

Thank you... Alexis Brown
Speaker for today

To be Forgiven...

“Repent, and each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins; and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.”

Acts 2:38

ATTENTION

BUSINESS MEETING
next Sunday at 2:30 p.m.

January Anniversaries

8 Bob & Debbie Pescador

Regular Meeting Times

Sunday.....9:45 a.m.

Sunday.....10:45 a.m.

Wednesday.....7:00 p.m.

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“Trust in the Lord with all your heart and do not lean on your own understanding.”

Proverb 3:5

- *“Fight the good fight”*
- *“Keep the faith”*
- *“Finish the course”*

How Men Act When They Repent

By Steve Klein

In Matthew 12:41, Jesus said, *“The men of Nineveh will rise up in the judgment with this generation and condemn it, because they repented at the preaching of Jonah; and indeed, a greater than Jonah is here.”* According to Jesus, the men of Nineveh repented at the preaching of Jonah.

You remember the story, don't you? God had commanded Jonah, *“Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and cry out against it; for their wickedness has come up before Me”*(Jonah 1:2). Now Nineveh was not only a city filled with wickedness, it was also the capital of the Assyrians, hated enemies of the Israelites. Jonah didn't want to go. He fled from God's presence. However, after being given some quality time in the belly of a fish to reflect and pray, Jonah decided to obey God. Jonah walked through the city proclaiming the judgment of the Lord upon these pagan people: *“Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!”*(Jonah 3:4).

The people of Nineveh repented. They *“proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of*

Why the Change?

them"(Jonah 3:5). When word came to the king of Nineveh, *"he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes."*He decreed that *"neither man nor beast, herd nor flock"*were to eat or drink and that "every one" was to *"turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hand"*(Jonah 3:7-8).

The text says that *"God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them"*(Jonah 3:10). God can read men's hearts. He knows more about what is going on in our heads than we do ourselves. But He did not need to read the minds of the Ninevites to know that they had repented. He *"saw their works, that they turned away from evil."*When the men of Nineveh repented, nobody was left to wonder whether or not their repentance was genuine. Nobody was left guessing about their intention to stop committing evil. Nobody would have doubted they had actually repented of their sins.

We really need to learn this lesson from the men of Nineveh. We need to learn how to act when we repent. Repentance isn't just saying "excuse me," "me bad," or "forgive me," and then going on with our lives as if nothing happened. Repentance should produce real change in our actions. We are to *"bear fruits worthy of repentance"*(Matthew 3:8). Often too many of us think that our repentance should go unnoticed. We are incognito repenters! And while God hardly asks us to don sackcloth and ashes today, He does ask us to *"do works befitting repentance"*(Acts 26:20).

Let's resolve to turn away from sin in our lives and make sure that we behave in such a way that folks can tell that's what we've done!

When the gospel was preached at Corinth, those who were fornicators, adulterers, and homosexuals stopped practicing those sins. *"Such were some of you"* (1 Corinthians 6:8-11). Did the preachers actually preach against those lifestyle choices? Did no one worry that this kind of preaching was not politically correct?

Are people being convicted of sin in our preaching of the gospel today? How will people know they need the remedy of sin in Jesus if they do not first know what sin is and how serious a malady it is?

Some at Corinth were thieves, covetous, and drunkards, but the preaching of the gospel made them realize they needed to quit. Some were revilers and extortioners, but the gospel made them want to quit that lifestyle.

Why the change? Because the gospel is about the remedy for sin, and sin is identified so that people realize it is wrong, and they are brought to realize that if they do not cease the practice of sin they are choosing eternal separation from God. Sin still separates us from God, but if we repent of sin, we can be forgiven and reconciled back to God (Luke 13:3; Acts 2:38; 3:19; 17:30-31).

Change comes by identifying the problem and offering the solution. The gospel does both, and that is why *"such were some of you"* instead of "such are some of you." We need to identify sin today in preaching the truth of the gospel. Souls are at stake, and we are the watchmen in charge of warning and telling solutions.
