

Title: True Repentance

Passage: Nehemiah 9

Draft Summary:

Repentance

- A deep and heartfelt sorrow for sin. A sincere commitment to renounce sin and hand over what God has for you.

Question: What do we do with sin?

- Try to hide or deny it? (See Adam/Eve: they hid)
- Excuse it?
- Shoot/attack the messenger? (Attack prophets)
- Celebrate sin?
- Tolerate it?
- Falsely thinking one can't change?
- Recognize, repent and confess it to God?

Teach and preach God's Word in a way that exalts

God.

Possible Discussion Questions:

- What point(s) in the sermon did the Lord most impress upon you?
 - What are your tendencies in the handling of sin in your life and in others?
 - Which attributes of God have made an impact in your life and how? Which one(s) are you to meditate or focus on now?
 - What next steps will you take in response to the sermon?
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EXPOSITION

Context of Passage

Nehemiah

- called by God to go to Jerusalem to rebuild the city's walls, which had been destroyed.
- The walls were completed in 52 days despite opposition from within and without.
- Next, he hires Levites and singers (along with gate keepers).
 - The backbone of a nation is the worship of the true God of the Bible.

- If don't have the standards of God's morality, then everything will crumble.
- God's Word was then read publicly to the people.

Nehemiah 9

- picture of what revival looks like
 - Also the longest prayer in the Bible

Introduction

Repentance

- True repentance is the sign of true revival.

Mark 1:15

and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

- one of the first words from Jesus.

Definition:

- A deep and heartfelt sorrow for sin. A sincere commitment to renounce sin and hand over what God has for you.
 - Not only sorrow but also turning to God's ways.

Overview

What true repentance looks like:

- I. Recognition and Confession of Sin
- II. Remorse and Regret of Sin
- III. Crying for Forgiveness
- IV. Radical Turn from Sin.
- V. Commit to God's Ways

I. RECOGNITION AND CONFESSION OF SIN

Nehemiah 9:3

And they stood up in their place and read from the Book of the Law of the LORD their God for a quarter of the day; for another quarter of it they made confession and worshiped the LORD their God.

Sinful nature

- it is inherent in our nature to sin.
- See 10 Commandments. We naturally do the opposite of those commandment.

What do we do with sin?

- Try to hide or deny it? (See Adam/Eve: they hid)
- Excuse it?
 - While our backgrounds impact the way we sin, it does not excuse it.
 - In the end, you still have the responsibility and choice of how you deal with sin
- Shoot/attack the messenger? (Attack prophets)
 - In the end, you need to deal with your sin
- Celebrate sin?
 - Though know it's sin, we justify it by gathering others to promote it.
 - We must call sin what it is: sin.
 - Analogy: Someone has a serious bad condition but merely put a band-aid and send them off, which is medical malpractice.
 - Likewise, do we commit spiritual malpractice by not sharing the Gospel?
- Tolerate it?
 - Habitual sin where fail to fight it.
- Falsely thinking one can't change?
 - God alone can help you change.
- Recognize, repent and confess it to God?
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II. REMORSE AND REGRET OF SIN

Nehemiah 9:1

Now on the twenty-fourth day of this month the people of Israel were assembled with fasting and in sackcloth, and with earth on their heads.

- Remorse
 - Recognize you are worthless and unworthy because of your sin
- Contrast: Merely sorry because one is caught or harms their reputation.

Godly vs. Wordly Sorrow

2 Corinthians 7:10-11

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

- See your sin through the lens of God.
- Truly understand the magnitude of your sin.
 - Your sin is so grievous in God's eyes that He sent His Only, Beloved Son (Jesus) to die on the cross for you!

Romans 7:24-25

Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! So then, I myself serve the law of God with my mind, but with my flesh I serve the law of sin.

III. CRYING FOR FORGIVENESS

Nehemiah 9:4

On the stairs of the Levites stood Jeshua, Bani, Kadmiel, Shebaniah, Bunni, Sherebiah, Bani, and Chenani; and they cried with a loud voice to the LORD their God.

- if there is no forgiveness, there is no hope.

Psalms 51:1-4 (David's prayer of confession)

Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight, so that you may be justified in your words and blameless in your judgment.

IV. RADICAL TURN FROM SIN

Nehemiah 9:2

And the Israelites separated themselves from all foreigners and stood and confessed their sins and the iniquities of their fathers.

- Repentance is not only confessing sin but also turning from worldly ways and to godly ways.
- Contrast: Hybrid Christians

- One who loves God and loves the world.
- Tolerates sin proclaiming “God is love”

Wordly ways:

Galatians 5:19-21

Now the works of the flesh are evident: sexual immorality, impurity, sensuality, idolatry, sorcery, enmity, strife, jealousy, fits of anger, rivalries, dissensions, divisions, envy, drunkenness, orgies, and things like these. I warn you, as I warned you before, that those who do such things will not inherit the kingdom of God.

- we must take God’s word seriously.

Galatians 5:22-23

But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law.

V. COMMIT TO GOD’S WAYS

Nehemiah 9:38

“Because of all this we make a firm covenant in writing; on the sealed document are the names of our princes, our Levites, and our priests.

- they memorialized their clear commitments in writing.

APPLICATION

Preach God’s Word.

- God’s Word is not a pretext for other agenda’s or one’s stories
- Instead, teach and preach God’s Word in a way that exalts God.
 - See Nehemiah’s prayer, which had 25 attributes of God.

Sampling of God’s attributes in prayer

- Eternal
- Creator
- Sustainer
- Provides, preserves all
- Covenant maker/keeper
- Faithful, keeps His promises
- Righteous

- Miraculous way-maker (does what is impossible)
- Glorious
- Powerful
- Judge
- Guide/Leader
- Law-giver
- Provides Rest
- Good / Merciful
- Enemy-Crusher
- Child-maker
- Family-sustainer
- Constant Savior

Nehemiah 9:6

"You are the LORD, you alone. You have made heaven, the heaven of heavens, with all their host, the earth and all that is on it, the seas and all that is in them; and you preserve all of them; and the host of heaven worships you.

Nehemiah 9:17b

But you are a God ready to forgive, gracious and merciful, slow to anger and abounding in steadfast love, and did not forsake them.

Nehemiah 9:21

Forty years you sustained them in the wilderness, and they lacked nothing. Their clothes did not wear out and their feet did not swell.

Nehemiah 9:23

You multiplied their children as the stars of heaven, and you brought them into the land that you had told their fathers to enter and possess.

Nehemiah 9:27b

And in the time of their suffering they cried out to you and you heard them from heaven, and according to your great mercies you gave them saviors who saved them from the hand of their enemies.

Nehemiah 9:31

Nevertheless, in your great mercies you did not make an end of them or forsake them, for you are a gracious and merciful God.

Nehemiah 9:32a

"Now, therefore, our God, the great, the mighty, and the awesome God, who keeps covenant and steadfast love, let not all the hardship seem little to you that has come upon us,

Nehemiah 9:33

Yet you have been righteous in all that has come upon us, for you have dealt faithfully and we have acted wickedly.

Titus 3:4-7

But when the goodness and loving kindness of God our Savior appeared, he saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life.