

U Turns (Revd Rhys Locke)

Mark 1:15

“The time has come,” he said. “The kingdom of God has come near. Repent and believe the good news!”

The Gospel is clear, we need to repent and believe. But what can this mean for us in simple terms as people?

So often because of films and TV programmes the word “Repentance” had become some sort of an “old fashioned” word amongst people and even Christians. However this is a word and action rarely spoken about by us in our churches- yet it forms the bedrock of the Gospel- Christ’s message that we must repent and believe the Gospel message. The Good News that is : Christ the Messiah has come; he has brought us forgiveness for our Sin by his Blood and He will come again one day in Glory. By His name and through faith in Him only might we receive the free gift of God which is Eternal Life - with Christ our Righteousness.

The Gospel is clear that there is One God and he is the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...and there is but one way to the Father...and that it through the Son.

He tells us plainly throughout the Gospels to repent before we do anything else and this can be painful for it means turning away from what we know is wrong, and following Christ.

With the church here in Crynant I like using the word “U-turn” whilst referring to repentance because it is a word understood by everyone...especially drivers!

The illustration of driving and then making a conscious effort to stop, turn around and move forward is perfect! Changing direction, not looking back but moving forward hand in hand with Jesus Christ and in the power of his Blood, Spirit and Word.

Christ is clear: no one is able to come to faith without a spirit of repentance. It is impossible today like it was when Christ met with other sinners such as Levi the Tax Collector who left his corrupt ways and followed Christ...and how can we forget Zacchaeus who likewise left his old ways and followed Christ.

If we have grown up in the chapel or have come to faith later on: we still need a spirit of repentance which is a willingness to make "uturns" each and every day. As Christians we will slip up, but this shouldn't be our excuse or our aims. Even during our mistakes, we should acknowledge them whilst gazing upon the perfect example of Jesus Christ.

"U-turns" away from addiction; unbelief; doubt; immortality; pride and unfaithfulness... to name but a few examples brings about lasting change and blessing for us in life as we fix our attention on the things of Heaven, the things that are pure and good.

Which leads me on to this: when we are Believers we simply cannot just carry on as we always did, because by the power of the Holy Spirit we will be convicted to make "uturns" so that we can live in peace with God our Father and our Saviour Jesus Christ. The Word will tell you that there is no need for such action but as Christians we know deep down they Christ calls us all to repentance today as he did yesterday.

I wonder what "uturn" God is calling you to today?

Mediate, act, make that "uturn" and be filled with the Joy of knowing Christ- a joy that lasts for eternity. The road of repentance is a hard road as we turn away from those things that keep us from God and draw nearer to Him on the narrow road that leads to Eternal Life.

"Come close to God, and God will come close to you. Wash your hands, you sinners; purify your hearts, for your loyalty is divided between God and the world."

James 4:8

For his names sake,

Amen