

Matthew: Jesus, The King of Kings

Repent!

Matthew 3:1-6

Pastoral Rant

Philippians 1:15-18 NKJV - x Some indeed preach Christ even from envy and strife, and some also from goodwill: The former preach Christ from selfish ambition, not sincerely, supposing to add affliction to my chains; but the latter out of love, knowing that I am appointed for the defense of the gospel. What then? Only [that] in every way, whether in pretense or in truth, Christ is preached; and in this I rejoice, yes, and will rejoice.

Philippians 2:20-21 NKJV - For I have no one like-minded, who will sincerely care for your state. For all seek their own, not the things which are of Christ Jesus.

What are you looking for on Sunday morning? Or in a church service?

Is it Jesus? Is it the Truth? Is it to Know God's Word? Is it true fellowship in the gospel? A family of believers caring for one another? Loving one another? And reaching the world?

If we say yes to all that - is it what we're really doing? Is it what our church is all about?

The church gets into all sorts of weird doctrines, ideas, practices and spiritual trouble! Why? Because they don't study the Bible!

Hosea 4:6a My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.

How many people in church, believers, even know there's a book named Hosea after a minor prophet in the OT? Let alone that God said this through him.

Ephesians 6:17 NKJV - And take the helmet of salvation, and the sword of the Spirit, which is the word of God;

machaira

a large knife, used for killing animals and cutting up flesh
a small sword, as distinguished from a large sword

Dune knife

PDW, SBR

We're in a battle and we need to have the sword, make sure it's sharp, and on top of it all, carry it with us!

Psalms 119:11 NKJV - Your word I have hidden in my heart, That I might not sin against You.

Now, when we come to hear a “message” or “sermon” or “teaching” - are we being taught anything? Have we read the bible? Has it been expounded and taught to us? Or is it just a bunch of verses backing up the point the speaker is making? Or worse, is it being twisted or not even used at all!

When I come to church, I want to do these three things above all:

1. **Hear and preach - TO SHARE the gospel**
 Not necessarily for the lost or for salvation, although that's important
 But the GOOD NEWS ON EVERY PAGE.
 NOT MAN'S GOOD NEWS OF YOUR BEST LIFE NOW
 BUT THAT GOD HAS MADE A WAY AND IS WITH ME
 SUNDAY SERVICE IS NOT PRIMARILY “MISSIONAL”
 WE ARE NOT HEAR TO REACH THE LOST (PRIMARILY) ON SUNDAY
 THAT'S THE JOB OF THE BODY MONDAY-SATURDAY, SO TO SPEAK
 SUNDAY IS FOR THE EDIFICATION OF THE SAINTS
2. Read and study the Bible
 TO KNOW GOD'S WORD INSIDE AND OUT
 BACK TO FRONT
Jordan Peterson the first hyperlinked document
3. TO TALK ABOUT (and with) JESUS
 To have Him lifted up on stage, in the message, in the worship, in the fellowship
 TO have Him lifted up in my heart, in my praise, in my prayer
 TO hear HIS VOICE in the message, have His spirit living within me and present and
 welcome in my heart and life and situations

BECAUSE JESUS IS THE ANSWER TO ALL.

Why is it so hard to find? I know it's out there! I've been a part of and seen plenty of churches who are sold out for Jesus - because the pastor and leadership and even those just visiting are visiting for those very things.

I know there are 7,000 men out there who haven't bowed the knee to Baal! (1st Kings 19)

I know it's what God has called me to. He did not send his Son to die so I could live my best life now, live in complacency and excuse, warm a pew in a nice place but where resurrection isn't happening!

But why is it so hard to find? Why is the church so lost?

Revelation 2:4 NKJV - "Nevertheless I have [this] against you, that you have left your first love.

Maybe they never had a first love - maybe their first love is still self.

But that's exactly why we need the gospel.

The Gospel - Romans Road (one more time)

Romans 3:23 - "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God"

Romans 6:23 - "For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord"

Romans 5:8 - "But God demonstrates his own love for us in this: While we were still sinners, Christ died for us"

Romans 10:9 - "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved"

Romans 10:13 - "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved"

Last week: Wise Men visit a few years after Jesus' birth, Joseph flees to Egypt with his family, returns to Bethlehem on God's leading

[Pray]

3:1-6

About 30 years later...Matthew skips Jesus' childhood and goes right to the official beginning of His ministry (although I'm sure he ministered to everyone his entire life)

Wilderness of Judea

He wasn't in the city. He wasn't in a town. He was in the wilderness! The back country! Down by a river.

The Bitterroot River, one of my favorite places on earth

People had to seek him out to be baptized

Repentance was an effort

It took a day to make a trip out there

Was dirty. Hard to find. Not neon signs and billboards.

No, John the Baptist was not saving them a seat on Sunday!

What was John's message?

Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!

That's it! 6 words in the translated Greek!

Repent - metanoeo

- to change one's mind, i.e. to repent
- to change one's mind for better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins

Apparently an old boating term to do a 180, go the complete other direction

Jonah - his story - God wanted Him to repent, he jumped ship. All they had to do was turn around and sail back, but he'd rather die

Repentance is merely saying "I'm sorry"

Although that's a good start.

But it's burning the bridges of sin.

It's destroying the way back.

It's making sure that the only way forward is the right way.

My life verse - John 14:6

Galatians 2:18-21 NKJV - "For if I build again those things which I destroyed, I make myself a transgressor. "For I through the law died to the law that I might live to God. "I have been crucified with Christ; it is no longer I who live, but Christ lives in me; and the [life] which I now live in the flesh I live by faith in the Son of God, who loved me and gave Himself for me. "I do not set aside the grace of God; for if righteousness [comes] through the law, then Christ died in vain."

**As Christians, we have power over sin, to repent! The Holy Spirit.
Our first act of repentance, is turning to Jesus.**

Quitting smoking

Struggling with sin - Just Stop

**When we sin, as believers, there is some part of us that still wants to - this is the flesh.
This is the part we must PUT TO DEATH.**

Sin can't be played with.

To quote Kyle Reese, in the Terminator

"It can't be bargained with, it can't be reasoned with. It doesn't feel pity! Or remorse or fear and it absolutely will not stop!... ever... until you are dead!"

Sin is out to terminate you. You must terminate it.

1 Peter 5:8-9 NKJV - Be sober, be vigilant; because your adversary the devil walks about like a roaring lion, seeking whom he may devour. Resist him, steadfast in the faith, knowing that the same sufferings are experienced by your brotherhood in the world.

Genesis 4:6-7 NKJV - So the LORD said to Cain, "Why are you angry? And why has your countenance fallen? "If you do well, will you not be accepted? And if you do not do well, sin lies at the door. And its desire [is] for you, but you should rule over it."

Who is John the Baptist?

Jesus' cousin, through Mary. Elizabeth and Zacharias

Luke 1

Luke 1:39-45 NKJV - Now Mary arose in those days and went into the hill country with haste, to a city of Judah, and entered the house of Zacharias and greeted Elizabeth. And it happened, when Elizabeth heard the greeting of Mary, that the babe leaped in her womb; and Elizabeth was filled with the Holy Spirit. Then she spoke out with a loud voice and said, "Blessed [are] you among women, and blessed [is] the fruit of your womb! "But why [is] this [granted] to me, that the mother of my Lord should come to me? "For indeed, as soon as the voice of your greeting sounded in my ears, the babe leaped in my womb for joy. "Blessed [is] she who believed, for there will be a fulfillment of those things which were told her from the Lord."

John had been preaching the Gospel since being in the Womb

John 1:6-13 NKJV - There was a man sent from God, whose name [was] John. This man came for a witness, to bear witness of the Light, that all through him might believe. He was not that Light, but [was sent] to bear witness of that Light. That was the true Light which gives light to every man coming into the world. He was in the world, and the world was made through Him, and the world did not know Him. He came to His own, and His own did not receive Him. But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, to those who believe in His name: who were born, not of blood, nor of the will of the flesh, nor of the will of man, but of God.

He was a few months older than Jesus

Greatest of the OT prophets

His message was clear - repent, God's kingdom is coming because His king is here

That's the way to receive the gospel - Repentance through Faith

Isaiah prophesied about John

He is the voice! Making the paths straight for God

Repentance is about making your life straight

A straight and direct path to God and to heaven

Israelites wandered for 40 years - but it was at most a two week journey straight through

If your life is twisted, messed up, confusing, tangled, knotted...it probably needs to be straightened out

That comes through repentance. Even if the mess your in isn't your fault, seeking God's way, repenting from your own plans and purposes - will straighten it out.

And just like with a long cord - *extension cords in the shop* - it can take a while, be frustrating, but it's a process worth doing if you want to be used again

Camels hair, leather belt, ate locusts and honey

He at ZE BUGS

But not forced to. He was so sold out for heaven, for repentance, that even his very life, attire, proved that only one thing mattered to John - the Kingdom of Heaven

- He didn't need fancy clothes
- To look pretty
- TO have a house
- To eat nice
- To be respected
- To have a 401k

His whole purpose was to help usher in the guests to the feast - to make the path straight for the coming king

Paving the road this week

The first step to repentance is realizing you have a problem

And the problem is sin. It's your fault. And only One man can do anything about it.

They went out to him. The whole region. They were people who knew they needed to repent - but guess what, they weren't finding the answer in temple. The Pharisees and Saducees weren't helping them. They knew they needed God.

And the crazy man in the wilderness telling everyone to repent for the Kingdom is coming - that message struck a chord with them. And they went. They repented of their sins. They confessed.

Baptism in cali, thousands - fantastic. I hope they're all genuine. Sometimes the church seeks numbers and converts but the conversion hasn't actually happened. I pray it has.

Baptising folks - in pools, in lakes, in public - public confession

But also having the person confess anything in the water - it was sometimes a big sign of where they were and why they were doing it

My baptism as a child vs. being saved.

This was the baptism of repentance - this isn't the same baptism we do today of identifying with the death and resurrection of Jesus post salvation - this was baptism in hopes of salvation coming - looking forward to the works of the messiah. That the sacrifice of bulls and goats was not enough - they needed a heart change.

And we all need a heart change

It's the only answer.

Our lives won't change until our heart changes.

And our hearts can't change without repentance.

And we can't truly repent unless our hope is in the one who can save us.

John knew it - he says to Jesus a little while later "I need to be baptized by You"

We need to be baptized by Jesus - baptized with the Holy Spirit and the Water of the Word

We can only conquer sin through His death and allowing Him to put to death our mortal members.

2 Chronicles 7:12-16 NKJV - Then the LORD appeared to Solomon by night, and said to him: "I have heard your prayer, and have chosen this place for Myself as a house of sacrifice. "When I shut up heaven and there is no rain, or command the locusts to devour the land, or send pestilence among My people, "if My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and turn from their wicked ways, then I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land. "Now My eyes will be open and My ears attentive to prayer [made] in this place. "For now I have chosen and sanctified this house, that My name may be there forever; and My eyes and My heart will be there perpetually.

If we'd but humble ourselves, and pray, and seek his face, and turn from our wicked ways - repent... then God would hear, forgive and heal...and we need it. The church needs it. Our land needs it.