

Mark 1:14-15
Kingdom of God- Part 2

The Kingdom of God is not a place built by any human. Its agenda is not negotiated by any earthly entity. Nor is it ruled by earthy kings, dictators, dignitaries or the elite. The Kingdom of God has come near through the person of Jesus, its true King, and by the outpouring of the Holy Spirit upon all who believe. The Kingdom of God is that place where all who have genuinely trusted in the Lord Jesus Christ will dwell with God forever, body and soul, in the life to come when the Kingdom of God is consummated by the return of Jesus the Christ. With this said, the question before us this morning is how can one be certain that he or she has gained entrance into the Kingdom of God? Hear me this morning, you can be certain as to whether or not you are a citizen of God's Kingdom. We, disciples of Jesus, are not sitting with our fingers crossed hoping, in the earthy sense, that we will be with the Lord when we die or when he returns. If you are, I say with the utmost love, turn to Jesus. Cry out to him to help your unbelief. So, how can we be certain? We can be certain we have gained entrance into the Kingdom of God because we have repented and believed in the gospel. And that leads us to our two final questions of this sermon series. What is it to repent? The other, what is it to believe in the gospel? Today we will answer the first of these two questions. To do so, I want to share three things on this monumental word of the faith, repent.

First, to repent is to be more than sorry. Simply being sorry about one's sin falls short of what it means to repent. To repent is to grieve your sin because you have come to realize that your sin has offended God. Listen to me. Our sin certainly impacts others in a variety of

ways, but ultimately all sin is against God, because only God is perfectly holy. You may heap consequence upon one for his or her sin against you but only God/Jesus will render eternal judgement upon the unrepented sinner. Until we come to a faithful understanding of who we truly are in the presence of a holy and just God we will never repent. When we repent, we glorify God because to repent is to acknowledge that what God has declared about sin, salvation and His Son, Jesus, is true. Listen, don't let what you perceive to be your goodness deceive you. Unless one repents there is no grace because without repentance there is no true belief in the gospel. **Do you grieve your sin?**

Psalm 51:1-6 “Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. ² Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. ³ For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. ⁴ Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. ⁵ For I was born a sinner— yes, from the moment my mother conceived me.”

NLT

Romans 3:10-23 “¹⁰ As the Scriptures say, “No one is righteous— not even one. ¹¹ No one is truly wise; no one is seeking God. ¹² All have turned away; all have become useless. No one does good, not a single one. ¹³ “Their talk is foul, like the stench from an open grave. Their tongues are filled with lies.” “Snake venom drips from their lips.” ¹⁴ “Their mouths are full of cursing and bitterness.” ¹⁵ “They rush to commit murder. ¹⁶ Destruction and misery always follow them. ¹⁷ They don't know where to find peace.” ¹⁸ “They have no fear of God at all.” ¹⁹ Obviously, the law applies to those to whom it was given, for its purpose is to keep people from having excuses, and to show that

the entire world is guilty before God. ²⁰ For no one can ever be made right with God by doing what the law commands. The law simply shows us how sinful we are. ²¹ But now God has shown us a way to be made right with him without keeping the requirements of the law, as was promised in the writings of Moses^[a] and the prophets long ago. ²² We are made right with God by placing our faith in Jesus Christ. And this is true for everyone who believes, no matter who we are. ²³ For everyone has sinned; we all fall short of God's glorious standard." **NLT**

Second, to repent is to turn from sin back to God. Sisters and Brothers, to repent is to turn wholeheartedly toward God through faith in God's Son, Jesus, hating the sins that once ruled us and seeking, by the power of the Holy Spirit, to walk in newness of life. To repent is to have received a heart that produces in us a genuine desire to live in a way that honors God/Jesus, rather than ourselves. A heart of flesh in place of our hearts of stone. Do you have a heart of flesh? What do you desire? What are you seeking right now? Who or what are you chasing after? What thoughts permeate your mind? Are you sure in your faith? Are you scared to die? Listen! **Do you have a heart that longs for Jesus?**

Acts 2:37-38, 3:19-21a ³⁷ Peter's words pierced their hearts, and they said to him and to the other apostles, "Brothers, what should we do?" ³⁸ Peter replied, "Each of you must repent of your sins and turn to God, and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. Then you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit." ... ¹⁹ Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. ²⁰ Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord." **NLT**

2 Cor 7:9 “Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way.” **NLT**

Psalms 42:1-2a “As a deer pants for flowing streams, so pants my soul for you, O God. ² My soul thirsts for God, for the living God.” **ESV**

Final thing, having to repent is not a matter of tradition. Listen! Whether you went from your mother’s womb right into the pew or you had no dealings with the church of our Lord Jesus Christ most of your life you must repent. Whether you can’t remember a time when you weren’t a part of the church or you were a heathen most of your life you must repent. Whether you were baptized as an infant or as an adult you must repent. Educated in the church and by the church or not you must repent. Does not matter the scenario, does not matter who you are or what story is, no one circumvents the need to repent. **Having to repent is not a matter of tradition. It is a requirement of God. A necessity of the faith brought on only by the power of the Holy Spirit in the believer’s heart.**

2 Peter 3:1-15a “This is my second letter to you, dear friends, and in both of them I have tried to stimulate your wholesome thinking and refresh your memory. ² I want you to remember what the holy prophets said long ago and what our Lord and Savior commanded through your apostles. ³ Most importantly, I want to remind you that in the last days scoffers will come, mocking the truth and following their own desires. ⁴ They will say, “What happened to the promise that Jesus is coming again? From before the times of our ancestors, everything has remained the same since the world was first created.” ⁵ They deliberately forget that God made the heavens long ago by the word of his command, and he brought the earth out from the water

and surrounded it with water. ⁶ Then he used the water to destroy the ancient world with a mighty flood. ⁷ And by the same word, the present heavens and earth have been stored up for fire. They are being kept for the day of judgment, when ungodly people will be destroyed. ⁸ But you must not forget this one thing, dear friends: A day is like a thousand years to the Lord, and a thousand years is like a day. ⁹ The Lord isn't really being slow about his promise, as some people think. No, he is being patient for your sake. He does not want anyone to be destroyed, but wants everyone to repent. ¹⁰ But the day of the Lord will come as unexpectedly as a thief. Then the heavens will pass away with a terrible noise, and the very elements themselves will disappear in fire, and the earth and everything on it will be found to deserve judgment. ¹¹ Since everything around us is going to be destroyed like this, what holy and godly lives you should live, ¹² looking forward to the day of God and hurrying it along. On that day, he will set the heavens on fire, and the elements will melt away in the flames. ¹³ But we are looking forward to the new heavens and new earth he has promised, a world filled with God's righteousness. ¹⁴ And so, dear friends, while you are waiting for these things to happen, make every effort to be found living peaceful lives that are pure and blameless in his sight. ¹⁵ And remember, our Lord's patience gives people time to be saved." **NLT**

The Kingdom of God. In the name of the Father, Son and Holy Spirit.
Amen.