

January 22, 2023 / Sermon: "Change your Mind" (#429)

Me...

- I change my mind a lot during the course of a day, and usually with little to no impact or consequences on others around me.
- When it comes to changing my mind regarding family stuff, it brings about challenges; healthy, clear communication with discussion and input is needed prior to acting on changing my mind.
- When it comes to changing my mind regarding ministry/work, that is the biggest challenge because it impacts all of you/others; healthy, clear communication with discussion and input is needed, and even after all that, there needs to be unity around the potential decision. We all know how that goes in the church setting, don't we?
- One little opinion can dismantle the entire change process!
- Change is at the center of the issue. The strength of the relationship between people becomes a key. If we trust one another, especially in a family, church or organization, we will likely be more apt to change because we know one another's heart!

You...

- New series... "Citizens of Heaven"; royal servants/disciples in an upside-down kingdom; a kingdom not of this world.
- When you said "YES" to following Jesus, you became a citizen of the Kingdom of Heaven / God; adopted into God's family; an heir to the kingdom.
- You said YES to change; to being changed by God's love. You've put your trust in the relationship you have with Jesus; He can be trusted. He has your best interest in mind for a healthy new you!
- You need to change; this is the way of a disciple of Jesus... your mind needs to change, your heart needs to change and your actions need to change.

- Today and next week, we are going to talk about change... changing your mind and changing your heart.

God's Word to us...

READ MATTHEW 4:12-23 (CSB)

Ministry in Galilee

12 When he heard that John had been arrested,

- JB had been arrested because he dared to say that Herod Antipas's marriage to his brother's wife was immoral. As tetrarch (the governor of one of four divisions of a country or province) of Galilee and Perea, Herod did not have jurisdiction over Judea; Jesus marches into his province to begin his ministry!

he withdrew into Galilee. 13 He left Nazareth and went to live in Capernaum by the sea, in the region of Zebulun and Naphtali.

- Strategic move to shift his "headquarters". Nazareth was an obscure little village; Capernaum was a much larger fishing center on lake Galilee. It boasted a tax collection center and a Roman garrison of at least 100 soldiers.

14 This was to fulfill what was spoken through the prophet Isaiah (9):

15 Land of Zebulun and land of Naphtali, along the road by the sea, beyond the Jordan, Galilee of the Gentiles. 16 The people who live in darkness have seen a great light, and for those living in the land of the shadow of death, a light has dawned. 17 From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

- Kingdom of Heaven / Kingdom of God... central focus of the teachings of Jesus. It is the sovereign and righteous rule of God over the lives of those who have accepted his rule and are striving to live according to his will. It is both a present reality and future culminating hope; it is God-centered and God-controlled!
- Eerdmans Bible Dictionary: Repent: "In its fullest sense it is a term for a complete change of orientation involving a judgment upon the past and a deliberate redirection for the future."
- Change of mind; change of heart.

The First Disciples

18 As he was walking along the Sea of Galilee, he saw two brothers, Simon (who is called Peter), and his brother Andrew. They were casting a net into the sea—for they were fishermen. 19 “Follow me,” he told them, “and I will make you fish for people.” 20 Immediately they left their nets and followed him.

- Immediately they changed their minds; a pivotal decision to take actions which would change the direction of their lives!

21 Going on from there, he saw two other brothers, James the son of Zebedee, and his brother John. They were in a boat with Zebedee their father, preparing their nets, and he called them. 22 Immediately they left the boat and their father and followed him.

23 Now Jesus began to go all over Galilee, teaching in their synagogues, preaching the good news of the kingdom, and healing every disease and sickness among the people.

Repent...

- Main message of John the Baptist. Not the way to grow a church for sure!
- In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the wilderness of Judea and saying, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near!”
(Matthew 3:1, 2)

- 7 He then said to the crowds who came out to be baptized by him, “Brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the coming wrath? 8 Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance. And don’t start saying to yourselves, ‘We have Abraham as our father,’ for I tell you that God is able to raise up children for Abraham from these stones. 9 The ax is already at the root of the trees. Therefore, every tree that doesn’t produce good fruit will be cut down and thrown into the fire.” (Luke 3:7-9)
- When John can no longer preach the message to REPENT, Jesus begins to preach it; picks up where John stopped.
- This must be pivotal in our understanding of being citizens of Heaven/disciples in the Kingdom of God, or Jesus would have dropped John’s message and started in with a new sermon!
- Matthew 4:17... From then on Jesus began to preach, “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.”
- Mark 1:15... “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”
- Luke 5:31, 32... Jesus replied to them, “It is not those who are healthy who need a doctor, but those who are sick. 32 I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.”
- No mention of the word in the gospel of John?????

Repent...

- Biblical repentance means “the act of changing one’s mind.”
- It goes beyond remorse, regret, or feeling bad about one’s sin. It involves more than merely turning away from sin.
- Eerdmans Bible Dictionary includes this definition of repentance: “In its fullest sense it is a term for a complete change of orientation involving a judgment upon the past and a deliberate redirection for the future.”

- In the Old Testament, repentance, or wholehearted turning to God, is a recurring theme in the message of the prophets.
- THE THEME OF THE JEWISH HIGH HOLIDAYS is teshuvah, a word often translated as "repentance," though it's more accurately understood as turning back (shuv) to God. The root of this verb occurs nearly 1,000 times in the Hebrew Scriptures and first occurs when God told Adam he would "return to the earth" (Gen. 3:19).
- In spiritual terms, shuv may be regarded as a practical turning away from evil and a turning toward the good, though Jewish thinking regards turning to God as the means by which we turn away from evil. This act of turning has the power to redirect a person's destiny. It effects the whole life of the soul.
- A related word in Hebrew is nacham, which is often associated with the emotion of regret (can also mean to comfort by changing your mind and plan; satisfaction)
- **NEXT WEEK...** In the ancient Greek translation of the Scriptures, the word nacham was usually translated using the word metanoia. Metanoia is a compound word that comes from 'μετα' (after, with) and 'νοεω' (to think), which means "changing your thinking," (though it also can mean "going beyond (meta) your thinking" to access the realm of your heart).
- In the OT, repentance was demonstrated through rituals such as fasting, wearing sackcloth, sitting in ashes, wailing, and liturgical laments that expressed strong sorrow for sin.
- These rituals were supposed to be accompanied by authentic repentance, which involved a commitment to a renewed relationship with God, a walk of obedience to His Word, and right living.
- Often, however, these rituals merely represented remorse and a desire to escape the consequences of sin.

- When the ancient prophets beckoned the people to repent and return, they were calling for a complete turnaround inspired from within the heart and will of the individual.
- The prophets called both the nation of Israel and individual people to surrender their lives, to turn away from a life ruled by sin to a relationship with God, the sovereign ruler over all...
- “Even now—this is the LORD’s declaration—turn to me with all your heart, with fasting, weeping, and mourning. Tear your hearts, not just your clothes, and return to the LORD your God. For he is gracious and compassionate, slow to anger, abounding in faithful love, and he relents from sending disaster” (Joel 2:12–13, CSB).

Application (You... personal / We... the church)

- Review...
- Repentance is more than simply regret or sorrow for wrongs committed in the past.
- Repentance is a determination to change, and commitment to living righteously in the future.
- Repentance turns belief into obedience.

Jesus... “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near/is at hand” (Matthew 4:17)

- Near / is at hand... Greek: approach/to make near.
- You can't be “near”, let alone live in the Kingdom of Heaven/God, without first repenting. We are not worthy of approaching God without the saving blood of Jesus covering our lives.
- Sinful/selfish/foolish living disconnects us from Jesus, alienates us from the Kingdom of Heaven and prevents us from producing fruit (healthy, effective, life-changing ministry) for God's Kingdom!
- John 15... 4 Remain in me, and I in you. Just as a branch is unable to produce fruit by itself unless it remains on the vine, neither can you unless you remain in me. 5 I am the vine; you are the branches. The one who remains in me and I in him produces much fruit, because you can do nothing without me.
- Sin fractures our fellowship with God.

Jesus... “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!” (Mark 1:15)

- Believe... Greek: have faith in; entrust.

- You can't believe in the "good news" unless you can repent (change your mind) and trust the "good news" (which is Jesus himself) and act differently!
- A repentant heart before God receives forgiveness from God so that believing in the "good news" becomes an exercise in obedience to God.
- Daily repentance restores your relationship with God and with others.
- Citizens of Heaven are called to "repent"; to change our minds, so that we and others can encounter God's Kingdom and fully rely on and walk with Jesus, the "good news" for our troubled times.

Sticky Statement...

As a citizen of heaven, you need to change your mind to change your circumstances.

January 29, 2023 / Sermon: "Change your Heart" (#430)

Brief review...

Matthew 4:17 CSB)... From then on Jesus began to preach, "Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near."

- In the Old Testament, repentance, or wholehearted turning to God, is a recurring theme in the message of the prophets.
- Hebrew word for repentance... "teshuvah" understood as turning back (shuv) to God.
- "shuv" may be regarded as a practical turning away from evil and a turning toward the good, though Jewish thinking regards turning to God as the means by which we turn away from evil.
- Repentance...
 - more than simply regret or sorrow for wrongs committed in the past.
 - determination to change, and commitment to living righteously in the future.
 - turns belief into obedience.
- **Application from last week...**
 - **Sin fractures our fellowship with God.**
 - **Daily repentance restores your relationship with God and with others.**
- A related word in Hebrew is nacham, which is often associated with the emotion of regret (can also mean to comfort by changing your mind and plan; bring about satisfaction by changing your mind and heart)
- In Koine Greek, the original language of the NT, the word "nacham" is usually translated using the word "metanoia". Metanoia's literal definition is "after think" or "changing your thinking," (though it also can mean "going beyond (meta) your thinking" to access the realm of your heart).

This morning, we are going to briefly unpack the greek verb “metanoia” and “strepho”, and talk about the 4 elements that make up **biblical** repentance.

God’s Word to us...

Repent...

- It goes beyond remorse, regret, or feeling bad about one’s sin. It involves more than merely turning away from sin.
- Biblical repentance means “the act of changing one’s thinking/mind”... metanoia.
- The danger of regarding "repentance" as simply "changing your thinking" is that this can lead to intellectualism that is devoid of inward, heart transformation.
- Evangelical Christianity has spawned an entire generation of those who accept "easy believism" and who tend to regard "repentance" as intellectual assent to the truths of the Gospel message (or to some creedal formula).
- Correct doctrine is vitally important, but it is emptiness if it is not passionately lived in one's experience. Ultimately, Christian truth is existential (pragmatic, experiential, lived out) rather than academic.
- Biblical repentance involves the “changing of one’s thinking and one’s heart and turning back to God”... “strepho”. “Strepho” is a literal or metaphorical turning. When applied to God, it means turning all of your "heart, soul, and strength" back to Him.
- **Mark 12:29-31**... Jesus answered, “The most important is Listen, Israel! The Lord our God, the Lord is one. 30 Love the Lord your God with all your heart, with all your soul, with all your mind, and with all your strength. 31 The second is, Love your neighbor as yourself. There is no other command greater than these.”
- The only way we can love God with our heart, soul, mind and strength is if we commit to daily repentance before God; turn away from our “sinful ways" and turn back to Him.

- **“Sinful ways”...**
- Do not make it a debate of do’s and don’ts.
- Make it your heart’s desire to dedicate your life to the Lord, in obedience to His Word. Until all of your life reflects the true nature of Christ, and you are doing what He has commanded all of us to do through His word, you and I need to repent!

Matthew 3:8 (CSB)... “Therefore produce fruit consistent with repentance.”

John the Baptist

- Fruit = The Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5-7); Micah 6:6-8; Psalm 15; Ephesians 4:17-32; 1 Peter 2 and on and on and on!

Application (You... personal / We... the church)

Biblical repentance is characterized by four elements:

1. **True repentance begins with an awareness of one’s own guilt, sinfulness, and helplessness.**
 - **Psalm 51:4–10 (CSB)...** Against you—you alone—I have sinned and done this evil in your sight. So you are right when you pass sentence; you are blameless when you judge. 5 Indeed, I was guilty when I was born; I was sinful when my mother conceived me. 6 Surely you desire integrity in the inner self, and you teach me wisdom deep within. 7 Purify me with hyssop, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. 8 Let me hear joy and gladness; let the bones you have crushed rejoice. 9 Turn your face away from my sins and blot out all my guilt. 10 God, create a clean heart for me and renew a steadfast spirit within me.
2. **True repentance takes hold of God’s mercy in Jesus Christ.**
 - **Ephesians 2:4-10...** 4 But God, who is rich in mercy, because of his great love that he had for us, 5 made us alive with Christ even though we were dead in trespasses. You are saved by grace! 6 He also raised us up with him and seated us with him in the heavens in Christ Jesus, 7 so that in the coming ages he might display the immeasurable riches of his grace through his kindness to us in Christ Jesus. 8 For you are saved by grace through faith, and this is not from yourselves; it is God’s gift— 9 not from works, so that no one can boast. 10 For we are his workmanship, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared ahead of time for us to do.

3. True repentance means a change of attitude and action regarding sin. Hatred of sin turns the repentant person away from his or her sin toward or back to God.

- **Job 42:5–6...** I had heard reports about you, but now my eyes have seen you. 6 Therefore, I reject my words and am sorry for them; I am dust and ashes.
- **Luke 19:8...** But Zacchaeus stood there and said to the Lord, “Look, I’ll give half of my possessions to the poor, Lord. And if I have extorted anything from anyone, I’ll pay back four times as much.”
- **James 2:14-17...** What good is it, my brothers and sisters, if someone claims to have faith but does not have works? Can such faith save him? 15 If a brother or sister is without clothes and lacks daily food 16 and one of you says to them, “Go in peace, stay warm, and be well fed,” but you don’t give them what the body needs, what good is it? **17 In the same way faith, if it does not have works, is dead by itself.**

4. True repentance results in a radical and persistent pursuit of holy living, walking with God in obedience to Word.

- **2 Timothy 2:21, 22...** So if anyone purifies himself from anything dishonorable, he will be a special instrument, set apart, useful to the Master, prepared for every good work. 22 Flee from youthful passions, and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.
- **1 Peter 1:13-16...** Therefore, with your minds ready for action, be sober-minded and set your hope completely on the grace to be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ. 14 As obedient children, do not be conformed to the desires of your former ignorance. 15 But as the one who called you is holy, you also are to be holy in all your conduct; 16 for it is written, Be holy, because I am holy.
- **1 Peter 2:1-10...** Therefore, rid yourselves of all malice, all deceit, hypocrisy, envy, and all slander. 2 Like newborn infants, desire the pure milk of the word, so that by it you may grow up into your salvation, 3 if you have

tasted that the Lord is good. 4 As you come to him, a living stone—rejected by people but chosen and honored by God— 5 you yourselves, as living stones, a spiritual house, are being built to be a holy priesthood to offer spiritual sacrifices acceptable to God through Jesus Christ. 6 For it stands in Scripture: See, I lay a stone in Zion, a chosen and honored cornerstone, and the one who believes in him will never be put to shame. 7 So honor will come to you who believe; but for the unbelieving, The stone that the builders rejected—this one has become the cornerstone, 8 and A stone to stumble over, and a rock to trip over. They stumble because they disobey the word; they were destined for this. 9 But you are a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people for his possession, so that you may proclaim the praises of the one who called you out of darkness into his marvelous light. 10 Once you were not a people, but now you are God’s people; you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

- Repentance recognizes that our sin is offensive to God. Repentance in the Bible involves a complete and irreversible change of mind, heart, and actions.
- To repent means to make an about-face, heart-directed turn away from self to God, from the past to a future ruled by God’s commands, acknowledging that the Lord reigns supreme over one’s existence.
- The focus of Jesus Christ’s mission was to call sinners to repentance: “I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance” (Luke 5:32).
- His call of absolute surrender goes out to all people: “But unless you repent, you too will all perish.” (Luke 13:5).
- In His farewell to the disciples, Jesus commanded that they take His message of repentance and faith to all the nations.

Luke 24:44-53... He told them, “These are my words that I spoke to you while I was still with you—that everything written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets, and the Psalms must be fulfilled.” 45 Then he opened their minds to understand the Scriptures. **46 He also said to them, “This is what is written: The Messiah will suffer and rise from the dead the third day, 47 and repentance for forgiveness of sins will be proclaimed in his name to all the**

nations, beginning at Jerusalem. 48 You are witnesses of these things. 49 And look, I am sending you what my Father promised. As for you, stay in the city until you are empowered from on high. 50 Then he led them out to the vicinity of Bethany, and lifting up his hands he blessed them. 51 And while he was blessing them, he left them and was carried up into heaven. 52 After worshiping him, they returned to Jerusalem with great joy. 53 And they were continually in the temple praising God.

Sticky Statement...

As a citizen of heaven, your attitude and actions must change as you pursue a passionate, holy lifestyle for Jesus Christ so others may know Him and make Him known.

Celebration of the Lord's Supper

Matthew 26:26-30... As they were eating, Jesus took bread, blessed and broke it, gave it to the disciples, and said, "Take and eat it; this is my body." 27 Then he took a cup, and after giving thanks, he gave it to them and said, "Drink from it, all of you. 28 For this is my blood of the covenant, which is poured out for many for the forgiveness of sins. 29 But I tell you, I will not drink from this fruit of the vine from now on until that day when I drink it new with you in my Father's kingdom." 30 After singing a hymn, they went out to the Mount of Olives.

1 Corinthians 11:23-26... For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you: On the night when he was betrayed, the Lord Jesus took bread, 24 and when he had given thanks, broke it, and said, "This is my body, which is for you. Do this in remembrance of me." 25 In the same way also he took the cup, after supper, and said, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink it, in remembrance of me." 26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink the cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

Scripture passages for Sunday, January 29, 2023

Micah 6:1-8 (NLT)... Listen to what the Lord is saying: “Stand up and state your case against me. Let the mountains and hills be called to witness your complaints. 2 And now, O mountains, listen to the Lord’s complaint! He has a case against his people. He will bring charges against Israel. 3 “O my people, what have I done to you? What have I done to make you tired of me? Answer me! 4 For I brought you out of Egypt and redeemed you from slavery. I sent Moses, Aaron, and Miriam to help you. 5 Don’t you remember, my people, how King Balak of Moab tried to have you cursed and how Balaam son of Beor blessed you instead? And remember your journey from Acacia Grove to Gilgal, when I, the Lord, did everything I could to teach you about my faithfulness.”
6 What can we bring to the Lord? Should we bring him burnt offerings? Should we bow before God Most High with offerings of yearling calves? 7 Should we offer him thousands of rams and ten thousand rivers of olive oil? Should we sacrifice our firstborn children to pay for our sins? 8 No, O people, the Lord has told you what is good, and this is what he requires of you: to do what is right, to love mercy, and to walk humbly with your God.

Psalms 15 (NLT)... A psalm of David.

1 Who may worship in your sanctuary, Lord? Who may enter your presence on your holy hill? 2 Those who lead blameless lives and do what is right, speaking the truth from sincere hearts. 3 Those who refuse to gossip or harm their neighbors or speak evil of their friends. 4 Those who despise flagrant sinners, and honor the faithful followers of the Lord, and keep their promises even when it hurts. 5 Those who lend money without charging interest, and who cannot be bribed to lie about the innocent. Such people will stand firm forever.

Matthew 5:1-12 (NLT)... One day as he saw the crowds gathering, Jesus went up on the mountainside and sat down. His disciples gathered around him, 2 and he began to teach them. 3 “God blesses those who are poor and realize their need for him, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. 4 God blesses those who mourn, for they will be comforted. 5 God blesses those who are humble, for they will inherit the whole earth. 6 God blesses those who hunger and thirst for justice, for they will be satisfied. 7 God blesses those who are merciful, for they will be shown mercy. **8 God blesses those whose hearts are pure, for they**

will see God. 9 God blesses those who work for peace, for they will be called the children of God. 10 God blesses those who are persecuted for doing right, for the Kingdom of Heaven is theirs. 11 “God blesses you when people mock you and persecute you and lie about you and say all sorts of evil things against you because you are my followers. 12 Be happy about it! Be very glad! For a great reward awaits you in heaven. And remember, the ancient prophets were persecuted in the same way.

1 Corinthians 1:18-31 (NLT)... The message of the cross is foolish to those who are headed for destruction! But we who are being saved know it is the very power of God. 19 As the Scriptures say, “I will destroy the wisdom of the wise and discard the intelligence of the intelligent.” 20 So where does this leave the philosophers, the scholars, and the world’s brilliant debaters? God has made the wisdom of this world look foolish. 21 Since God in his wisdom saw to it that the world would never know him through human wisdom, he has used our foolish preaching to save those who believe. 22 It is foolish to the Jews, who ask for signs from heaven. And it is foolish to the Greeks, who seek human wisdom. 23 So when we preach that Christ was crucified, the Jews are offended and the Gentiles say it’s all nonsense. 24 But to those called by God to salvation, both Jews and Gentiles, Christ is the power of God and the wisdom of God. 25 This foolish plan of God is wiser than the wisest of human plans, and God’s weakness is stronger than the greatest of human strength. 26 Remember, dear brothers and sisters, that few of you were wise in the world’s eyes or powerful or wealthy when God called you. 27 Instead, God chose things the world considers foolish in order to shame those who think they are wise. And he chose things that are powerless to shame those who are powerful. 28 God chose things despised by the world, things counted as nothing at all, and used them to bring to nothing what the world considers important. 29 As a result, no one can ever boast in the presence of God. **30 God has united you with Christ Jesus. For our benefit God made him to be wisdom itself. Christ made us right with God; he made us pure and holy, and he freed us from sin. 31 Therefore, as the Scriptures say, “If you want to boast, boast only about the Lord.”**