



REPENT AUSTRALIA

"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."

2 Chronicles 7:14

VOLUME 10:6

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DO WE REALLY NEED TO REPENT?

In his Good Friday sermon this year the Anglican Dean of Perth, Dr John Shepherd, called for a change of thinking about the idea that God would punish sinners. He also said that the notion "of God suffering and dying to pay off some fictional debt makes a travesty of God" Moreover he claimed that we did not have to worry too much about repenting for our sins because God "couldn't care less" Like other liberal theologians the good dean finds it difficult to accept that Jesus had to die to restore the relationship between a Holy God and sinful man that had been destroyed by our sins. Well, are they right?

The Wages of Sin

Certainly not, according to the Holy Scriptures. In fact, we are all sinners who need a Saviour. And how do we find Him? According to Peter the Apostle in his sermon after the Day of Pentecost, we are to "Repent...and be converted that (y)our sins may be blotted out". Believe it or not, as spiritual beings, there is not one of us who is sinless...and the wages of sin is death! Every newspaper you read contains evidence of a disease that is rampant throughout the human race – murder, rape, war, hatred, lust, prejudice, greed, rebellion, injustice, deception, disobedience and so on. The very fact that we need police, jails and troops illustrates that something is radically wrong. We all recognise that man has this sin disease which is eating away his soul. And what is sin? Plainly speaking, it is anything contrary to the will and law of the Spirit of God. Sin is a revolt against God and His infinite goodness and mercy. It is setting up our own selfish, ignorant independence, of desiring what He has forbidden and preferring our own carnal pleasure to pleasing Him.

The Ten Commandments

Long ago God gave the Ten Commandments to test man and to keep him on the straight and narrow path, for his own good. (In fact, every one of God's laws is for our good.) If we break His laws we are not only rebelling against Him and hurting ourselves into the bargain, we also stand guilty before Him. But God, through the death of His sinless Son on the cross, gives the promise that our sins will be forgiven if we repent and accept His sacrifice as full payment for them. The Holy Bible assures us of this: "The blood of Jesus Christ, His Son, cleanses us from all sin." That is the Gospel. That is good news. In fact there is no better news. No longer need the cold hand of death clutch us in its deadly embrace. The grave has lost its terror. We can shout along with the Apostle Paul, "O Death, where is your sting? O grave, where is your victory?" Jesus said, "I am the resurrection and the life. He who believes in Me, though he may die, he shall live...Because I live, you shall also live." If you accept the gospel, the good news of His salvation, you too shall know victory over death.

The Judgment Seat of God

One day we shall all be summoned before the judgment seat of God. There Christ will judge us. To some He will say, "Depart from Me, I never knew you," while to others He will say, "Enter into the joy of your Lord". What will He say to you? Listen to what He says now: "Truly, truly, I say to you, he who hears My Word and believes Him who sent Me has eternal life; he does not come into judgment, but has passed from death to life." The Bible also tells us, "For our sake He made Him to be sin who knew no sin, so that in Him we might become the righteousness of God." Moreover the Scriptures teach, "Therefore there is no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus." In other words, the judgment of death is the wage of sin that we deserve, but Christ pays the wage, and we have eternal life. Surely it is good news! It is great news – but it is meaningless until you accept it for yourself and live in His Spirit.

Depends on Faith

It all depends on faith. And faith is trusting Him whom we cannot see. This means more than just believing that He lived 2000 years ago. It means more than believing that the Bible gives a true account of all that He did and said and suffered while He was on earth. To believe *about* Christ is not to trust *in* Him. To know that He is able to save is nothing unless you are really saved; to know that He can cleanse you of all sins is nothing unless they are washed away; to know that He will help you to come to Him is nothing unless you obey. And when you come *truly repentant* you will enjoy the miracle of conversion, something the good dean of Perth has obviously not experienced. Yours is the new birth when, as Jesus explained to Nicodemus in John 3, you are born again from on high and are energised by God's Holy Spirit. Be assured, penitent sinners are turned from darkness to light, from the power of Satan to God. This is the teaching of Christ Himself and countless thousands upon thousands in every generation can testify to the truth of that teaching. The Word of God pledges that "if anyone is *in* Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things become new".

Conversion

Conversion is a decisive turning point of moving from death to life whereby you gain entry to the Kingdom of God. (In other words He becomes your King of kings and you shall rule and reign with Him throughout eternity.) Conversion consists of *repentance and faith*. *Repentance* means a complete change of mind and heart towards God from evil; *faith* means to believe in His Word and trust in His Christ. Conversion is an action, not a feeling (though emotion is often linked with it). It is something you DO. Conversion means to enter into a personal relationship with Him; union with Him in life, union with Him in death and union with Him in resurrection from death. When a child is born it is born into a son/daughtership and immediately becomes a member of the family; and there and then, before it has done a thing to merit it, the little child has a right to its father's and mother's love. It is exactly the same with the new birth of the child of God. Everyone born of the Spirit (born again) is born into a son/daughtership and is received by faith at once into the family of God.

Past Sins

When the learned churchman argues that atonement is not necessary, that your past sins are of no consequence to God, and that He could not care less about them he is dead wrong. He is also totally way off-beam when he says, "Our God is not a God who needs satisfying ... atonement of ourselves and God is not a settling of accounts, not a secret deal that is supposed to restore our relationships with God to what it was at the beginning". But God is a holy God. Sin is so abhorrent to Him that only the lifeblood of His sinless Son given freely on Calvary could atone for it in man. Therefore there is an absolute necessity for the sinful soul to sincerely *repent*. For without *repentance* there is no forgiveness and without forgiveness there is no salvation. You are lost for eternity! It is as simple as that, no matter what the Dean of Perth may believe. Ultimately, of course, the holiness of God will ensure that when all things are consummated with the return of Christ in glory to reign on the earth the powers of evil will be put away, leaving a moral universe without sin, sorrow or pain. Surely the Gospel is good news indeed!

PRAYER

Lord God Almighty, the Great I AM; Father of our Lord Jesus Christ; the Alpha and the Omega; Lord of Life and Light; Omniscient Father, as children of the New Covenant seated in heavenly places, we sincerely thank You for Your blessed Holy Spirit to direct us in the dispensation of Your amazing grace through the finished work of Jesus Christ on the cross. Gracious Father, we delight to be adopted into Your Royal Family of Faith so we may do Your Will as Your Spirit helps us live by faith in keeping with our divine legacy. Merciful Father, as penitent sinners transformed by Your Living Word through Your omnipresent Spirit, we thank You because You are sovereign and You do whatever Your Name says. As Saviour, You save; as Deliverer, You deliver; as Redeemer, You redeem; as Healer, You heal; as Master, You assume authority; as Bread of Life, You provide; as Almighty, You bestow divine strength to help Your children in their weakness. Glory be to Your Name.

Sovereign Lord, we humbly come in the authority of Jesus Christ and power of Your omnipotent Spirit to pull down Satan's strongholds of deception, destruction, degradation and death. Father, release Your mercy and forgiveness to set free all captives of sin and restore abundant life to even the vilest sinner. Spirit of the Living God, we thank You for empowering Your Word so that it never returns void, enlightening everyone with the courage to act on it in faith. In Jesus' triumphant Name we pray Amen.

RA: Led by our Lord Jesus Christ through the power of the Holy Spirit to glorify God with the Brotherhood of Man in love and faithfulness to bring glory and honour to His Holy Name. Amen

REJOICE & SHARE IN FAITH THIS MESSAGE IN PRAYER WITH OTHERS & BE BLESSED TO BE ONE IN CHRIST JESUS.