

THE BEREANS

ACTS 17:11

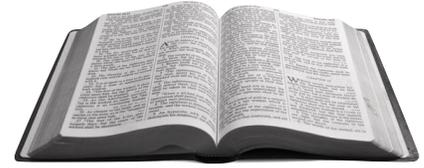
2 Corinthians 12:7-10

Lesson #24

The Theology of Change

06/16/2019

How to read the Old Testament



The theology of change?

Larry Crabb

1

What do we most need to see **changed** in our lives?

- our circumstances
- our environment
- our image / history
- **our behavior**
- **our attitude**
- **our perception**



2

Mountains



Expectations

- some you remove
- some you endure
- some you climb
- **some you reimagine.**

(see as a stepping stone not a stumbling stone)

3

What does it mean to **repent**?

Repent



metanoeo
meta - "after"
noeo - "to perceive"

"to renew or change perception"

4

Two ways to pastorally abuse others

Lead people to believe that God will change things that He won't.

Lead people to believe that God will not change things that He can.

5

2 Corinthians 12

“⁷ And because of the surpassing greatness of the revelations, for this reason, to keep me from exalting myself, there was given me a thorn in the flesh, a messenger of Satan to buffet me - to keep me from exalting myself! ⁸ **Concerning this I entreated the Lord three times that it might depart from me.** ⁹ And He has said to me, “My grace is sufficient for you, for power is perfected in weakness.” Most gladly, therefore, I will rather boast about my weaknesses, that the power of Christ may dwell in me. ¹⁰ **Therefore I am well content with weaknesses, with insults, with distresses, with persecutions, with difficulties, for Christ’s sake; for when I am weak, then I am strong.**”

• **Paul prays to God to change his circumstances but God’s will is to change Paul’s perception.**

6

2 Corinthians 5:14

“For the love of Christ controls us,”

Two paths



N.C. emphasis
Spirit centered
Love motivated
Worship oriented

O.C. emphasis
Law centered
Fear motivated
Works oriented

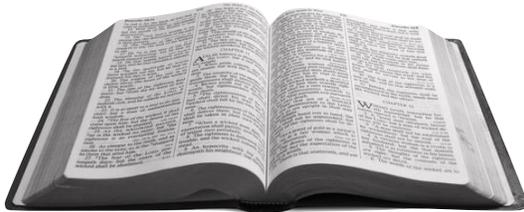
Matthew 6:22

“The eye is the lamp of the body; so then if your eye is clear, your whole body will be full of light.”



7

Contrasting “emphasis”



Old Covenant

New Covenant

Behavior

Belief

Temporal

Eternal

Material

Spiritual

8



Two things that require repentance.

1. To **BECOME** a Christian there is only one thing that we **MUST** change.

Colossians 1:27

“this mystery among the Gentiles, which is **Christ in you, the hope of glory.**”



Worldly hopes



Kingdom hopes

9

Two things that require repentance.

2. To **LIVE** a Christian life there are many things that we **MUST** change.

Acts 26:20

“that they should repent and turn to God, performing deeds appropriate to repentance.”



The works of the flesh



The fruit of the Spirit

10

Two types of righteousness

Legal position - “In Christ” by faith
(the Gospel message)



11



Faith in Christ
renders us fit for heaven
giving us life.



Good works
renders us fit for earth
letting it shine.

12

1 Corinthians 1:2

“To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who have been sanctified in Christ Jesus, saints by calling,”

The Corinthians had REPENTED (saving faith)

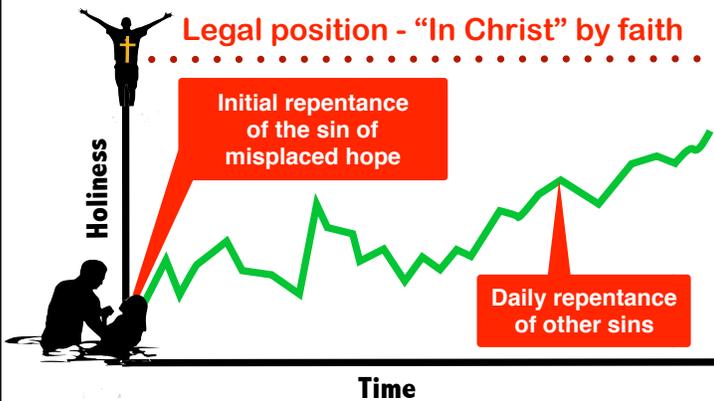
1 Corinthians 3:3

“For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

but were in need of repentance (good works).

13

Two types of repentance



14

Basic facts about the theology of change.

1. **God is not looking for winners.**
(as this world measures things)

1 Corinthians 1

“²⁶ For consider your calling, brethren, that there were **not many wise according to the flesh**, not many **mighty**, not many **noble**; ²⁷ but God has chosen **the foolish things** of the world to shame the wise, and God has chosen **the weak things** of the world to shame the things which are strong, ²⁸ and **the base things** of the world and **the despised**, God has chosen, **the things that are not**, that He might nullify the things that are,”

15

Basic facts about the theology of change.

2. **God is not looking for winners but for sinners.**

Romans 3:23

“for **all have sinned** and fall short of the glory of God,”

1 Timothy 1:15

“It is a trustworthy statement, deserving full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world **to save sinners**, among whom I am foremost of all.”

16

Basic facts about the theology of change.

3. **God is not looking for winners but for sinners who know it.**

Matthew 5

“³ Blessed are the **poor in spirit**, for theirs is the kingdom of heaven. ⁴ Blessed are those who **mourn**, for they shall be comforted. . . . ⁶ Blessed are those who **hunger and thirst for righteousness**, for they shall be satisfied.”

We will not change what we do not acknowledge or want to change.

17

“There is a God shaped vacuum in the heart of every man which cannot be filled by any created thing, but only by God, the Creator, made known through Jesus.”



Blaise Pascal

18

“Through pride we are ever deceiving ourselves. But deep down below the surface of the average conscience a still, small voice says to us, ‘Something is out of tune.’”



Carl Jung

19

“Of all acts of man repentance is the most divine. The greatest of all faults is to be conscious of none.”



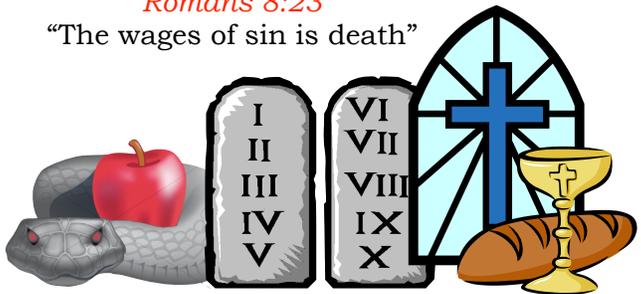
Thomas Carlyle
(Scottish philosopher)

20

Jesus doubles down on the Law to show us who we are before God.

Ephesians 2
“1 And you were dead in your trespasses and sins,”

Romans 8:23
“The wages of sin is death”



21

God’s great visual aid
Death!



Mortality
Meaning
Morality
Management



22

Death is a major theme in the Christian faith.




Death is a visual aid to the Gospel.



23

Basic facts about the theology of change.

4. God is not looking for winners but for sinners who know it **and are justified by faith in Christ.**

Romans 4:5

“But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, **his faith is reckoned as righteousness,**”

We will be justified by faith without being perfected in this mortal body.

24

Two types of righteousness



25

The structure of Ephesians

ch.1-3
What Christ has done
FOR us.

Our Identity

ch.4-6
What Christ is doing
IN and THROUGH us.

in Action

REPENTANCE
that brings
legal reconciliation



repentance
that brings
spiritual / social harmony



26

Ephesians 1

“17 that the God of our Lord Jesus Christ, the Father of glory, may give to you a spirit of wisdom and of revelation in the knowledge of him. 18 **I pray that the eyes of your heart may be enlightened,** so that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the surpassing greatness of His power toward us who believe.”

Ephesians 3:14-19

“That you 18 **may be able to comprehend** with all the saints what is the breadth and length and height and depth, 19 and to know **the love of Christ** which surpasses knowledge, that you may be filled up to all the fulness of God.”

- **Paul does not teach and pray that Christians will KNOW God's will but that God's Spirit would open their eyes to see who they are "in Christ".**

27

“The disciple of Jesus needs more than light. He also needs sight. The blind man is not aided by light without sight.”

A.W. Tozer



28

“We take a new convert and immediately make a worker out of him. That is not God's way. God meant that a convert should first learn to be a worshipper, and then his work will have God in it.”

A.W. Tozer



29

Romans 6

“¹ What shall we say then? Are we to continue in sin that grace might increase? ² May it never be! **How shall we who died to sin still live in it?** ³ Or do you not know that **all of us who have been baptized into Christ Jesus have been baptized into His death?** ⁴ Therefore we have been buried with Him through baptism into death, in order that as Christ was raised from the dead through the glory of the Father, so we too might walk in newness of life. ⁵ For if we have become united with Him in the likeness of His death, certainly we shall be also in the likeness of His resurrection, ⁶ knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; ⁷ for he who has died is freed from sin.”

Paul’s motivation for moral behavior is not fear of condemnation. It is perception of a new identity as Christians.

30

“Walking in the Spirit” means changing the way we see ourselves.

When we see self in **contrast** to Christ

When we see self in the **context** of Christ

Death  **Life**

31

Summary

1. God is seeking people who know they **must change**.
2. Turning from self to God **as our hope** is the first change that we must make.
3. Building a life that **makes a difference** is the Christian’s calling.
4. A changed life starts with attending to **perceptions** not performance.
5. Seeing clearly has less to do with knowing God’s will than **knowing God and seeing ourselves “in Christ”**.

32

Water baptism is about conversion.

The Lord’s Supper is about communion.



Both are about repentance.

33