

First Repentance, Then Faith



Foundations (Day 62)
by Derek Prince

The New Testament is unanimous on this one point: True repentance must always go before true faith. Without true repentance there can never be true faith.

The call to repentance begins at the very introduction to the New Testament with the ministry of John the Baptist.

> "The voice of one crying in the wilderness: 'Prepare the way of the Lord, make His paths straight.' John came baptising in the wilderness and preaching a baptism of repentance for the remission of sins." (Mark 1:3-4)

John the Baptist's call to repentance was a necessary preparation for the revelation of the Messiah to Israel. Until Israel had been called back to God in repentance, their long-awaited Messiah could not be revealed among them.

A little further on we read the first message that Christ Himself preached after John had prepared the way before Him.

> "Now after John was put in prison, Jesus came to Galilee, preaching the gospel... and saying, 'The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand. Repent, and believe in the gospel.'" (Mark 1:14-15)

The first commandment that ever fell from the lips of Christ was not to believe but to repent. First repent, then believe.

After His death and resurrection, when Christ commissioned His apostles to go out to all nations with the gospel, once again the first word in His message was "repentance."

> "Then He said to them, 'Thus it is written, and thus it was necessary for the Christ to suffer and to rise from the dead the third day, and that repentance and remission of sins should be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem.'" (Luke 24:46-47)

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Here again it is repentance first, and after that, remission of sins.

Shortly after the resurrection, the apostles, through their spokesman Peter, began to fulfil this commission of Christ. After the Holy Spirit's coming on the day of Pentecost, the convicted (but still unconverted) multitude asked: "Men and brethren, what shall we do?" (Acts 2:37). To this inquiry there came an immediate and definite answer.

> "Then Peter said to them, 'Repent, and let every one of you be baptised in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins; and you shall receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'" (Acts 2:38)

Here again it is repentance first; after that, baptism and remission of sins.

Devotional

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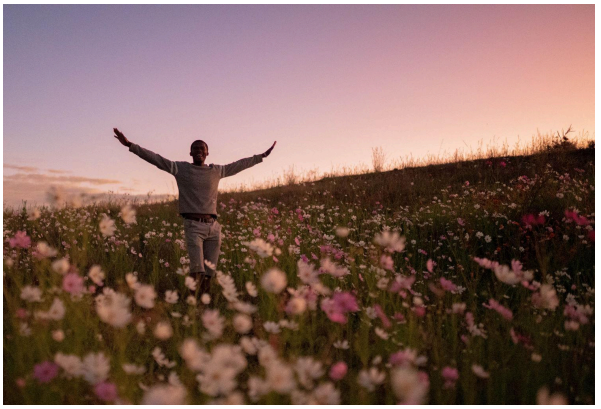

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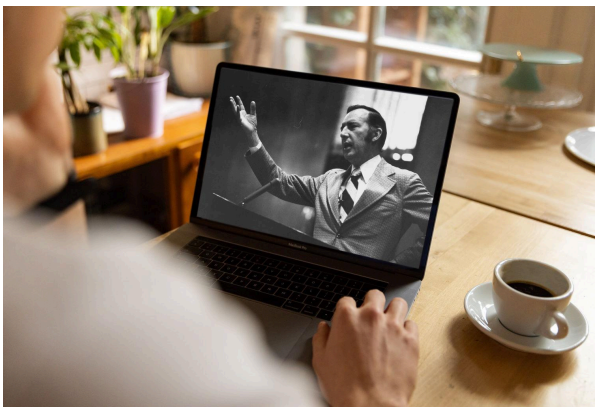

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