judged that way.”

What does Jesus say about that? “Do you think that they were worse sinners than anyone else? No. I tell you that unless you repent, you are going to perish as well” (Luke 13:2). He goes on to talk about a somewhat similar incident that was a natural disaster—something we call an ‘act of God.’ The Tower of Siloam—probably on Jerusalem’s wall—fell and killed 18 people. Jesus says the same thing: “Do you think they were worse than anybody else in Jerusalem? Don’t look at this and try to figure out how they were so bad. Turn around and look at where you are in respect to these things. Unless you turn and repent, you are going to perish in the same way.”

As an aside, this piece of Scripture is especially helpful for us in understanding tragedy, especially natural disasters in our world. If a tornado touches down in Moore, Oklahoma, it is not because there are more sinners there than in St. Charles or anywhere else. That is not how we interpret it. There are many things we can repent of as a nation but we are not a theocracy. If terrorists fly planes into towers in New York City, we don’t respond by saying, “What are the sins of our nation from which we need to repent?” We need to begin by looking at ourselves and saying, “God, why am I still breathing? Why have you given me another day of life?” That is what Jesus tells these guys: “...*unless you repent, you will all likewise perish*” (Luke 13:5). It might not be in a moment, tomorrow, next year or in the same manner. But you will perish as well.

Jesus continues to use the theme of judgment and applies it specifically to the nation of Israel in Luke 13:6-9. He compares Israel to a fig tree—a common image we see in Scripture. He lets us know in this parable that Israel will be judged. The vinedresser might get a bit more time from the owner of the vineyard, but judgment is coming. As John the Baptist said earlier: “*Even now the axe is laid to the root of the trees*” (Luke 3:9). It is coming down.

Why are they being judged? Look at Luke 13:6. There is no fruit. What good is a fruit tree without fruit? Jesus is saying that is the way it is with the nation of Israel as He came to them. They were God’s covenant people whom He had chosen and established out of all the nations of the earth to be the one through whom the Redeemer would come and through whom His plan of salvation would happen.

They are rejecting Jesus—their King—as Messiah and not receiving Him as the anointed One. Jesus is saying that the axe is at the base of the tree and judgment is coming because there is no fruit.

A good example of Israel's lack of fruit is the synagogue ruler in the next story. He would rather argue about what is legal on the Sabbath than rejoice in the miracle done by the Lord of the Sabbath. Did you notice how Luke referred to Jesus as "*Lord*" in Luke 13:15? In the book of Luke and Acts, Luke loves to do this. A light bulb ought to go on when we see "Lord." Luke uses this word more than the other gospel writers. He wants you to know that Jesus is the Lord come in the flesh.

Here the Lord of the Sabbath is in the synagogue. The synagogue ruler (and apparently others, based on the plural phrasing of Jesus' rebuke) would rather argue about what is legal on the Sabbath day—which would have been Saturday. He is missing the fact that there is a display of God's power by the God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob Who is there in the flesh. The rulers are missing out on the Kingdom because it looks like a tiny, insignificant mustard seed. They were expecting it to come as a fully-grown oak.

This leads those in Jesus' hearing to ask a very logical question. Jesus warns about coming judgment in Luke 13:22-23 and is continuing to teach as He journeys toward Jerusalem. Luke wants us to know that. Some people ask Him a very logical question—one that is often asked in various ways in our day. "How many people will be saved? Will there be a lot or very few?" They ask, "*Will those who are saved be few?*" (Luke 13:23).

Certainly the Jews of Jesus' day would assume they would be okay and make it into the Kingdom as covenant people. After all, they were the sons of Abraham and heirs to the Old Testament promises. But Jesus gives them a rude awakening. He basically says, "You are sinners too. Unless you repent, you will miss out on the party. The doorway into the banquet of the Kingdom of God is narrow. Don't say you hung out with Me, spent some time with Me or were impressed by My miracles. On that day, if you haven't received Me as King, submitted to Me and embraced Me as your Lord and Savior, then I will say, 'I never knew you. You may have known of Me but we didn't have a relationship.'"

Worse than that—from the Jewish perspective—others will be coming in. Did you notice where they are coming from in Luke 13:29? They are coming from the four corners of the earth—east, west, north and south. There is a great reversal going on. Jesus' own people—the covenant people of God in the Old Testament, the Israelites—are by and large rejecting Him as Messiah. A few of them receive Him; we see this in the belief of the Apostles and in the very Jewish flavor of the early church. But overall, the nation has rejected Him and remained in its unbelief. Jesus says that now the gospel will go out to the Gentiles as He calls people from the four corners of earth—from every tribe, language and nation. We see

this happening in the book of Acts as the gospel goes out to the four corners of the known world and beyond. Because the nation of Israel would not come to Jesus and repent, Jesus says, “One day I will say, ‘I do not know you’” (Luke 13:27).

What do we do with that today? In 2013, we live in a largely Gentile context. How does the message of Luke 13 apply to all of us? Does it apply? Yes, it absolutely does apply. As we confess today, there is one Redeemer—the Lord Jesus Christ. He is gloriously calling people from the east, west, north and south. His call is the same for all people: “Don’t compare yourself to others whom you think are worse sinners. Don’t try to figure out how few or how many will be saved. Repent or you also will perish.”

We need to hear the message from this passage. The only proper and right response to the King and the coming of His Kingdom is to repent and embrace Jesus Christ as Lord and King.

I want to take a look at the word ‘repent.’ What does it mean? Jesus says the same thing in Luke 13:3 and 13:5: “...*unless you repent you will all likewise perish.*” Let’s ask three really basic questions:

1. What is repentance?
2. Why do we repent?
3. How is repentance lived out and what is its fruit?

What Is Repentance?

The word used in the Bible is a Greek word that means ‘to turn.’ It means to be going in one direction, turn 180 degrees and begin going in the opposite direction. It means a change of mind and purpose. The term ‘*metanoia*’ can be broken down in this way: ‘*meta*’ means ‘change’ and ‘*noia*’ comes from the word ‘*nothos*’ which means ‘mind.’

We are headed in one direction, turning from that toward something else. What are we ‘turning from’ when we repent?

1. **Our refusal to admit that we are sinners.** Jesus said again and again, “They are not worse sinners than you. You need to understand you are a sinner. Don’t compare yourself to other people.” The Bible says, “...*for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God*” (Romans 3:23). We would like to think that God is grading on a curve. When we are having a hard time, we can always think of somebody who is worse than ourselves. There is always somebody we can look at and say, “They are worse than me.”

Look at what the Apostle Paul said about himself in 1 Timothy 1:15: “*The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save*

sinner, of whom I am the foremost.” Who is the number one sinner you know? You look at that person every morning in the mirror. You are more acquainted with the reality of your sin than anyone else is. We need to turn from our tendency to not want to admit our sin.

2. **Our efforts to save ourselves.** Think about this synagogue ruler in Luke 13:14. He sees this miracle of the woman who is healed and is indignant because Jesus healed on the Sabbath. You can hear him saying, “I know the rules. I am a religious person and know what God wants. God is happy with people like me.” Jesus rebukes him and others who were apparently thinking the same thing in very strong terms: “*You hypocrites!*” (Luke 13:15). “You are making up your own rules as you go. You don’t know what God wants. He doesn’t want your rule keeping, instead He wants you to repent and turn.”
3. **Our refusal to come to Jesus as Savior.** This is the bottom line. What a tragic assessment Jesus makes near the end of Luke 13 of Jerusalem’s refusal to repent and embrace Him as Messiah and King. In His compassion, He says, “*How often would I have gathered your children together as a hen gathers her brood under her wings, and you were not willing!*” (Luke 13:34). They would not come to Him because of pride, self-will and clinging to the idol of absolute autonomy—being in control of their absolute destiny. We want our own life and kingdom to rule over. Repentance is turning from our refusal to relinquish the kingdom of me.

What are we turning to when we repent? It is exactly the opposite of what we were headed toward. We are turning to a Person Whose name is Jesus. We enter the Kingdom by embracing the King, Jesus Christ, renouncing all allegiances to our kingdom, placing our faith in Jesus and turning to Him as our Savior—the One Who sets us free. He is the One Who came to earth as the second Person of the Trinity and took on flesh in order to liberate captives.

When we read about miracles in the Gospels and in the book of Luke in particular, we know Jesus wants to set people free from their bondage to things like disease. However, the way Luke tells the story of this woman’s healing in Luke 13:10-17 makes it clear that Jesus’ miracle is more than an individual example of Jesus’ compassion. It certainly shows us His compassion for hurting people but Luke wants to make sure we do not lose sight of the bigger picture—why Jesus came and what His mission was.

Remember that in this section we are walking with Jesus on His way to Jerusalem. We are reminded of that often. He is teaching on the way and enters the synagogue. There is a woman there who is physically unwell with a serious disease. There is something wrong with her back that prevents her from standing up straight. She is bent over and fused in that position. She is sick. Luke tells us this in an interesting way: “*there was a woman who had had a disabling spirit*” (Luke 13:11).

Note that Jesus initiated this miracle and He is up to something bigger than we might immediately realize. He sees the woman, calls to her and does not say, “You are well.” What does He say? “...*you are freed...*” (verse 12). She is made well and physically whole in an instant.

This ruler of the synagogue and those in authority immediately make a big issue about working on the Sabbath. Jesus doesn’t really go there even though He could have done so as Lord of the Sabbath. Besides that, He had not (from what I understand) broken God’s Law regarding the Sabbath. Instead, “*The Lord*” (verse 15) provides this definition of what has happened. “This woman—a daughter of Abraham—was bound by a disabling spirit and I have rescued her and set her free.”

From the synagogue ruler’s point of view, Jesus could have waited one more day. After all, she had been like this for 18 years. What would be the big deal about waiting another day to clear up all appearance of wrongdoing? From her Lord and Savior’s perspective, her freedom could not wait another moment for she had been in bondage more than 18 years. She had been in bondage her whole life. Ultimately, this miracle is not about Jesus healing physical infirmities but about Jesus healing people of all their diseases and spiritual infirmities. It is about redeeming lives from the pit. This is what Jesus was doing and why He was journeying to Jerusalem. He was on a rescue mission to save this woman’s soul—and others’ lost souls—as he called them to allegiance to Him.

Notice how that mission is accomplished on His timetable: He says, “*And ought not this woman, a daughter of Abraham whom Satan bound for eighteen years, be loosed from this bond on the Sabbath day?*” (Luke 13:16). It is hard to make it come out in English but there is a three-letter word for ‘ought not’ that comes up again in this passage. It basically means: ‘It is necessary.’ It is necessary from a divine perspective. In other words, “Is it not necessary from the perspective of God’s divine plan that this daughter be released today? The Sabbath is the day of rest which anticipates that final rest in the Kingdom of God when it comes in its fullness. Today is the perfect day for her to be released not only from her physical infirmity but also from the bondage which Satan has held her in until now.” Jesus is going to accomplish this on His timetable.

Later, in Luke 13:31 to the end of the chapter, Jesus hears that King Herod—the pretender and supposed King of the Jews—wants to put Him to death. Jesus dismisses it and calls Herod a fox (verse 32). It certainly means Herod is sly and cunning but in Jesus’ culture it would have also meant he was an insignificant, unimportant rodent. Jesus knows He is going to die and that is why He is going to Jerusalem. There is nothing Herod can do that is going to be worse than what will happen to Jesus when He gets to Jerusalem. Jesus also knows the timetable—the very moment—of His death and knows Herod cannot touch Him. He will not die at the hands of Herod but when He finishes His ‘course’ (verse 32).

This three-letter word comes up again in Luke 13:33: “*Nevertheless, I must* [it is necessary for Me to] *go on my way today and tomorrow and the day following* [the third day]...” Herod cannot push Jesus but He will be going on His way. You know what Jesus is setting us up for when he says the third day? After Jesus death and the completion of His mission on the cross, God’s approval of what He has done in paying for the sins of humanity will be loud and clear in the resurrection on the third day. Jesus offers forgiveness and eternal life because of what happens on the third day.

Jesus says something to the woman whom He heals that is true of each one of us. We are all crooked and bent. Sin has distorted God’s perfect image in each one of us and we have embraced sin. We are sinners by birth but also sinners by choice. As a result, there is a spirit that has bound us named Satan and we are subject to his tyranny. But Jesus has come. There is a Redeemer—Jesus, God’s own Son. He has bound up the strong man and is plundering his house—taking people captive through His love. From the east, west, north and south He is setting captives free from the tyranny.

Why Do We Repent?

We repent because there is a Redeemer. Jesus has come and paid the ransom for sin. We repent because Jesus makes repentance possible. He has made Himself known to us through His Word as the Savior—the Lover of souls, the One Who will lay down His life for His enemies to draw us to Himself. We hear this in His voice as He says, “*O Jerusalem, Jerusalem...*” (Luke 13:34). Fill in your name. “O Dave, Dave. Give up on your own self will and come to Me. I long to cover you with My saving wings and draw you in.”

It is His call to every human being and His call to you today. If you have never turned to Jesus Christ as your King and Savior, hear Him calling out your name. He is saying, “Turn from your own self will, from trying to clean yourself up and make yourself better.” Turn from that to embrace Jesus Christ as your Savior. Come under His loving rule and let Him be your King, wash you clean, straighten you out and set you free from the bondage in which you have been held captive. Come to Him, repent of and turn from your sin, admit it and embrace Him by faith as your Lord and Savior.

We also repent because the time is short and the door of opportunity is closing. This is the call of urgency which we find in this passage. The door is narrow and we need to be absolutely focused on finding it. When it shuts, if you have not come to Jesus Christ, you will be in a place of weeping, intense sorrow, gnashing of teeth, intense frustration and anger.

I think we see in Luke 13:22-30 that there is an important distinction between seekers and strivers in our culture. Jesus seems to be saying, “There are a lot of people who understand themselves as truth seekers.” They want to know more and ask a lot of questions which lead to many more questions but no conclusive answers. There is no landing. Jesus says that at some point you have to land. You have to strive to enter the narrow door.

When He says strive, He is not saying you can somehow earn your salvation or work to get into the Kingdom of God. It is not that kind of Kingdom. He is saying you ought to have an attitude of heart and mind that is fixated on getting into Jesus’ Kingdom. That is your number one priority.

It reminds me of what was said about Boaz when Ruth made it clear to him that she was making herself available as his wife. When Boaz went to town, Naomi said of him, “He is not going to rest until this matter is taken care of; he is not going to lay his head on the pillow until he can make you his wife” (Ruth 3:18).

That is what it means to strive to enter through the narrow door. It means don’t lay your head on the pillow tonight until you know this issue has been resolved. None of us is promised tomorrow. Putting off repentance for any reason puts one in grave spiritual danger. The writer of Hebrews repeats several times: “Today, if God is speaking to you, do not harden your heart in unbelief but humble yourself before Him” (Hebrews 3:15). Don’t be like Esau who sought repentance but it was too late (Hebrews 12:17). There is something called hell. It is a place of weeping, gnashing of teeth, unending grief and relentless anguish.

Repentance is a turning from self and sin to Jesus Christ, the Savior Who draws us with cords of love.

How Is Repentance Lived Out?

What does the fruit of repentance look like? I’m going to give you three things in summary:

1. **Repentance looks like ongoing confession of sin and repentance.** When we come to Christ, repenting of our sins and placing our faith in Him for salvation, it is not the last time we ever repent. In the ‘95 Theses’—Martin Luther’s list of grievances against the church of his day—the first statement he made is that the Lord Jesus Christ intended the entire life of a believer to be one of repentance. That happens in the big picture way when we come to saving faith in Jesus Christ. Yet we continually repent, knowing our sins have been forgiven.

I want to use an illustration to show how this works practically in our lives. Part of the reason why we come to Christ in repentance and faith is we have an awareness of God's holiness, our sinfulness and the gap between them. We understand that Jesus, in a very real way, fills in that gap with what He has done on the cross. He has lived the righteous life for us, died an atoning death, paid the just penalty for our sin and is the provision to bridge the gap between our sinfulness and God's holiness. We rejoice in that.

Here is the funny thing: as we go along in our Christian life and walk, taking advantage of the means of grace—the preaching of God's Word, our own study and meditation on God's Word and fellowship with other believers—we begin to understand that God is even greater and more holy than we realized. Our understanding of His holiness goes up. At the same time, we begin to search our own hearts and find we are guilty of sins of the heart as well as outward sins. We understand our sinfulness is actually worse than we thought.

Here is the wonderful thing. If we are focused on the gospel of Jesus Christ and understand it is the finished work of Jesus Christ on our behalf, the cross becomes bigger in our understanding. Our love for Christ is larger and our joy in our salvation is greater. As we go through the Christian life, that happens. One of the means of God's grace for that happening is repentance, coming back to God and saying, "I really messed up today, Lord. I said this, did this and thought that. I know these things displeased You. But I also know that Jesus' blood has already paid for this. I didn't deserve it but You have promised it to me. By Your grace, through faith, I have already received that. Give me the strength by Your Holy Spirit to live a life that does please You now." That is what repentance looks like. As we do that, the cross of Jesus Christ and more importantly Jesus Himself grows in our understanding and is magnified in our minds.

2. **Repentance looks like overflowing thanksgiving and joy.** This understanding leads to our worship. We say, "Praise God, I came to You just as I am. I came guilty and You forgave me. I was broken and You healed me."
3. **Repentance is lived out by offering the gospel of the Kingdom to those who are still outside of it.** As we grow in the joy of our salvation and in appreciation for the Savior, we want others to

know this. We begin to see others differently. We may be less offended by their sin and less preoccupied with figuring out who is a worse sinner. We see somebody made in the image of God who is bent and twisted by sin and we know a Savior Who can straighten them by His grace. We tell them of Jesus and call them to the same repentance which God has granted us.

God has granted you repentance which resulted in the forgiveness of your sins. He has given you a place at His table. Show your gratitude by pointing others to the way through the narrow Door—Jesus, Who said, “*I am the way, and the truth, and the life. No one comes to the Father except through me*” (John 14:6).

Amen.

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