

The Gables – Repentance

Introduction:

Breakable Joke: There was a very gracious lady who was mailing an old family Bible to her brother in another part of the country. “Is there anything breakable in here?” asked the postal clerk. “Only the Ten Commandments,” answered the lady.

Lying Joke: A minister told his congregation, “Next week I plan to preach about the sin of lying. To help you understand my sermon, I want you all to read Mark 17.” The following Sunday, as he prepared to deliver his sermon, the minister asked for a show of hands. He wanted to know how many had read Mark 17. Several went up. The minister smiled and said, “Mark has only sixteen chapters. I will now proceed with my sermon on the sin of lying.”

Confession Joke:

Confessor: I have stolen a fat goose from a poultry yard!

Priest: That is very wrong.

Confessor: Would you like to accept it, Father?

Priest: Certainly not - return it to the man whom you stole it from.

Confessor: But I have offered it to him and he won't have it.

Priest: In that case you may keep it yourself.

Confessor: Thank you, Father.

Last Minute Joke: A minister waited in line to have his car filled with gas just before a long holiday weekend. The attendant worked quickly, but there were many cars ahead of him. Finally, the attendant motioned him toward a vacant pump. “Reverend,” said the young man, “I’m so sorry about the delay. It seems as if everyone waits until the last minute to get ready for a long trip.” The minister chuckled, “I know what you mean. It’s the same in my business.”

Source for all of the above jokes:

<http://www.jollynotes.com/christian-humor-christian-jokes-clean-jokes-best-christian-jokes/>

Dialog between Rick & Donna:

Rick: Donna, what does repentance mean to you?

Donna: Hmm! I’m not sure. I think it means to say you’re sorry if you get caught.

Rick: If you get caught?

Donna: Yeah! Why should you say you’re sorry if you don’t get caught?

Rick: Interesting. Proverbs 5:21 says, “For your ways are in **full view** of the Lord, and he examines all your paths.” So, God sees everything you do, or ever have done. You can’t hide anything from God.

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Donna: Everything?

Rick: Yes. Everything. He even knows your thoughts. Psalm 139:2 says, “You know when I sit and when I rise; you perceive my **thoughts** from afar.”

Donna: So, he know everything good and bad I’ve ever done, or ever thought?

Rick: Yes.

Donna: I’m in trouble then.

Rick:

- Yes. We all are. Repentance means to turn away from the evil we have done, recognize that we cannot erase what we’ve done by ourselves, ask God to forgive us, ask those we have hurt to forgive us, and then stop doing whatever it was we were doing that was sinful.
- **Jeremiah 31:19** says, “After I strayed, I **repented**; after I came to understand, I beat my breast. I was ashamed and humiliated because I bore the disgrace of my youth.” Have you ever done anything sinful or stupid when you were young? We all have, haven’t we?

Donna: Well, I haven’t done anything that bad. I mean, I’ve never murdered anyone.

Rick: Luke 5:31-33 says, Jesus answered them, “It is not the healthy who need a doctor, but the sick. I have not come to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” In other words, Jesus is not reaching out to those who are righteous in their own eyes, but to those who acknowledge that they are sinners. The first step to repentance is to acknowledge that you aren’t righteous before a holy God. Please read what the first beatitude says.

Donna: Matthew 5:3 says, “Blessed are the poor in spirit for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.”

Rick: “Poor in spirit” refers to those who are sorry for their sins. Romans 6:23 says, “For all have sinned and fallen short of the glory of God.” So, none of us are good enough to stand before God on our own. We’ve all fallen short. Romans 3:23 says, “The wages of sin is death...” Death means spiritual death, or separation from God for all eternity in hell. In Matthew 5:48, Jesus said, “Be perfect, as your Father in Heaven is perfect.” Therefore, we’re all in trouble. The penalty for not standing perfect before God is hell.

Donna: What are we to do? Even I’m not perfect.

Rick: That’s right. But God has the antidote to our problem. He sent his one and only son, Jesus, to die on the cross to pay the penalty for our sins. All we have to do is repent and believe.

Donna: Repent and believe? That’s so simple.

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Rick: Yes. It's so simple that a child can do it. But most people aren't willing to admit that they've done wrong, or they want to fix the problem themselves by doing enough good works to make up for the bad things they've done. It doesn't work that way. James 2:10 says "For whoever keeps the whole law and yet stumbles at just one point is guilty of breaking all of it."

Donna: I don't understand. I'm guilty of breaking all the law if I break just one part?

Rick: Yes. I'm not saying you would, but suppose you were sent to prison for something relatively minor; let's say, filing a false tax return. What would you be called?

Donna: A prisoner.

Rick: What are the murderers, rapists, thieves, swindlers, and drug dealers called who are in prison with you?

Donna: Prisoners.

Rick:

- So even the littlest sin still makes you a lawbreaker in God's eyes.
- Ezekiel 18:30 says, "Therefore, you Israelites, I will judge each of you according to your own ways, declares the Sovereign Lord. **Repent!** Turn away from all your offenses; then sin will not be your downfall." Do you want to be sure that sin is not your downfall? Repent.
- Two verses later, in Ezekiel 18:32, God says, "For I take no pleasure in the death of anyone, declares the Sovereign Lord. **Repent** and live!"
- Jesus said in Luke 13:3, "But unless you **repent**, you too will all perish.
- A few verses later, in Luke 15:7, Jesus says, I tell you that in the same way there will be more rejoicing in heaven over one sinner who **repents** than over ninety-nine righteous persons who do not need to **repent**.
- Donna, please read the parable of The Rich Man and Lazarus from Luke 16.

Donna: Luke 16:19-31:

¹⁹ "There was a rich man who was dressed in purple and fine linen and lived in luxury every day.

²⁰ At his gate was laid a beggar named Lazarus, covered with sores ²¹ and longing to eat what fell from the rich man's table. Even the dogs came and licked his sores.

²² "The time came when the beggar died and the angels carried him to Abraham's side. The rich man also died and was buried. ²³ In Hades, where he was in torment, he looked up and saw Abraham far away, with Lazarus by his side. ²⁴ So he called to him, 'Father Abraham, have pity on me and send Lazarus to dip the tip of his finger in water and cool my tongue, because I am in agony in this fire.'

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²⁵ “But Abraham replied, ‘Son, remember that in your lifetime you received your good things, while Lazarus received bad things, but now he is comforted here and you are in agony. ²⁶ And besides all this, between us and you a great chasm has been set in place, so that those who want to go from here to you cannot, nor can anyone cross over from there to us.’

²⁷ “He answered, ‘Then I beg you, father, send Lazarus to my family, ²⁸ for I have five brothers. Let him warn them, so that they will not also come to this place of torment.’

²⁹ “Abraham replied, ‘They have Moses and the Prophets; let them listen to them.’

³⁰ “‘No, father Abraham,’ he said, ‘but if someone from the dead goes to them, they will repent.’

³¹ “He said to him, ‘If they do not listen to Moses and the Prophets, they will not be convinced even if someone rises from the dead.’”

Rick:

- We need to repent now, before it's too late and we find ourselves in hell wishing we had repented while we had the opportunity.
- 2 Peter 3:9 says, “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. Instead he is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to **repentance**.”
- Revelation 3:18-20 says: I counsel you to buy from me gold refined in the fire, so you can become rich; and white clothes to wear, so you can cover your shameful nakedness; and salve to put on your eyes, so you can see. Those whom I love I rebuke and discipline. So be earnest and repent. Here I am! I stand at the door and knock. If anyone hears my voice and opens the door, I will come in and eat with that person, and they with me.
- God is rooting for you to repent. He loves you and wants you to have a relationship with him. If you haven't already done so, I hope you'll repent today.