

Day 16

Real Repentance

“In those days John the Baptist came, preaching in the Desert of Judea and saying, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” Matthew 3:1-2

John the Baptist figures prominently in the Advent Bible readings even though he was still a baby when Jesus was born. But Advent is about preparation, and 30 years after Jesus was born, John prepared the faithful to meet their long-awaited Savior. His message was simple and straightforward: “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.” Christ’s kingdom, however, was not to be a worldly kingdom, but a heavenly kingdom.

Repentance is an important part of our life in Christ’s kingdom, but it is not what brings our salvation. Christ’s life and death is the cause of our salvation. To repent is to turn away from sin, but we cannot make God save us, no matter how or how often we repent. God commands us to repent, not because we can save ourselves, but because He knows that a repentant sinner will remain in faith, while an unrepentant sinner will lose his faith. We certainly do not repent as often, or as sincerely, as we should; but God’s forgiveness in Christ Jesus remains certain.

Let us then repent of our sins, for the kingdom of heaven is near. But let us not put our faith in our repentance; instead let us put all our trust in our King, Jesus, who has redeemed us from all sin.

Prayer

Father, I tend to gloss over my sins instead of confessing them and repenting. I need your power to turn away from my sins. I need you to be my Savior and Leader in my life. In Jesus’ name I pray. Amen.

Ponder

How difficult has it been for you to make a U-turn when you recognize you are sinning? Think of a U-turn as a direction you can focus on when you need to repent.

Worship Video

Mighty to Save: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=YVeQoHdIDEE>

Christmas Story

[Luke 2:13-14](#)

Suddenly a great company of the heavenly host appeared with the angel, praising God and saying, “Glory to God in the highest heaven,
and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”

Bible Verse

[Luke 2:14](#)

“Glory to God in the highest heaven, and on earth peace to those on whom his favor rests.”