

General Topics :: Repent

Repent - posted by habakkuk3 (), on: 2005/11/15 14:40

I've heard several preachers refer to the gospel as a "cotton-candy" Christianity and here's a very good article written on the topic of repentance. I haven't changed any of the article but put quotes around part of it to draw attention to it.

By Paul Proctor

April 17, 2004

NewsWithViews.com

Repent – now there’s a word we don’t hear much at church anymore. It has such a negative connotation, doesn’t it? If we called on people from our congregations to repent, it might imply that we think they’re sinners or something – which by the way, is another word we don’t throw around the sanctuary too often these days. “Sinners”, you see, have been focus-grouped and reclassified by church growth marketing specialists as “seekers”, so as not to give them the impression that they’re destined for an eternity in Hell. After all, that could put a chill on Sunday morning’s chitchat around the coffeepot and take all the fun and frivolity out of worship. For those unfamiliar with the creeker commandments, number one is:

“Thou shalt not offend a seeker no matter what it costs him.”

Have you noticed what has replaced “repent”? Its substitute is a word that is vastly more positive and quite accommodating of one’s lifestyle and indiscretions – not to mention sounding a lot more hip and high tech to those wanting to “impact” the world for Christ. Yeah, “impact” – that’s another one... Don’t bother looking it up in your bible either. It’s not there any more than “seeker” is because frankly, Jesus never told us to “Go ye therefore into all the world and impact seekers in my name.” That’s just more creeker-speak designed to fill venues, not the Kingdom of God.

No, sinners are not called to repent anymore. In the interest of church growth, they’re simply “invited to connect” – be it with Christ, His church and/or any small group of seekers, creekers or feelers that gather for therapy and consensus – none of which is biblical in any contrived combination. Though today’s dumbed down church sees these two words as largely synonymous; “connecting”, rather than “repenting” actually bypasses any personal responsibility and accountability to a just and holy God.

“Connecting with Jesus” doesn’t condemn sin but accommodates it – being powered by “phileo” love (brotherly love), instead of “agape” love, (Godly, spiritual, selfless love) which just happens to be excellent for drawing large crowds in search of self-esteem and entertainment. “Connecting” conveniently avoids the sin issue and the need for one to turn from his or her evil ways in obedience to the Word of God. It implies that sin is, for the most part, a non-issue – that if we just “connect” with Jesus He won’t care what we’ve done in the past, what we’re doing in the present or what we will do in the future. In the church growth movement, connecting IS repenting. What’s more, the word “connect” is key to the advancement of what I call “Cotton Candy Christianity” – something I’ve alluded to in earlier writings.

Quote:
-----Cotton Candy Christianity is a superficial faith that relies on feelings, emotions and human relationships rather than the Word of God and has so diluted the Gospel and deluded the church, in its perverted quest for cultural relevance and global acceptance, that it now bears almost no resemblance to the early church.

Cotton candy is pink, fluffy, inviting and delicious. When you bite into it, it dissolves into a sugary sweet nothingness. There’s little or no nutrition or food value to it. You just get a pink tongue, rotten teeth, sticky lips and a brief burst of artificial energy that gives everyone around you the bogus impression that you are a happy and healthy individual without a care in the world. But the fact is; you can starve to death on it, no matter how much you eat.

You think sinners (seekers) don’t have a sweet tooth for brotherly love and acceptance? Of course they do! So much s

o that they'll gladly accept any invitation to skip the main course at God's table for a delectable dessert of empty calories and the emotional high that pseudo-salvation offers. But it still ends in spiritual starvation. The only difference is the conned consumer THINKS he's saved because he feels full. But the only thing he's full of is the sugary sweet nothingness of self-esteem.

"There is a way that seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof are the ways of death." — Proverbs 16:25

I did a quick search for the word "repent" in Rick Warren's preferred version of "scripture"; Eugene Peterson's "The Message." The word appeared only twice in his entire New Testament — both times in John's Revelation. "Repentance" appeared only one time in Matthew and "repenting" only once in the Gospel of Luke. Most other versions of the bible had "repent" or some form of the word appearing 50 to 60 times in their New Testaments. In "The New Life Translation" and "The Contemporary English" New Testaments, it didn't appear at all. What a travesty!

Do you not see a new age agenda at work here, my friends? Can you not see how the exchanging of negative truths for positive lies alters the eternal destiny of unsuspecting souls? If you don't, you may need to crawl out of the cotton candy and start looking a little deeper into the unrevised Word of God. These word changes are about a lot more than simplifying scripture for today's illiterate and utilizing a more fashionable and familiar language. It is no accident that the church growth movement is replete with them. If you think that Satan doesn't modify the Word of God for his own purposes you might need to go back and read Genesis 3 one more time.

Many of the new bible versions have replaced "repent" with the word "change." But, people, places and things change constantly. Change is a natural part of life. Even inanimate objects untouched and unmoved by human hands inevitably change through entropy. But a change in one's life is not necessarily repentance. Furthermore, man cannot change himself enough to please God. The Lord does not want an upgraded version of the same person. He wants a new man and a new woman — something you and I cannot fabricate with self-help books and human initiative. It only comes through a total and complete surrender of one's heart and life to Jesus Christ in repentance and faith.

The church today is "changing" like never before, but not for the good and certainly not for God. Change is probably the most used and promoted word in the church growth movement. From the beginning, its leaders set out to do one thing; change the church. Well, guess what; mission accomplished! Moreover, by minimizing the seriousness of sin and the need for one to repent, they have also changed the message — a fact they fervently refuse to admit.

Change is the very platform of every aspiring candidate running for political office against an incumbent — the pitch of every salesman offering you a new and improved product and the vision of every revolutionary, patriot and dictator throughout history. But again, that's not repentance. And, it is repentance that is desperately needed in the church today — not change. I dare say there will be no revival without it.

Inviting the lost to simply "connect" with Jesus is as absurd as trying to take your material possessions with you to Glory. It can't be done! You have to let them go. You cannot bring your worldly ways into the Christian life anymore than you can take your worldly wares into the Kingdom of God. They MUST be left behind! It is what separates the sheep from the goats. That's what repentance is all about — abandoning the old life for the new — not connecting them!

"Be ye not unequally yoked together with unbelievers: for what fellowship hath righteousness with unrighteousness? and what communion hath light with darkness? And what concord hath Christ with Belial? or what part hath he that believeth with an infidel?" — 2nd Corinthians 6: 14-15

Instead of discarding sin and our old lives to embrace the love of Christ and escape Hell out of a reverent and obedient fear of God, many today are casually "connecting with Jesus" to get stuff. That's why I call it "consumerism", because a lot of us are just "loving" God for what we can get out of Him, which isn't love at all. It is only an emotionally based infatuation that is focused more on receiving spiritual stuff than obeying God and His Word.

They may well believe they're following Jesus with all their heart, but I would have to question the "Jesus" they are following. Is their "Jesus" the Living Word of God or an imaginary Jesus manufactured in the minds of men that appeals to one's "felt needs?" (i.e., the flesh) Who is it today's seekers are walking down the aisle to receive and what spirit is leading them? The Lord repeatedly warned of impostors with their "signs and lying wonders". That's why it is SO important that we study, know and believe the Written Word of God because it will never contradict the Living Word.

There is no "connecting" with Christ until we acknowledge our sin for what it is and forsake it under the power of the

Holy Spirit. That's why John the Baptist's cry in Matthew 3:2 was identical to that of Jesus Himself in Matthew 4:17. The church may have changed dramatically over the years but God has not. And, neither has His message to sinful man.

"Repent: for the kingdom of Heaven is at hand." - Matthew 4:17

Re: Repent - posted by crsschk (), on: 2005/11/15 15:36

Oh, this is just outstanding brother...

Quote:
-----Cotton candy is pink, fluffy, inviting and delicious. When you bite into it, it dissolves into a sugary sweet nothingness. There's little or no nutrition or food value to it. You just get a pink tongue, rotten teeth, sticky lips and a brief burst of artificial energy that gives everyone around you the bogus impression that you are a happy and healthy individual without a care in the world. But the fact is; you can starve to death on it, no matter how much you eat.

Recall this from a past posting I believe you put forth... Would only add to that it can also make you sick...

Quote:
-----Have you noticed what has replaced "repent"? Its substitute is a word that is vastly more positive and quite accommodating of one's lifestyle and indiscretions - not to mention sounding a lot more hip and high tech to those wanting to "impact" the world for Christ. Yeah, "impact" - that's another one... Don't bother looking it up in your bible either. It's not there any more than "seeker" is because frankly, Jesus never told us to "Go ye therefore into all the world and impact seekers in my name." That's just more creeker-speak designed to fill venues, not the Kingdom of God.

Quote:
-----Do you not see a new age agenda at work here, my friends? Can you not see how the exchanging of negative truths for positive lies alters the eternal destiny of unsuspecting souls?

Well said, very well said

Re: - posted by habakkuk3 (), on: 2005/11/16 14:38

Yes, this brother's columns are always exciting to read. He sounds so much like my pastor I thought they were friends and I called my pastor and discovered he didn't know him.

We some information about the "cotton candy" Jesus on our website, so perhaps you saw it there? Not really sure.

"There is a way which seemeth right unto a man, but the end thereof the ways of death." Proverbs 14:12...