

Luke 3:1-20 Repentance

The Word of God came into the history of human autonomy to turn us from sin and judgment to salvation in Christ.

- 1) The Word of God came into the history of human autonomy (3:1-2).
 - a) Tiberius Caesar—Pagan hegemony over Promised Land
 - b) Pontius Pilate—Irreverent hegemony over Promised Land
 - i) Luke 13:1—“the Galileans whose blood Pilate had mingled with their sacrifices”
 - ii) Erected Roman Standards embossed with images of the emperor in the holy city
 - iii) Seized funds from the temple treasury to build an aqueduct
 - iv) Arranged for soldiers in plain clothes to mingle among protestors and then on his signal beat the protestors with clubs, killing many
 - v) 2 other incidents recorded in Philo and Josephus so that he was described by these contemporaries as greedy, inflexible, cruel, resorting to robbery and oppression
 - c) Herod (Antipas)—Son of Herod the Great—Illegitimate Power; Personal Immorality; murder of John the Baptist
 - d) Philip—Son of Herod the Great—Illegitimate Power
 - e) Lysanias
 - f) High Priesthood of Annas and Caiaphas—Political Appointees of Rome; not Zadokite Priests
- 2) The Word of God came to turn us from sin and judgment to salvation in Christ (3:2b-18).
 - a) The Word that came was an Ancient Word and a Prophetic Word (Isaiah 40:3-5); an Eternal and Divine Word of salvation
 - b) What was John’s baptism?
 - i) Not Christian baptism (Acts 19:1-5)
 - ii) Outward sign of restoration to covenant (forgiveness of sins)
 - iii) Possible indication that temple system was defunct
 - c) **What is repentance?**
 - i) Turning the whole person away from sin (3:3, 9)
 - ii) Turning the whole person to the Lord (3:4-5)
 - d) **What is the evidence of repentance?**
 - i) Seeing God’s salvation (3:6)
 - ii) Moral Transformation (3:8; 10-14)
 - e) **Why should you repent?**
 - i) Warning of Impending Judgment (3:7-9)
 - ii) Promise of Christ (3:15-17)
 - iii) The Call to repentance is “Good News” or “Gospel” (3:18)
 - (1) You are not biologically or environmentally determined in your moral choices
 - (2) By God’s power moral transformation is possible—He gives what He commands (paraphrase of Augustine’s prayer)
 - (3) Restoration to God is possible by His grace
 - iv) Refusal to repent is to reject the gospel and choose evil and the consequent judgment for your sin (3:19-20).
- 3) The Word of God still calls for repentance.
 - a) Are you an unbeliever, living with no regard for the authority of God? Turn from the tyranny of autonomy and know the blessed reign of Jesus Christ.
 - b) Are you a believer? Because we have not yet arrived repentance is part of our sanctification. Do not make peace with your sin. Do not mistake presumption for faith.
 - c) Are you a faithful witness for Christ? You must call people to repent from sin as you call them to faith in Christ.