

LUKE: THE SON OF MAN, THE SAVIOR HAS
COME, WEEK 15

TITLE: FRUITS OF REPENTANCE

TEXT: LUKE 3:7-14

INTRODUCTION: (1) RELIGION STILL IS IN, IN AMERICA.

* NOW WHAT I MEAN BY THAT STATEMENT IS **IT'S POPULAR AND ACCEPTED IN OUR CULTURE** TO EXTERNALLY IDENTIFY WITH A CHURCH, A SYNAGOGUE, A TEMPLE, A MOSQUE, A HALL OR SOME KIND OF SYSTEM OF BELIEFS THAT ACKNOWLEDGE A GOD.

** GOD-TALK IS IN, JARGON THAT USES REFERENCES ABOUT A DEITY OR THE PRACTICE OF SOME FORM OF RELIGION IS IN.

*** GOD BLESS YOU IS IN, ALTHOUGH WE DO NOT ALWAYS KNOW WHAT GOD THAT PERSON IS BLESSING US WITH. AND TERMS THAT REFER TO **THE HIGHER POWER, "THE MAN UPSTAIRS," OR "SOMEONE WAS WATCHING OVER US" ARE POPULAR PHRASES.**

*** AND IT APPEARS THAT THERE IS A REVIVAL OF PRAYER IN OUR LAND. WE HEAR A LOT, **"OUR PRAYERS ARE WITH SO AND SO" FROM ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE, AND "YOU'RE IN OUR PRAYERS" AND WE EVEN HAVE NATIONAL DAYS OF PRAYER.**

(2) BEYOND THAT RELIGIOUS MUSIC IS IN, FOR BILLIONS OF DOLLARS A YEAR IS SPENT ON MUSIC THAT HAS RELIGIOUS OVERTONES. AND WE HAVE ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE PERFORMING AND SINGING RELIGIOUS MUSIC THAT **NORMALLY DON'T IDENTIFY WITH CHRISTIANITY** OR HAVE ANYTHING TO DO WITH IT.

* AND WE HAVE ALL KINDS OF PEOPLE IN SPORTS WHO ARE RELIGIOUS TOO.

(3) BEYOND THAT WE HAVE MANY RELIGIOUS BROADCASTING NETWORKS IN TV AND RADIO, MORE CHURCHES, MANY RELIGIOUS PUBLISHERS, MANY RELIGIOUS RECORDING LABELS, MORE PREACHERS, RELIGIOUS POLITICIANS, AND PROBABLY MORE RELIGION THAN EVER IN THE HISTORY OF OUR NATION, A PLURALISTIC RELIGIOUS SOCIETY. AND SOME **WOULD SAY ISN'T THAT WONDERFUL?**

* HOWEVER, **THE PROBLEM IS IT HASN'T** CHANGED A WHOLE LOT OF PEOPLE. OUR NATION IS AS MORALLY BANKRUPT AS **IT'S** EVER BEEN.

** INIQUITY ABOUNDS, MATERIALISM AND MONEY ARE GODS AND **HEDONISM IS IN. LET'S** PARTY, THANK GOD FOR FRIDAY, THANK GOD FOR THE WEEKEND AND PEOPLE ARE LOVERS OF PLEASURE MORE THAN LOVERS OF GOD.

(4) AND THE REASON FOR THIS IS IN AMERICA IS WE HAVE RELIGION WITHOUT RELATIONSHIP TO JESUS CHRIST. WE HAVE RELIGION WITHOUT REPENTANCE, WE HAVE RELIGION WITHOUT REGRET OF SIN, WE HAVE RELIGION WITHOUT FRUITS OF REPENTANCE.

* BECAUSE OF THAT, SIN HAS BEEN REDEFINED AS A LACK OF SELF-ESTEEM, A LACK OF MONEY, NOT THE LOVE OF MONEY, A LACK OF HAVING ENOUGH THINGS, A LACK OF LOVING YOURSELF, AND A LACK OF HAVING A PROPER ENVIRONMENT.

** AND REPENTANCE IS A DIRTY WORD. AND EVEN IN QUOTE EVANGELICAL CHURCHES TODAY WE HAVE SALVATION WITHOUT SURRENDER, CONVERSION WITHOUT CONVICTION, SALVATION WITHOUT GODLY SORROW, AND PROFESSION WITHOUT POSSESSION. AND **IT'S** NO WONDER WE ARE MESSED UP.

*** WHICH LEADS ME TO ASK THE QUESTION, WHY DID JESUS COME INTO THE WORLD? TO MAKE PEOPLE RELIGIOUS? TO STRENGTHEN THEIR EGO AND SELF ESTEEM? TO TELL THEM HOW GOOD THEY ARE AND STROKE THEM? NO.

**** HE CAME TO CALL SINNERS WITH AND WITHOUT RELIGION TO REPENTANCE, LUKE 5:32, LUKE 19:10.

(5) FOLKS, JESUS CAME TO CALL SINNERS - THE LOST, THOSE WHO KNOW THEY HAVE A TERMINAL DISEASE, THOSE WHO ARE HOPELESS, THOSE WHO ARE HURTING, THOSE WHO ARE HUNGRY, THOSE WHO ARE THIRSTY, THOSE WHO ARE WEAK, THOSE WHO ARE WEARY, THOSE WHO ARE BROKEN, THOSE WHOSE LIVES ARE SHATTERED, THOSE WHO ARE DESPERATE - SINNERS WHO KNOW THEY ARE UNWORTHY, YET LONG TO BE FORGIVEN.

* BELOVED, JESUS AND HIS FORERUNNER AND HERALD - JOHN THE BAPTIZER AIMED A LOT OF THEIR MESSAGES TO SELF-RIGHTEOUS RELIGIONISTS LIKE THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES WHO THOUGHT THEY WERE RIGHTEOUS AND WITHOUT ANY REAL SPIRITUAL NEED.

** AND THE TRUTH IS THAT UNLESS PEOPLE REALIZE THEY HAVE A SIN PROBLEM, THEY WILL NOT COME TO CHRIST FOR A SOLUTION AND REPENT.

***** PEOPLE DON'T COME FOR HEALING UNLESS THEY KNOW THEY HAVE A DISEASE; THEY DON'T COME FOR LIFE UNLESS THEY ARE CONSCIOUS THAT THEY ARE UNDER THE PENALTY OF DEATH; AND THEY DON'T COME FOR SALVATION UNLESS THEY ARE WEARY OF THE BONDAGE OF SIN.**

(6) WELL, THE RELIGIONISTS IN OUR TEXT TODAY WERE IN THAT CATEGORY. THEY CAME OUT TO BE BAPTIZED BY JOHN THE BAPTIZER.

* BUT JOHN KNEW THAT THEY WERE NOT COMING TO REPENT AND THUS CALLED THEM SNAKES AND TOLD THEM TO BRING FORTH THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE AND TO QUIT TRUSTING IN RELIGION.

**** AND BECAUSE OF THAT I'VE TITLED OUR MESSAGE THIS MORNING, "FRUITS OF REPENTANCE."**

***** AND UNDER THAT THEME WE'LL LOOK AT 3 POINTS AS WE STUDY LUKE 3:7-14. NO. 1 THE REBUKE BY JOHN OF THESE RELIGIONISTS, V. 7; NO. 2 THE RELIANCE UPON RELIGION FOR SALVATION, VV. 8-9; AND NO. 3 THE REQUIREMENT FOR SALVATION, FRUITS OF REPENTANCE TO SHOW FAITH, VV. 10-14.**

****** SO WE'LL LOOK AT THE REBUKE, THE RELIANCE AND THE REQUIREMENT UNDER THE TITLE OF FRUITS OF REPENTANCE. AND WITHOUT FURTHER INTRODUCTION, LOOK AT V. 7 WHERE WE'LL SEE OUR FIRST POINT, THE REBUKE.**

I. THE REBUKE, (READ V. 7)

A. NOW WE LEARNED LAST SUNDAY, THAT JOHN WAS THE ONE THAT WAS PREPARING THE WAY FOR JESUS TO COME, AND WAS PREACHING A MESSAGE OF REPENTANCE, TO TURN FROM SIN AND TRUST THE COMING MESSIAH JESUS, AND IF THEY TRULY REPENTED, THEY WOULD BE FORGIVEN OF THEIR SINS, AND THEIR REPENTANCE WOULD BE MANIFEST BY BEING BAPTIZED.

* WELL, CROWDS OF PEOPLE, V. 7, A MULTITUDE OF PEOPLE ESPECIALLY RELIGIONISTS LIKE THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES ACCORDING TO MATTHEW 3:7-9 WERE COMING OUT TO HEAR JOHN AND BE BAPTIZED, LIT. A THRONG OF PEOPLE, TROOPS OF PEOPLE, A MULTITUDE.

** AND JOHN REALIZES RIGHT AWAY THAT THEY ARE NOT COMING IN SINCERITY. JOHN KNEW THEY WERE RELIGIOUS OPPORTUNISTS, AND FOR WHATEVER REASONS THEY WERE COMING, JOHN KNEW THEY WERE NOT REPENTANT AND WERE NOT COMING TO SEEK TRUE RIGHTEOUSNESS.

*** AND YOU MAY BE WONDERING, RAY, HOW DO YOU KNOW THAT?

**** WELL, **BY JOHN'S REBUKE, BY WHAT HE SAYS, FOR WHAT DOES HE CALL THEM?**

**** HE CALLED THEM A BROOD OF VIPERS, LITERALLY OFFSPRING, DESCENDANTS, CHILDREN OF SNAKES. THESE WERE NOT KIND WORDS, THESE WERE CUTTING CONVICTING **WORDS, "YOU DESCENDANTS OF SNAKES."**

1. AND CALLING THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES A BROOD OF VIPERS POINTED OUT THE DANGER OF THE VENOM OF THEIR RELIGIOUS HYPOCRISY.

*** AND LIKE THE DESERT VIPER OF JOHN'S DAY** THESE RELIGIOUS LEADERS OFTEN APPEARED TO BE HARMLESS, BUT THEIR BRAND OF RELIGION WAS VENOMOUS AND DEADLY, THE APPLICATION OF II TIMOTHY 3:5, TITUS 1:16 AND PROVERBS 14:12.

** NOW UNDERSTAND THAT JOHN WAS NOT THE ONLY ONE WHO CALLED THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES VIPERS. IN MATTHEW 23:33, JESUS CALLS THE SCRIBES AND PHARISEES **"SERPENTS" AS WELL AS A BROOD** OF VIPERS, SUGGESTING EVEN MORE DIRECTLY THAT THEIR TRUE SPIRITUAL FATHER WAS SATAN, THE SERPENT, AS CHRIST SPECIFICALLY CHARGES IN JOHN 8:44.

*** AND BELOVED THESE RELIGIOUS HYPOCRITES **WERE SATAN'S CHILDREN DOING SATAN'S** DECEITFUL WORK. AND JOHN KNEW IT.

**** SO JOHN ASKS A QUESTION OF THEM AT THE END OF V. 7, **"WHO WARNED YOU TO FLEE FROM THE WRATH TO COME?"**

2. AND THE QUESTION "WHO WARNED YOU TO FLEE" CONTINUES THE VIPER FIGURE HERE. FOR IN THAT DAY, A BRUSH FIRE OR A FARMER BURNING THE STALKS IN HIS FIELD AFTER HARVEST WOULD CAUSE VIPERS AND OTHER CREATURES TO FLEE BEFORE THE FLAMES IN ORDER TO ESCAPE – CRAWLING AND RUNNING OUT.

* AND THIS WAS A COMMON SIGHT IN MANY OF THE MEDITERRANEAN AND ARAB REGIONS AND ONE THAT JOHN THE BAPTIZER DOUBTLESSLY HAD SEEN MANY TIMES.

** AND THE IMPLICATION IS THAT THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES WERE EXPECTING **JOHN'S BAPTISM TO BE A KIND OF SPIRITUAL FIRE INSURANCE, GIVING PROTECTION FROM THE FLAMES OF THE WRATH TO COME - SO THEY'RE ON THE RUN.**

*** AND YES TRUE REPENTANCE AND **CONVERSION DO PROTECT FROM GOD'S WRATH** AND JUDGMENT, BUT SUPERFICIAL FALSE AND INSINCERE PROFESSIONS OR ACTS OF FAITH TEND ONLY TO HARDEN A PERSON AGAINST GENUINE SAVING BELIEF, GIVING A FALSE SENSE OF SECURITY.

**** WELL, JOHN WOULD NOT BE PARTY TO SUCH HYPOCRISY AND SHAM. AND IT WAS THE DECEITFULNESS OF THEIR TRUE MASTER, **SATAN, AND NOT GENUINE FEAR OF GOD'S** JUDGMENT, THAT LEAD THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHERS OUT TO HEAR JOHN AND TO SEEK HIS BAPTISM AS A PRETENTIOUS FORMALITY.

3. AND WHAT A REBUKE THIS IS, WHICH LEADS **US TO OUR 2'D POINT TODAY, THE RELIANCE AS** THESE JEWS WERE RELYING ON THEIR JEWISHNESS BEING RELATED TO ABRAHAM AS THEIR TICKET TO HEAVEN. LOOK AT V. 8 PLEASE.

II. THE RELIANCE, (READ V. 8)

A. NOW THE PREREQUISITE FOR BEING RESCUED FROM THE WRATH TO COME FOR THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHER JEWS WAS TO BRING FORTH FRUITS IN KEEPING WITH REPENTANCE, TO MANIFEST THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE.

* IN OTHER WORDS TRUE REPENTANCE IS SEEN BY FRUIT, BY ACTIONS AND CHANGE, NOT JUST WORDS OR GOING THROUGH A RITUAL.

**** AND JOHN'S BAPTISM WAS AN OUTWARD** SYMBOL OF REPENTANCE OF BELIEVING HIS MESSAGE ABOUT THE COMING MESSIAH.

*** AND UNFORTUNATELY THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES WANTED THE SYMBOL, THEY WANTED THE EXTERNAL RITE, BUT WERE NOT REPENTANT AND TRULY BELIEVING IN THE MESSIAH THAT JOHN WAS PREACHING ABOUT.

*** THEY WANTED THE FORMALITY WITHOUT FAITH AND A CHANGE OF HEART, THEY WANTED RELIGION, BUT A RELIGION WITHOUT REPENTANCE, WITHOUT FRUIT.

1. AND BELOVED THIS REMINDS US THAT GENUINE REPENTANCE PRODUCES FRUIT, IT PRODUCES A CHANGE IN BEHAVIOR. FOR FRUIT IN SCRIPTURE IS ALWAYS SEEN AS MANIFESTED BEHAVIOR, BY THEIR ACTIONS, BY THEIR BEHAVIOR, BY THE WAY THEY LIVE, BY THE MESSAGE THEY COMMUNICATE. MATTHEW 7:15&16. (QUOTE THEM).

* AND MY POINT IS THE FRUITS OF REPENTANCE WILL RESULT IN A CHANGED LIFE, CHANGED BEHAVIOR THAT BEARS FRUIT.

** AND TRUE REPENTANCE WILL INCLUDE A DEEP SENSE OF WRONGDOING AND OF SIN AGAINST GOD, NOT SIMPLY REGRET OVER THE PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES OF OUR SIN.

*** THE SORROW OF TRUE REPENTANCE IS LIKE **DAVID'S IN** PSALM 51:1-4 (QUOTE THEM).

**** **AND FOLKS, DAVID'S SORROW WAS** SORROW FOR THE OFFENSE AGAINST A HOLY GOD, NOT SIMPLY REGRET OVER THE PERSONAL CONSEQUENCES OF HIS SIN.

2. I MEAN SORROW OVER BEING FOUND OUT OR OVER SUFFERING HARDSHIP OR DISCIPLINE BECAUSE OF OUR SIN IS NOT GODLY SORROW, AND HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH REPENTANCE.

* THAT SORT OF SORROW IS BUT SELFISH REGRET, CONCERN FOR SELF RATHER THAN FOR GOD AND IT MERELY ADDS TO THE ORIGINAL SIN, II CORINTHIANS 7:10.

** AND THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHERS WERE NOT TRULY REPENTANT. THEY **DIDN'T SEE THEIR SIN AND WHO THEY WERE** TRULY OFFENDING, A HOLY GOD. THEY WERE HYPOCRITES AND PHONIES AS JOHN WELL KNEW.

*** AND JOHN HAD SEEN ABSOLUTELY NO EVIDENCE OF TRUE REPENTANCE AND HE DEMANDED TO SEE SUCH EVIDENCE BEFORE HE WOULD BAPTIZE THEM.

**** JOHN KNEW WHAT THEY WERE RELYING ON AS FAR AS BEING RIGHT WITH GOD, AND THAT WAS ABRAHAM.

3. FOR JOHN OBVIOUSLY KNEW WHAT THE JEWS WERE THINKING FROM BEING AROUND THEM.

* THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHER JEWS THOUGHT DESCENT FROM ABRAHAM WAS A PASSPORT TO HEAVEN.

** IN FACT MANY JEWS OF N.T. TIMES BELIEVED, AND MANY ORTHODOX JEWS OF OUR OWN DAY STILL BELIEVE, THAT SIMPLY THEIR JEWISHNESS **ASSURES THEM A PLACE IN GOD'S KINGDOM.**

*** AND BELOVED, THESE JEWS IN OUR TEXT WERE TRUSTING IN RACE AND IN THEIR RELIGION AS A MEANS OF ENTRANCE INTO **GOD'S KINGDOM.**

**** AND YES BEING A JEW WAS A GREAT ADVANTAGE IN KNOWING AND UNDERSTANDING GOD'S WILL ACCORDING TO ROMANS 3:1&2 AND ROMANS 9:4&5, BUT WITHOUT REPENTANT FAITH IN HIM THAT ADVANTAGE BECOMES A MORE SEVERE CONDEMNATION.

4. AND IF ABRAHAM HIMSELF WAS JUSTIFIED BY FAITH, HOW COULD HIS DESCENDANTS BE JUSTIFIED IN ANY OTHER WAY? GENESIS 15:6, ROMANS 4:20-22. (QUOTE THEM)

* NOW BELOVED, THE TRUTH OF THE MATTER IS, NO DESCENT FROM ABRAHAM, NO MATTER HOW GENETICALLY PURE, COULD MAKE THAT PERSON RIGHT WITH GOD.

** IN FACT, OUR LORD CONTRADICTED THE SIMILAR CLAIMS OF ANOTHER GROUP OF PHARISEES, EXCEPT IN EVEN STRONGER TERMS **THAN JOHN'S, IN** JOHN 8:39&40.

*** FOR AFTER THEY SELF-RIGHTEOUSLY **ASSERTED "ABRAHAM IS OUR FATHER,"** JESUS SAID **"IF YOU ARE ABRAHAM'S CHILDREN, DO** THE DEEDS OF ABRAHAM. BUT AS IT IS, YOU ARE SEEKING TO KILL ME, A MAN WHO HAS TOLD YOU THE TRUTH, WHICH I HEARD FROM GOD; THIS ABRAHAM DID NOT DO."

**** AND OUR LORD WENT ON TO SAY IN THAT TEXT THAT THEIR DEEDS (THEIR FRUITS) PROVED THEIR FATHER WAS ACTUALLY SATAN, VV. 44&58.

5. NOW GET THIS, THE JEWS GENERALLY CONSIDERED GENTILES TO BE KINDLING FOR HELL, SPIRITUALLY LIFELESS AND HOPELESS, DEAD STONES AS FAR AS A RIGHT RELATIONSHIP WITH GOD IS CONCERNED.

* AND IT MAY BE THAT JOHN PLAYED ON THAT FIGURE IN DECLARING AT THE END OF V. 8 THAT GOD IS ABLE FROM THESE STONES TO RAISE UP CHILDREN TO ABRAHAM, THAT IS, TRUE CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM WHO COME TO THE LORD AS ABRAHAM DID, BY FAITH.

** IN OTHER WORDS, THE GOD WHO WAS ABLE TO CREATE ADAM OUT OF THE DUST OF THE GROUND WAS ALSO ABLE TO MAKE TRUE SONS OF ABRAHAM OUT OF THE DESERT STONES TO WHICH JOHN PROBABLY POINTED.

*** BELOVED, CREATOR GOD COULD RAISE UP FROM STONES TRUE SPIRITUAL CHILDREN OF ABRAHAM IF HE SO DESIRED. GOD COULD WITH SUCH PERFECT EASE RAISE UP CHILDREN TO ABRAHAM, AND BECAUSE OF THAT WAS NOT DEPENDENT ON THEM FOR THE CONTINUATION **OF ABRAHAM'S POSTERITY.**

*** **AS ONE COMMENTARY I READ SAID:** "THE GREAT CREATOR COULD, IF HE SO DESIRED, PEOPLE THE JUDAIC DESERT WITH A NEW RACE OF MEN AND WOMEN POSSESSING NO PHYSICAL ANCESTRY, BUT MORE FITTED TO BE THE RECIPIENTS OF HIS GRACE THAN THE UNWORTHY SONS OF ABRAHAM."

3. AND BELOVED, REGARDLESS OF WHAT JOHN MEANT BY THE STONES, THE PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHERS WERE PROUDLY TRUSTING IN THEIR RACE AND RELIGION TO MAKE THEM FIT FOR THE KINGDOM AND THEY WOULD BE DAMNED **IF THEY DIDN'T REPENT**, AND THE FIRE OF HELL WOULD BE THEIR END. LOOK AT V. 9 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 9. NOW JOHN GIVES US A FARMING OR AGRICULTURAL ILLUSTRATION OF BRINGING FORTH FRUIT.

**** AND JUST AS A FRUIT TREE IS EXPECTED TO BEAR FRUIT, TRUE BELIEVERS WILL PRODUCE FRUIT, THERE WILL BE FRUIT THAT GIVES EVIDENCE OF REPENTANCE, OF SAVING FAITH.

1. AND JOHN COMPARED PEOPLE WHO CLAIM **THAT THEY BELIEVE IN CHRIST BUT DON'T** MANIFEST ANY FRUIT TO UNPRODUCTIVE TREES THAT WILL BE CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO THE FIRE.

* LET ME FURTHER ILLUSTRATE, IN V. 9 THE PICTURE IS THIS, AT THE END OF EVERY HARVEST SEASON, THE FARMER WOULD GO THROUGH HIS VINEYARD OR ORCHARD LOOKING FOR PLANTS THAT HAD BORNE NO GOOD FRUIT.

** THESE WOULD BE CUT DOWN TO MAKE ROOM FOR PRODUCTIVE VINES AND TREES TO KEEP THEM FROM TAKING NUTRIENTS FROM THE SOIL THAT WAS NEEDED BY THE GOOD PLANTS.

*** AND THE TRUTH IS THIS, A FRUITLESS TREE WAS A WORTHLESS AND USELESS TREE, FIT ONLY TO BE CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO THE FIRE.

**** AND JESUS USED A SIMILAR ILLUSTRATION IN JOHN 15:6 IN DESCRIBING FALSE FOLLOWERS. HE SAID: **"IF ANYONE DOES NOT ABIDE IN ME, HE IS THROWN AWAY AS A BRANCH, AND DRIES UP; AND THEY GATHER THEM, AND CAST THEM INTO THE FIRE, AND THEY ARE BURNED."**

2. AND BELOVED THE POINT AGAIN IS FRUITLESS REPENTANCE IS WORTHLESS AND USELESS; IT MEANS ABSOLUTELY NOTHING TO GOD.

* AND AS WE GO BACK TO LUKE 3, JOHN WAS SPEAKING SPECIFICALLY TO THE UNREPENTANT PHARISEES AND SADDUCEES AND OTHERS THAT JUDGMENT WAS EMINENT IF THEY FAILED TO TRULY REPENT AND BRING FORTH THE FRUIT OF REPENTANCE.

** THE AXE WAS ALREADY LAID AT THE ROOT OF THE TREE OF THEIR LIVES, AND IF THEY FAILED TO REPENT, ONE DAY THEY WOULD BE CUT DOWN AND THROWN INTO HELL.

*** AND LET ME GIVE YOU ONE QUICK **APPLICATION AND WE'LL MOVE ON TO V. 10.**

3. JOHN IS NOT SAYING TO THESE PEOPLE, IF YOU FAIL TO BRING FORTH THE FRUIT OF **REPENTANCE YOU'LL MISS OUT ON THE ABUNDANT LIFE, OR YOU WON'T HAVE ANY PEACE, OR YOU'LL MISS OUT ON GOD'S BLESSINGS, OR YOU WON'T BE HAPPY.**

* HE SAYS **IF YOU DON'T TURN YOU'LL BURN!!** AND THAT SOUNDS HARSH, BUT THAT WAS THE MESSAGE THEY NEEDED TO HEAR. REPENT OR PERISH, LUKE 13:3 (QUOTE IT)

** AND LET ME REMIND YOU AGAIN THAT WE MUST GIVE PEOPLE THE BAD NEWS OF THEIR SIN SO THEY SEE THEIR NEED OF THE GOOD NEWS OF FORGIVENESS **THROUGH CHRIST'S SACRIFICIAL DEATH ON THE CROSS AND HIS BURIAL AND RESURRECTION TO BE RESCUED FORM GOD'S WRATH.**

*** THE MESSAGE IS REPENT, TURN, BE CONVERTED AND CHRIST IS YOUR ONLY HOPE, OR THERE WILL BE A CUTTING.

***** WHICH LEADS US TO OUR 3'D POINT** TODAY,
THE REQUIREMENT. LOOK AT V. 10 PLEASE.

III. THE REQUIREMENT, (READ V. 10)

A. NOW JOHN'S CONFRONTIVE SOBERING
MESSAGE PROMPTED AT LEAST SOME IN THE
CROWD TO REFLECT ON THEIR SINFUL LIVES,
THERE WAS CONVICTION.

* IT IS TO SAY JOHN PREACHED REPENTANCE
WITH SUCH URGENCY AND POWER THAT PEOPLE
WERE DESPERATE TO KNOW HOW TO ESCAPE
THE FIRE OF GOD'S JUDGMENT.

** HENCE, WANTING TO KNOW WHAT SPECIFIC
ACTIONS THEY NEED TO TAKE TO MANIFEST
GENUINE REPENTANCE, THEY BEGAN
QUESTIONING HIM SAYING, **"THEN WHAT SHALL
WE DO?"**

*** AND THIS REMINDS ME OF THE DAY OF PENTECOST AS PETER PREACHED THE GOSPEL AND WHEN HE WAS DONE THE JEWISH PEOPLE THAT HEARD THE MESSAGE WERE CUT TO THE HEART AND SAID TO PETER AND THE REST OF **THE APOSTLES, "WHAT SHALL WE DO?"** IN ACTS 2:37. AND PETER SAID IN V. 38, REPENT AND EACH OF YOU BE BAPTIZED IN THE NAME OF JESUS CHRIST FOR THE FORGIVENESS OF SINS.

**** AND BASICALLY THE ONLY DIFFERENCE **BETWEEN JOHN AND PETER'S MESSAGE WAS** JOHN PREPARED PEOPLE FOR JESUS AND PETER PREACHED THAT JESUS HAD COME AND DIED AND ROSE AGAIN. JOHN LOOKED FORWARD TO JESUS, PETER LOOKED BACK TO JESUS.

1. NOW WITH THAT SAID, JOHN WAS NOT PREACHING A WORKS SALVATION, DO THIS AND YOU WILL BE SAVED, NO.

* JOHN WAS MAKING THE GENERAL POINT THAT TRUE REPENTANCE PRODUCES A TRANSFORMED LIFE, IT PRODUCES FRUIT! AND TRUE REPENTANT FAITH EFFECTS HOW WE TREAT OTHER PEOPLE.

** IN OTHER WORDS, REPENTANCE PRODUCES CHANGE, AND JOHN GIVES THESE PEOPLE PRACTICAL THINGS THAT FOLLOW REPENTANCE DEALING WITH THEIR POINT OF SIN.

*** AND THE FIRST POINT OF SIN IS SELFISHNESS. LOOK AT V. 11 PLEASE.

B. READ V. 11. NOW THE FIRST EXAMPLE OF WHAT REPENTANCE LOOKS LIKE IN THE LIFE OF A SELFISH PERSON IS TO SHARE WHAT THEY HAVE WITH THOSE IN NEED.

* IF YOU HAVE TWO TUNICS, GIVE ONE TO A **PERSON THAT DOESN'T** HAVE ONE, AND IF YOU HAVE FOOD, SHARE WITH THE PERSON WHO HAS NONE. THIS IS A SPECIFIC WAY IN WHICH THEY WOULD SHOW SINCERITY, TO SHOW A REPENTANT HEART, TO SHOW A HEART THAT WAS GOING TO RECEIVE THE COMING MESSIAH.

** AND JOHN KNEW THAT MANY OF HIS LISTENERS WERE STINGY AND SELFISH, STOCKPILING FOR SELF, KEEPING THINGS FOR SELF. SO WHAT FRUIT SHOWS REPENTANCE? GENEROSITY. LOVING OTHERS BY MEETING REAL NEEDS, TANGIBLY. THIS SHOWS A CHANGED HEART.

*** THEN JOHN WILL GET REAL SPECIFIC AS TWO SPECIFIC GROUPS OF PEOPLE ASK JOHN WHAT THEY SHOULD DO, TAX COLLECTORS AND SOLDIERS. AND FIRST OF ALL TAX COLLECTORS. LOOK AT V. 12 PLEASE.

C. READ V. 12. NOW TAX COLLECTORS WERE HATED IN JEWISH SOCIETY BECAUSE THEY WERE DISHONEST AND COLLECTED TAXES FOR THE ROMANS, THEIR ENEMIES WHO OCCUPIED ISRAEL.

* AND TAX COLLECTORS WERE DESPISED AS TRAITORS AND ROBBERS AND WERE CUT OFF FROM JEWISH RELIGIOUS LIFE AND FORBIDDEN TO TESTIFY IN JEWISH COURT, FOR THEY WERE DISHONEST.

** WELL, SPECIFICALLY THEY ASK WHAT THEY SHOULD DO TO SHOW FRUITS OF REPENTANCE AND JOHN ANSWERS THEM IN V. 13. LOOK AT V. 13 PLEASE.

D. READ V. 13. NOW JOHN DID NOT TELL THE TAX COLLECTORS TO QUIT BEING TAX COLLECTORS, HE DID NOT SAY THAT BEING A TAX COLLECTOR WAS SINFUL.

* BUT WHAT JOHN DID TELL THEM WAS NOT TO COLLECT ANY MORE TAXES THAN WHAT THEY HAD BEEN ORDERED TO COLLECT.

** AND THE REASON FOR THAT WAS MOST TAX COLLECTORS COLLECTED TAXES ABOVE WHAT ROME HAD ORDERED AND KEPT THE EXTRA FOR THEMSELVES, PLUS THEY WERE INVOLVED IN KICKBACKS AND BRIBES.

*** HOWEVER THEY COULD SHOW FRUITS OF REPENTANCES BY TREATING PEOPLE HONESTLY AND FAIRLY.

*** THUS FOR TAX COLLECTORS, THE FRUIT OF REPENTANCE WAS WHAT? THE ANSWER IS HONESTY. CHRISTIANS SHOULD BE THE MOST HONEST PEOPLE IN THE WORLD.

**** AND THEN LASTLY, SOLDIERS THEN ASK JOHN WHAT THEY SHOULD DO. LOOK AT V. 14 PLEASE.

E. READ V. 14. NOW SOLDIERS WERE ANOTHER GROUP IN THAT DAY THAT WERE PRONE TO ABUSING THEIR AUTHORITY FOR PERSONAL SELFISH GAIN.

* AND AS THEY ASK JOHN WHAT THEY CAN DO, JOHN GAVE THEM 3 WAYS TO SHOW GENUINE REPENTANCE.

** NO. 1 THEY WERE NOT TO TAKE MONEY FROM ANYONE BY FORCE. AND REMEMBER THEY HAD GOVT. AUTHORITY AND WEAPONS AND COULD ABUSE THAT. SO NOTE THAT THE GREEK VERB **TRANSLATED "TAKE MONEY BY FORCE"** WHICH IS VERY VISUAL FOR US TO IMAGINE. WHY? WELL FOR IT LIT. MEANT TO SHAKE THOROUGHLY, TO MAKE TO TREMBLE, TO TERRIFY, TO AGITATE, TO EXTORT FROM ONE BY INTIMIDATION, MONEY OR OTHER PROPERTY.

*** AND TO USE A CONTEMPORARY IDIOM OR PICTURE, IT MEANS TO SHAKE PEOPLE DOWN FOR MONEY, TO SHAKE DOWN SOMEONE.

**** AND SOLDIERS IN THAT DAY, DID THAT.

1. NO. 2 SOLDIERS WERE TOLD **"NOT TO ACCUSE ANYONE FALSELY."**

* AND THAT MEANS THAT SOLDIERS WERE NOT TO ABUSE THEIR POWER AND AUTHORITY TO TWIST AND PERVERT EVIDENCE IN AN ATTEMPT TO EXTORT MONEY FROM THE INNOCENT.

** AND THEN NO. 3 SOLDIERS WERE TO BE CONTENT WITH THEIR WAGES. FOR IF THEY ARE NOT IN THIS CONTEXT, THEY WILL SHAKE PEOPLE DOWN, THEY WILL EXTORT. WHY? BECAUSE THEY WANT MORE AND ARE NOT CONTENT WITH WHAT THEY ARE PAID AND WILL VIOLENTLY TAKE MONEY FROM HELPLESS PEOPLE BY ABUSING THEIR AUTHORITY.

*** SO BE CONTENT. CONTENTMENT IS A FRUIT OF REPENTANCE.

**** AND ONE LAST THING, JOHN DID NOT SAY TO SOLDIERS, GIVE UP YOUR VOCATION, QUIT BEING A SOLDIER. JOHN SAID BE AN HONEST ONE, SO NO TEACHING HERE FOR BEING A CONSCIENTIOUS OBJECTOR, BEING A SOLDIER WAS ALRIGHT.

IN WRAP UP AND IN APPLICATION: (1) FRUITS OF REPENTANCE FOLLOW GENUINE REPENTANCE. ACTIONS, OBEDIENCE, CHANGE IS A FRUIT OF TRULY TURNING AND IN CHRISTIANITY, TURNING FROM SIN TO THE SAVIOR, JESUS CHRIST.

* AND TODAY I ASK THE SIMPLE QUESTION, ARE THERE FRUITS, ACTIONS THAT REVEAL THAT YOU TRULY KNOW CHRIST, THAT YOU TRULY HAVE REPENTED OF YOUR SINS?

** AND THE ACTIONS THAT JOHN BRINGS UP IN OUR TEXT TODAY AS FRUITS OF REPENTANCE ARE FRUITS OF LOVE.

*** FOR IF YOU LOVE OTHERS AND YOU HAVE MORE THAN ENOUGH, IN LOVE YOU WANT TO GIVE CLOTHING AND FOOD.

**** **IF YOU LOVE, YOU WON'T CHEAT OTHER PEOPLE OR LIE TO TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEM.**

******* AND IF YOU LOVE, YOU WON'T SHAKE PEOPLE DOWN, YOU WON'T EXTORT, AND IF YOU DON'T LOVE MONEY YOU WILL BE CONTENT WITH GOD'S PROVISION.**

(2) OR TO PUT IT ANOTHER WAY, ALL OF THESE EXAMPLES HAVE TO DO WITH MONEY. GIVING AWAY, NOT TAKING ADVANTAGE OF OTHERS AND BEING CONTENT.

* AND MONEY HAS GREAT SPIRITUAL POWER, BOTH FOR EVIL AND FOR GOOD.

** AND WHAT WE DO WITH MONEY REVEALS OUR TRUE PRIORITIES. ARE WE LIVING FOR OURSELVES OR OTHERS? OUR BUDGETS AND SPENDING ARE LEADING INDICATORS OF OUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH.

*** THEREFORE IF YOU HAVE MORE THAN YOU NEED, GIVE TO THOSE WHO TRULY TRULY HAVE NEED THAT ARE NOT LAZY, BUT IN DIFFICULT CIRCUMSTANCES.

****** IF YOU ARE IN BUSINESS, DON'T
OVERCHARGE PEOPLE, TREAT PEOPLE RIGHT.**

(3) IF YOU ARE WORKING AND NOT GETTING
WHAT YOU THINK YOU ARE WORTHY OF OR
DESERVE, STOP COMPLAINING, BE CONTENT,
AND STOP SCHEMING TO GET MORE.

** CONTEXTUALLY WE SEE FRUITS OF
REPENTANCE, FOR TODAY, FRUITS OF TRULY
KNOWING CHRIST.

*** FOR THE BELIEVER, BE CONTENT. FOR THOSE
WITHOUT CHRIST, REPENT AND REMEMBER
FRUITS WILL FOLLOW.

**** I CLOSE WITH 6 VERSES. 5 ARE FOUND IN
I TIMOTHY 6:6-8, 10&11 AND HEBREWS 13:5.
(QUOTE THEM AND PRAY)