

⁸ **Therefore bear fruit in keeping with repentance (Mt. 3:8)**

I. INTRODUCTION

- A. There are two key parts that work on the inside of a Christian. These two parts are like an engine that causes the heart of the Christian to run. As the heart of the Christian runs properly we live as Jesus commanded us, bearing fruit and growing more like Jesus.
- B. These two parts are: *repentance and faith*. These two components are necessary for the life of the Christian. We are going to be focusing on repentance for this session.

II. REPENTANCE IS A WAY OF LIVING

- A. John the Baptist commanded the religious leaders that they were to ***bear fruit in keeping with repentance***. What John said here is very important, when he says ***keeping with*** he means that repentance is something that we are to stay with, not just do occasionally. In other words, repentance is not just an act but *a way of living*.
- B. The common view of repentance is that it is to be done when we've done something wrong. Maybe it was yesterday or a month ago. We are supposed to say, "I'm sorry, God." We are supposed to stir up feelings of guilt and shame for what we've done so that we teach ourselves to never do that *thing* again.
- C. What is it that we're repenting of? We are repenting of a sin; let's say greed. Greed, the love of money, has become *an idol* of the heart. We find ourselves loving money more than Jesus, so we repent of greed.
- D. Repentance is the action of turning to Jesus and turning away from idols, in this case, greed. But obviously we don't just turn away from greed for one moment. If someone repents to us of wronging us and then *immediately* does it again, we wouldn't call that repentance. No. Repentance is the *continued life* that is pointed in the right direction – toward Jesus.
- E. As we run toward Jesus, we become like him we ***bear fruit*** like John said to the religious leaders. What are these fruits? They are the fruits of the spirit: love, joy, peace, patience...etc.
- F. These fruits that are grown in our heart cause us to live with deep satisfaction and delight in God. The idols of greed, lust, anger that we pursue have no lasting joy in them.

III. REPENTANCE PRODUCES SADNESS OR LOVE? – LUKE 7

- A. Jesus goes to have dinner at a Pharisees' home. In comes a woman who is called in the story a "sinner." She is most likely a prostitute. She doesn't say a word but comes in and begins to weep on Jesus' feet. Everyone is shocked. She begins drying his feet with her hair and anointing them with perfume.

³⁸ ***As she stood behind him at his feet weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears. Then she wiped them with her hair, kissed them and poured perfume on them. (Mt. 7:38)***

- B. Those who are there are seriously questioning Jesus, why is He allowing her to do this? Does He know who she is? Jesus turns to Peter, his disciple and says, “Peter I want to tell you a story.”
- ⁴⁰ **Jesus answered him, “Simon, I have something to tell you.”**
“Tell me, teacher,” he said.
- ⁴¹ **“Two people owed money to a certain moneylender. One owed him five hundred denarii,^[c] and the other fifty. ⁴² Neither of them had the money to pay him back, so he forgave the debts of both. Now which of them will love him more?”**
- ⁴³ **Simon replied, “I suppose the one who had the bigger debt forgiven.”**
“You have judged correctly,” Jesus said. (Mt. 7:40-43)
- C. Jesus is telling us that the result of true repentance is love. Great love. Immense love for Him. When we see the incredible debt that we owe and our inability to ever pay that debt then realize that Jesus paid our debt for us, the response is *extravagant love*.
- D. What happens in your heart when you repent to God? What feelings do you have afterward? Do you feel depressed and hopeless? Do you feel despair in your heart? If so, it may be that you’re not actually repenting the way God shows us.
- E. Notice the way that she repents: tears, worship, and extravagant giving.
- F. Repentance is turning to Jesus in *affection* and *habit*. We want to love Christ with *all* that we are and not let anything take place of our affection. We want to pursue Christ with all our habits.

IV. HOW TO REPENT

- A. When we identify idols in our hearts (idols of lust/greed/love of self) we turn to God and *replace those areas with* things that are focused on Jesus.
1. Step #1 - identify idols of you affection. Ask, “What is it that I love more than Jesus?”
 - a. What do you do in your free time?
 - b. What is it that makes you feel successful
 - c. Do you have real desire for Jesus?
 2. Step #2 - call them sin. Don’t be nice to your sins, don’t call them nice names, call them what they are: sin.
 3. Step #3- express to God your inability to cleanse yourself of those things, ask Him to do it for you
 4. Step #4 – *fill* your life in that former area with things that will benefit your spirit.

V. CONCLUSION

- A. Repentance is to pursue Christ with our affections and habits. The result is love and joy.