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| **Three Shades of Repenting**  *Promise: God leads us back to where we belong in Him* Pastor Timothy A. Duesenberg Joel 2:12-19; Psa 51:1-13; 2 Cor 5:20b—6:10; Matt 6:1-6, 16-21 (Ash Wednesday), 2/14/24)  *Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love.* – Joel 2:13b  **Lead In –** As we heard in the opening address, “from ancient times the season of Lent has been kept as a time of special devotion, self-denial, and humble repentance born of a faithful heart that dwells confidently on [God’s] Word and draws from it life and hope.” Tonight, we will focus on the implications of repentance and what it means for our lives. I can tell you what it meant for the professional painter who got caught thinning his paint…   1. **Repent Can Imply “Turning” or “To Turn”**    1. Some form of the word “turn” used some 700 Xs…    2. Even μετανοέω *(metanoeō)* implies this... 2. **At Least Three Senses of Turning**    1. A change in direction, getting on right path…    2. To turn away from that which is destructive (distraction)…    3. To turn as an invitation to return… (there is no place like home) 3. **Returning to Baptism**    1. Our baptismal identity…    2. The daily implications of our baptism… (joined to His death)    3. It is our Lord’s work, if we allow it…   **Final Word –** Friends in Christ, of course repentance means our turning from sin, our turning from plodding our own paths instead of following Christ the Way, the Truth and the Life. Of course it means returning to where we belong and to who we are in Christ. But don’t forget it also can mean turning from some good things so that they also don’t become a distraction to the best. That is why it can be helpful to *give some things up for Lent.* For indeed the good can get in the way of the best.  **Ac 26:17-18** *(The Risen Christ to Paul on the Damascus Road)* “I am sending you to open their eyes, so that they may turn from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God, that they may receive forgiveness of sins.”  **Mt 7:13-14** “Enter by the narrow gate. For the gate is wide and the way is easy that leads to destruction, and those who enter by it are many. For the gate is narrow and the way is hard that leads to life, and those who find it are few.”  **Mk 9:43-47** “And if your hand causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life crippled than with two hands to go to hell, to the unquenchable fire. And if your foot causes you to sin, cut it off. It is better for you to enter life lame than with two feet to be thrown into hell. And if your eye causes you to sin, tear it out. It is better for you to enter the kingdom of God with one eye than with two eyes to be thrown into hell.” | **Joel 2:12-19 ESV**  *Return to the Lord*  12“Yet even now,” declares the Lord, “return to me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning; 13and rend your hearts and not your garments.” Return to the Lord your God, for he is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and abounding in steadfast love; and he relents over disaster. 14Who knows whether he will not turn and relent, and leave a blessing behind him, a grain offering and a drink offering for the Lord your God?  15Blow the trumpet in Zion; consecrate a fast; call a solemn assembly; 16gather the people. Consecrate the congregation; assemble the elders; gather the children, even nursing infants. Let the bridegroom leave his room, and the bride her chamber.  17Between the vestibule and the altar let the priests, the ministers of the Lord, weep and say, “Spare your people, O Lord, and make not your heritage a reproach, a byword among the nations. Why should they say among the peoples, ‘Where is their God?’”  18Then the Lord became jealous for his land and had pity on his people. 19The Lord answered and said to his people, “Behold, I am sending to you grain, wine, and oil, and you will be satisfied; and I will no more make you a reproach among the nations.  **Ph 3:20** But our citizenship is in heaven, and from it we await a Savior, the Lord Jesus Christ  **Ga 3:26-27** For in Christ Jesus you are all sons of God, through faith. For as many of you as were baptized into Christ have put on Christ.  **Ro 6:4** We were buried therefore with him by baptism into death, in order that, just as Christ was raised from the dead by the glory of the Father, we too might walk in newness of life.  **Ti 3:5-7** He saved us, not because of works done by us in righteousness, but according to his own mercy, by the washing of regeneration and renewal of the Holy Spirit, whom he poured out on us richly through Jesus Christ our Savior, so that being justified by his grace we might become heirs according to the hope of eternal life. |