

Take feedback.  
Write answers on white board.



Today and next Sunday we will consider three beautiful gospel words that are seen in Genesis 33.



When Jacob left Canaan and went to Paddam Aram... because he had stolen his brother's blessing from their father, after earlier obtaining Esau's birthright in a manipulative way... God appeared to him in a dream and made this promise...

Genesis 25:13-15

I am the LORD, the God of your father Abraham and the God of Isaac. I will give you and your descendants the land on which you are lying. Your descendants will be like the dust of the earth, and you will spread out to the west and to the east, to the north and to the south.

All peoples on earth will be blessed through you and your offspring. I am with you and will watch over you wherever you go, and I will bring you back to this land. I will not leave you until I have done what I have promised.

For twenty years Jacob lived in Paddam Aram.

There he worked for his uncle Laban, the brother of his mother Rebekah.

Fourteen of those twenty years he labored to pay off his bridal debt. There in Paddam Aram eleven sons and one daughter were born to him and his wives.

But Paddam Aram was not the land God had promised to give to Jacob...and to Isaac... and to Abraham – it was Canaan.

Jacob had fled Canaan at the urging of his mom, when she was told that Esau planned to kill Jacob.

But Jacob returned to Canaan by the word of the LORD.

**Genesis 31:3**  
**Go back to the land of your fathers**  
**and to your relatives,**  
and I will be with you.

Upon his return to Canaan, the first thing Jacob did was to send messengers to his brother Esau who was living in the land of Seir. This was what Jacob said to his brother through them.

**Genesis 32:4-5**  
**Your servant Jacob says,**  
**I have been staying with Laban and have**  
**remained there until now.**  
**I have cattle and donkeys, sheep and goats,**  
**menservants and maidservants.**  
**Now I am sending this message to my lord,**  
**that I may find favor in your eyes.**



When the messengers returned... they told Jacob that Esau was coming to him accompanied by 400 men.

This caused great fear and distress in Jacob and compelled him to pray.

Genesis 32:9-12

“O God of my father Abraham, God of my father Isaac, Lord, you who said to me, ‘Go back to your country and your relatives, and I will make you prosper;’ I am unworthy of all the kindness and faithfulness you have shown your servant.

I had only my staff when I crossed this Jordan, but now I have become two camps. Save me, I pray, from the hand of my brother Esau, for I am afraid he will come and attack me, and also the mothers with their children. But you have said, ‘I will surely make you prosper and will make your descendants like the sand of the sea, which cannot be counted.’”

After praying, Jacob carefully selected a gift for his brother Esau.

Genesis 32:13-15	200 female goats
	20 male goats
	200 ewes
	20 rams
	30 female camels with their young
	40 cows
	10 bulls
	20 female donkeys
	10 male donkeys

He sent this gift ahead with some of his servants.

That same day Jacob escorted his family across the Jabbok River. Then he returned to their deserted camp to spend the night alone.

This was when a man came out of the dark and wrestled with him. As dawn came, Jacob pleaded with the man to bless him, which the man did.

Additionally, the man gave to him a new name, Israel.

As the sun rose, so did this realization in Jacob: he had seen God face to face and his life had been spared.

It's been important to restate these details because they are the background for the three beautiful gospel words that are revealed in Genesis 33.

We will focus today on the first word...



What does this word mean? Wikipedia says....

Repentance typically requires:  
**an admission of guilt** for committing a wrong or for omitting to do the right thing;  
**a promise or resolve not to repeat the offense**;  
**an attempt to make restitution** for the wrong, or in some way to reverse the harmful effects of the wrong or the omission where possible.

Wikipedia

But what is the the meaning of the word as it is used in the Bible?

change of mind

We have all had the experience of changing our mind.

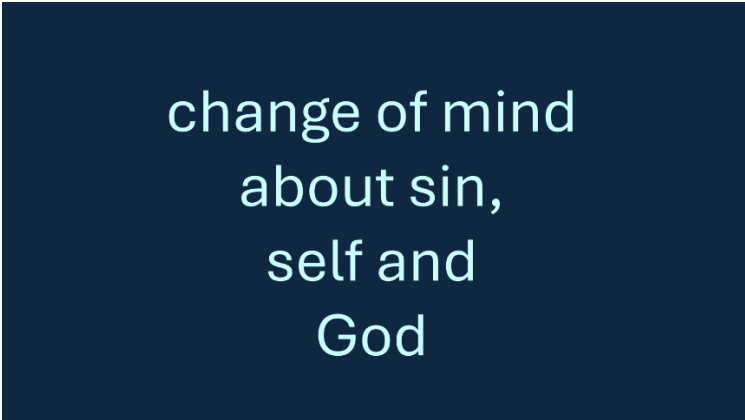
I never used to like skinny jeans.  
In my younger years I was a bell bottom guy.  
And in my 20's and 30's my pant of choice was relaxed fit.

But when I tried on a pair of skinny jeans a decade ago, I repented.

I love vegetables.  
But brussell spouts is another story.  
It didn't help that as a teenager I ate them at a camp and then later  
that same night, I was repeatedly sick to my stomach.  
I know my sickness wasn't the fault of the brussels sprouts.  
But...

I tried to eat them several years ago... assured that with bacon and  
cranberries...I would love them.  
I didn't repent.

But the word... repent, repentance... in the Bible has a very specific  
usage regarding what changes.



change of mind  
about sin,  
self and  
God

To repent is to change one's mind... about sin and self and God.  
About sin and self...  
It is not the things we do or say that make us a sinner.  
We are born sinners.

Psalm 51:5  
Surely I was sinful at birth,  
sinful from the time my  
mother conceived me.

It is the nature of sin within that blinds the mind... and makes dark the heart ... and enslaves the will.

Sin is deceptive... above all things... the prophet Jeremiah said. What does that mean?

I have no problem seeing your sin, as you do mine.  
But seeing own sin... that is another story.  
Our tendency is to either be oblivious to it... or to regard it as something minor... which it isn't.

Jeremiah said that our hearts infected by sin are beyond cure. What he meant is that nothing we do can rid us of it.

It is a great mercy when God reveals to a person... their desperate spiritual condition.

The mercy of God always precedes the gift of repentance.

In the triune God alone, we encounter hope.

Because of who the triune God is the story of our lives can change.



God and his grace at work in us... writes a better story.

**This is why I earlier said repentance is a beautiful gospel word. Repentance welcomes the triune God to work a miracle in us. By the grace of God through faith in Christ we can become a new creation.**

Where do we see repentance - in action in Genesis 33?

Upon returning to Canaan, after the angels of God met him... Jacob sent messengers to his brother Esau.

Up until that point in his life... Jacob had resorted to manipulation in order to bring about what God had told his mom when he and his brother were still in her womb.

Genesis 25:23

Two nations are in your womb,  
and two peoples from within you will be separated;  
one people will be stronger than the other,  
and the older will serve the younger.

But at the place he named Mahanaim, alongside the Jabbok River, where the angels of God had met him and God himself had wrestled with him.... Jacob repented... he changed his mind about his sin.



He changed his mind about who he was – the deceiver.  
He changed his mind about who God is – the LORD who is not a small “god,” but a mighty God whom Jacob could not deceive, manipulate nor control, but who... with one touch... defeated him.

Though he could not see how God would fulfill his promises to him, Jacob repented from trust in his own ability.

What was the evidence of Jacob’s repentance?

He sent messengers to Esau.

He didn’t stealthily cross into Canaan and set up home in some secluded place.

Those messengers told Esau that Jacob had returned.

They assured Esau that Jacob would not attempt to defraud him in any way – Jacob had sufficient; he had cattle, donkeys, sheep and goats, servants, wives and children.

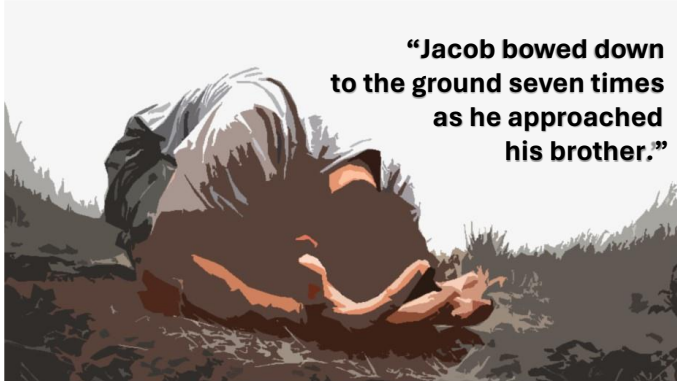
The messengers told Esau what mattered most to Jacob ... he wanted Esau’s favor.

Jacob’s change of mind regarding how sinful his sin had been... didn’t mean he felt no fear when he was told that Esau was on his way to him.

But his repentance granted him the resolve to approach Esau and trust God to work out his promises.

This is why, 33:3, Jacob went on ahead of his family.

This is why as Esau approached...



Jacob's repentance produced humility in him. Even though the birthright and blessing was his, Jacob did not approach Esau demanding that he receive him as the head of the family.

Jacob chose to let God fulfill his word to him in the way God chose. As he put his trust in the LORD... Jacob experienced what Isaiah would testify to...centuries later.

**Isaiah 30:15**  
**In repentance and rest**  
**is your salvation,**  
**in quietness and trust**  
**is your strength...**

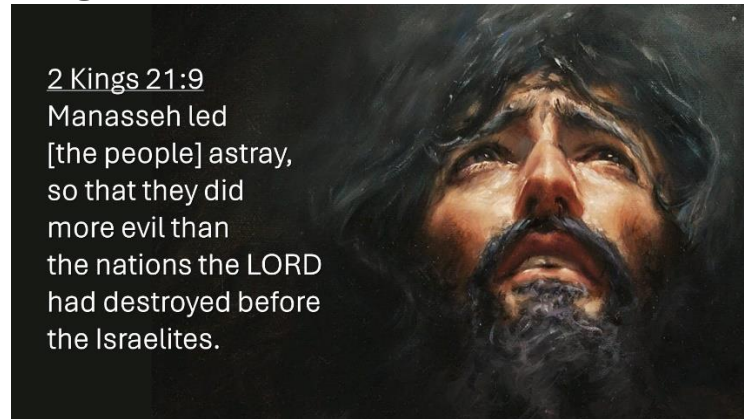
I don't see the gift that Jacob sent to Esau as being a bribe. Nor was it intended by Jacob to be compensation. Rather, I see the gift as an acknowledgement on Jacob's part, of the enormity of the wrong he had done to his brother.

The gift was given to demonstrate and verify the sincerity of Jacob's words and the intent of his heart to make peace with his brother.

There are many other stories told in the Bible; of individuals who had done great wrong, but to whom mercy was shown and repentance granted.

Their stories are told to encourage men and women, teens and children to take hope in God; to believe in him, to receive him and to turn from sin and self to him.

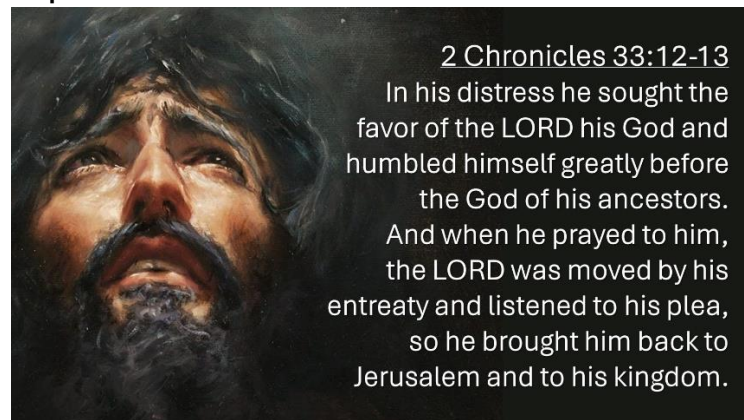
### **King Manasseh.**



When his warnings were repeatedly ignored, God allowed the Assyrians to invade Judah.

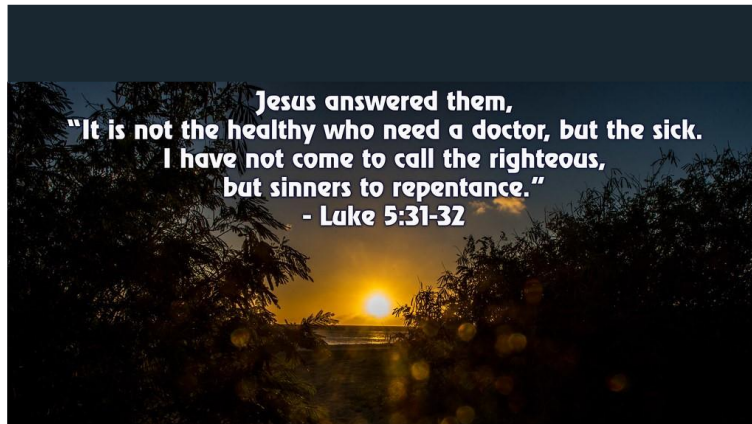
King Manasseh was taken captive and exiled to Babylon.

It was there in prison that Manasseh was granted mercy and repentance.

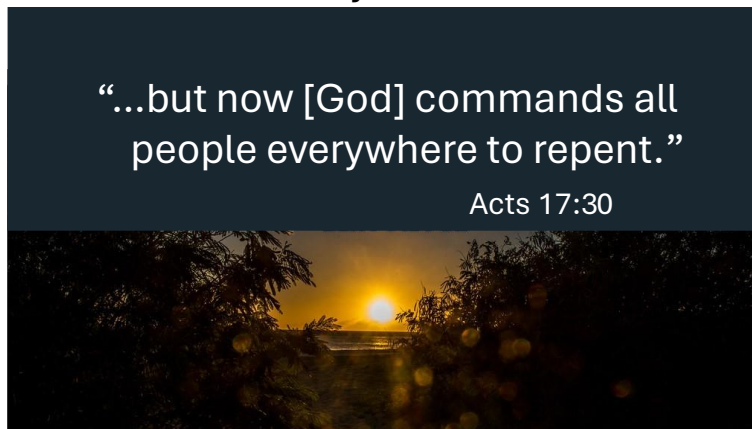


Upon his return to Jerusalem, Manasseh put his repentance into action... he rid Judah of the foreign gods and restored the worship of the living God; and he urged the people to love and serve God.

Jesus came into the world to call sinners to change their minds – about him, about their sin, about the focus of their lives.



After his death, resurrection and ascension... after accomplishing all that is necessary for mankind to be saved, the triune God...



For those of you who may not yet be in relationship with the triune God, has he in recent days, even this morning, allowed you to see yourself as he sees you?

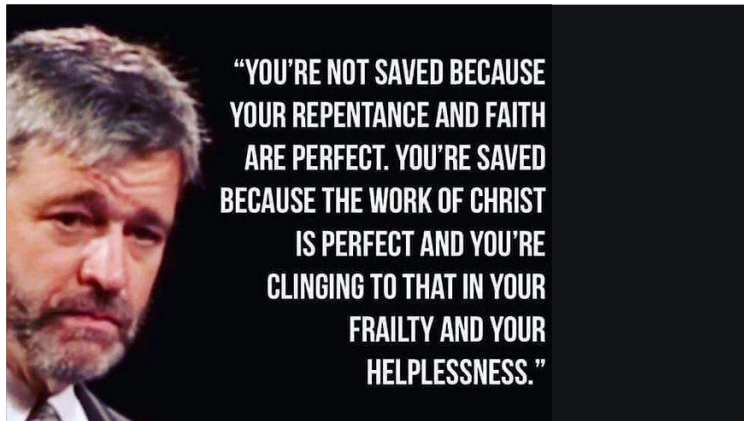
Has he made known to you that your sin has made you an enemy of God?

Even if we were to pool all our goodness as a human race, we would not have enough... to even rescue one of us.

But what we cannot do, Jesus did for us.

He lived the perfect life we could not... and then gave his perfect life in sacrifice... to pay in full ... our sin debt.

Paul Washer wrote:



None of us are enough.

We are hopelessly and helplessly lost.

But we have in Jesus a strong and perfect Savior.

I extend to those of you who are not yet in relationship with the triune God this morning... the invitation of Jesus who said...

“Come to me and find rest for your soul.”

Will you repent, that is, will you change your mind about him and about your sin?

Will you stake your life in the here and now as well as the life after death on Jesus and what he promises?

The Father calls you to come home.

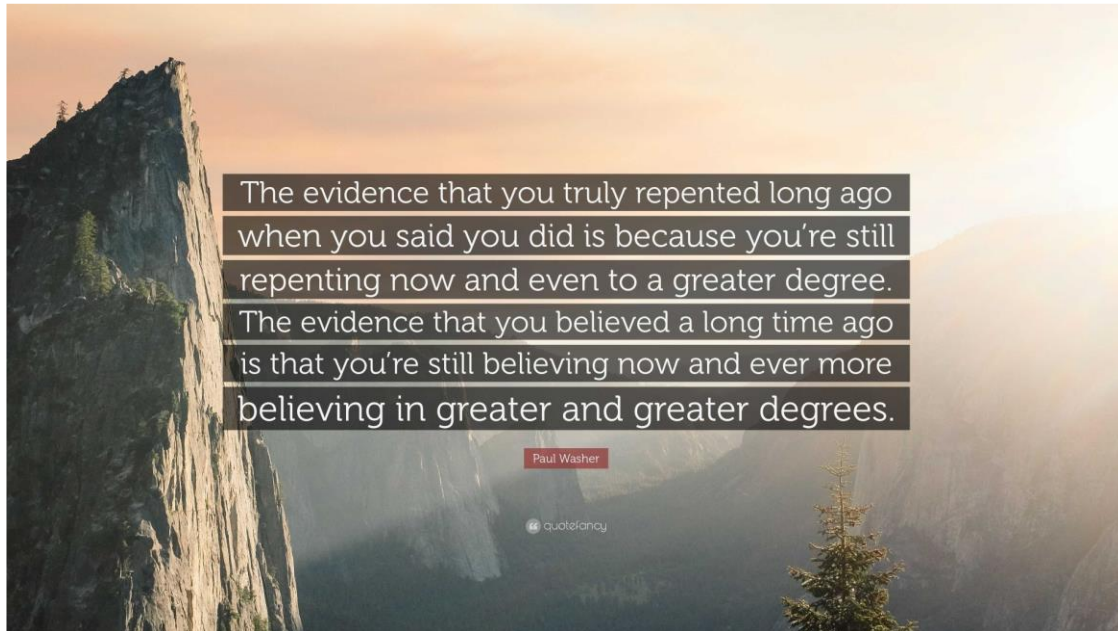
He commands you to repent.

His mercy has shown you your sin.

Will you take hold of the Savior?

Will you speak in your heart to him, agreeing with his assessment of your sin, and asking for his mercy and forgiveness and welcome him into your life to be the One in charge?

For those of us who are following Jesus... I remind all of us that repentance is not a one-time event, but an ongoing practice. Again, I reference Paul Washer:

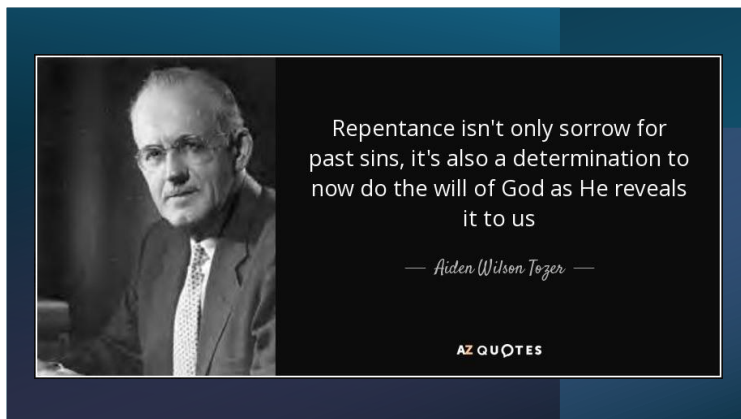


Our faith rooted in the finished work of Christ at the cross and the empty tomb, is lived out day by day.

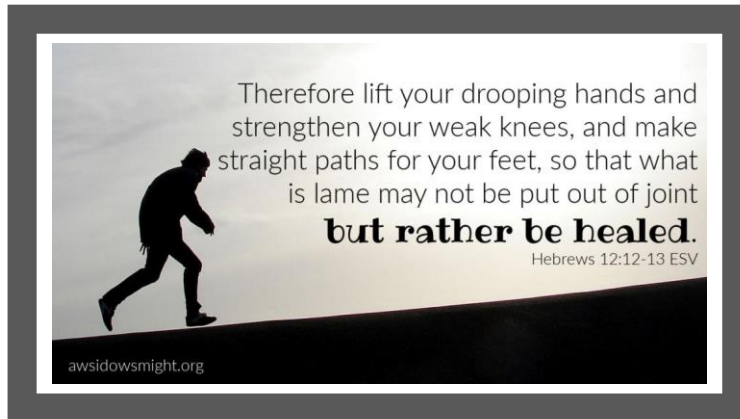
Our hope is not in a prayer we made in the past, but that today... we live as Jesus lived.

As the Spirit trains us to put on the new person we have become and to put off the old person we used to be, he will require us to continue to repent and to continue to believe.

AW Tozer said...



Look at this conclusion made in Hebrews 12:12-13.



Repentance is a gift from God.  
But it is a gift we must receive and utilize.  
With all the grace you have been given, run the race of faith.

Do what is yours to you to do.  
Get up in the morning with enough time to feed your soul with the living word of God.  
Pray as if it really matters because it does.  
Engage in spiritual disciplines and habits as if your life depended on it because it does.

And as you do, as you set your hope on Jesus, the God of all grace, will finish in you what he began.