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# Sermon Notes

September 13, 2020

First Congregational Church of Pomfret

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## God is For Us: Faith and Repentance

Romans 8:30-34, 1 Corinthians 1:3-9

### Responding to God's Call

- ❖ There are many things God brings into play in our lives as He unfolds and applies the benefits of salvation to us
- ❖ The Golden Chain of Salvation (Romans 8:29-30)
- ❖ God's call
  - God calls us in order to conform us to the image of His Son
  - as God calls us, He gives us a new birth spiritually
    - purifying us from the pollution of sin
    - transplanting a new heart into us on which He writes His law
- ❖ God must do this work in us before we can turn to Him and make the necessary response of faith and repentance

### Faith

- ❖ Being born again is INSEPARABLE from its effects
  - regeneration and faith are two sides of the same coin: you can't have one without the other

- the renewed heart and mind God gives us WILL respond to God with faith and repentance
- ❖ Faith is an activity that must be exercised by each individual whom God calls
  - in faith, we must receive and rest upon Christ and Christ alone for salvation
  - John Murray, "Faith is a whole-souled movement of self-commitment to Christ for salvation from sin and its consequences."
  - Jesus is the OBJECT of our faith
- ❖ There is a constellation of three things that function together when genuine, saving faith is present
  - **CONTENT** (Knowledge)
    - faith has a clearly defined, definite CONTENT
    - we must know who Christ is, what He has done, and what He is able to do
  - **CONVICTION**
    - takes us beyond the head to the heart
    - convinces me that Christ is exactly and only what I need to deal with my desperate condition and the hopelessness of my sin and misery
  - **COMMITMENT** (Trust)
    - brings us home to God
    - occurs when we stop thinking we belong to ourselves and we become true disciples of Jesus Christ by realizing that we belong to the Lord

## Repentance

- ❖ It is impossible to disentangle faith and repentance
  - Martin Luther, “We are saved by faith alone, but the faith that saves is never alone.”
  - the faith that saves is a repentant faith
  - faith brings a hatred of sin into our lives along with a desire to be saved from sin
- ❖ Our hatred of sin causes us to turn from sin, turn to God and pursue a new kind of obedience
  - an obedience that is diligently attentive to the power of God’s Spirit at work within us who makes such obedience possible
  - repentance results in a change of heart, mind and will within us
- ❖ Repentance causes us to
  - to see God in a new way
  - see ourselves in a new way
  - see sin in a new way
  - understand righteousness in a new way
- ❖ Old things pass away and give way to new patterns of thinking, speaking, relating
- ❖ If we fail to grasp the deep-seated change of thought and feeling that repentance requires, we impoverish ourselves by failing to apprehend all God has for us in Christ

- ❖ 1 Thessalonians 1:9-10 gives a living illustration of what repentance looks like in action
  - when God’s people respond to God’s call with faith and repentance, other people sit up and take notice
  - the gospel of repentance (Luke 24:46-47, Acts 2:37-38)
- ❖ If the faith you profess is a faith that allows you to walk in the ways of the present evil world, then your faith is false
  - true faith is not a momentary act
  - true faith is a continuing confidence directed toward the Savior
- ❖ Repentance begins and continues at the cross of Christ

## Personal Application

1. Consider the three components that function together in genuine saving faith (content, conviction, and commitment) and then examine your heart to see if there are any places where your experience and expression of faith needs to be strengthened. If so, how will you go about doing that?
2. Martin Luther says “Our Lord and Master Jesus Christ willed the entire life of believers to be one of repentance.” How does this life of repentance show up and shine out of your life? Are there ways in which you could strengthen and become more intentional about repentance?
3. When we respond to God with faith and repentance, old things pass away and give way to new patterns of thinking, speaking, relating. What old things are gone from your life, and what are some the new things that have come in their place?