

THE STORY

Chapter 3 – Crossing the River: Connecting to Your Real Story

February 17th, 2021

- 1 **Reminder: Life is all about story creation.**

- 2 **Our ultimate call is to believe God.**
 - Consider Adam & Eve, again.
 - They were born with mission as *imagers* of God but lost the presence of God, the Garden of Eden, and access to the tree of life.

 - Consider Abraham.
 - Read **Romans 4:1-5, 13-15**.

 - Consider the Israelites and their *crossing the river* into the Promised Land.
 - All Israel had to do was believe God and move in the direction of their faith.

- 3 **God has given us a powerful spiritual strategy to rediscover daily and lifelong restoration of our divine stories.**
 - Biblically, we call this repentance, which simply means, "*to change one's mind and move in a new direction; to have a change of heart; to change the entire course and personality of one's life.*"

 - Some Key Scriptures:
 - **Luke 5:31-32 (ESV) — 31** And Jesus answered them, "Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. **32** I have not come to call the righteous but sinners to repentance."

 - **Mark 1:14-15 (ESV) — 14** Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God, **15** and saying, "The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."

 - **Acts 2:37-39 (ESV) — 37** Now when they heard this they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" **38** And Peter said to them, "Repent and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. **39** For the promise is for you and for your children and for all who are far off, everyone whom the Lord our God calls to himself."

- **Matthew 3:8 (ESV) — 8** Bear fruit in keeping with repentance.
 - **Mark 2:17 (ESV) — 17** And when Jesus heard it, he said to them, “Those who are well have no need of a physician, but those who are sick. I came not to call the righteous, but sinners.”
 - **Mark 6:11–13 (ESV) — 11** And if any place will not receive you and they will not listen to you, when you leave, shake off the dust that is on your feet as a testimony against them.”
12 So they went out and proclaimed that people should repent. **13** And they cast out many demons and anointed with oil many who were sick and healed them.
 - **Luke 13:3 (ESV) — 3** No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all likewise perish.
 - **Luke 15:7 (ESV) — 7** Just so, I tell you, there will be more joy in heaven over one sinner who repents than over ninety-nine righteous persons who need no repentance.
 - **Romans 2:4 (ESV) — 4** Or do you presume on the riches of his kindness and forbearance and patience, not knowing that God’s kindness is meant to lead you to repentance?
 - **2 Corinthians 7:10 (ESV) — 10** For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.
 - **2 Peter 3:9 (ESV) — 9** The Lord is not slow to fulfill his promise as some count slowness, but is patient toward you, not wishing that any should perish, but that all should reach repentance.
- Although it is true that repentance involves regret and sorrow, it’s far more than just a moment of anguish over our sin.
- Instead, what if we see repentance as a shift in lifestyle—a continual process woven into the fabric of our entire life’s story?
- With this perspective, repentance is our passionate response to a spiritual intrusion resulting in brand new story creation.
- 4 **God already sees you as forgiven—that’s what love does.**
- As Canaan was promised to Abraham and Israel, life is promised to us. So, repentance is not encouraging God’s affection but receiving a brand-new story in a brand-new land.

- 5 **Repentance says to God, "I choose to walk in the story you have written for me."**
 - Again, don't think of repentance as a means to gain God's acceptance in the moment but as a way of stepping into and unfolding your story for all to read.

- 6 **The Father is not a micromanager of our lives.**
 - There is absolutely no control in love.

 - The greatest battle in the Kingdom of God is not what the enemy does to us, but what we do to ourselves.

 - Repentance is the freewill offering of my entire life to a mission greater than myself.

- 7 **Baptism declares our shift from a story of living to die to a story of lifelong eternal living.**
 - In a single act of obedience, we are declaring, "As Jesus died, was buried, and was resurrected to a new life, we also are doing the same thing."

 - Read **Matthew 28:18-20; Romans 6:1-11; Acts 2:38; 8:12, 14-17; 10:44-48; 19:1-7.**

 - Baptism doesn't make us right with God; it demonstrates how I will walk with God.

- 8 **Summary: Baptism and repentance are a deliberate lifestyle of creating a life-story of walking in God's Presence, under His leading, and in our God-given purpose.**