



REPAINT AND THIN NO MORE

True Repentance

Roger Loomis

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A humorous play on the word repent recently came to mind. A man was hired to paint his neighbor's home, and bought the necessary paint. However, he miscalculated the right amount to provide good coverage and began to thin the paint way too much. Suddenly, a voice from heaven brought a reprimand, "I am not pleased with you. Repaint and thin no more!"

William Booth, founder of the Salvation Army, gave a prophecy regarding the end time church that I fear has largely come to pass. It includes a warning that many will not repent and therefore not be truly born again. He said, "The chief danger of the twentieth century will be religion without the Holy Spirit, Christianity without Christ, forgiveness without repentance, salvation without regeneration, politics without God, and heaven without hell."

Allow me to touch on the idea of forgiveness without repentance; because frankly, there is no forgiveness without repentance. To repent means to think differently about our sin, to change our mind and make a 360 turnaround. It means to forsake what we're doing that's contrary to God's Word.

In my travels as a hospice chaplain, I met all "makes and models" of American religiosity. Many today have traded their sacred roots for carnal pursuits and ungodly living, all the while not understanding that real Christianity has nothing to do with religion, but a relationship of the saving kind. Sadly, I met many who treated the true gospel with contempt.

Without apology, the message of salvation is validated by a changed life. Biblical salvation mandates regeneration! The gospel of Jesus Christ is transformational.

Booth's prediction is lived out in lives that are "churchy" but not Christ-exalting. Many grew up in church, but never had a life-changing encounter with Christ. To attend church without meeting the Savior represents a travesty of epic proportion. Deception abounds when people exchange truth for a lifestyle that dishonors the Lord. How sad that many freely discuss their church tradition, but say nothing or little about Jesus.

I heard a man, while talking about the church of his boyhood and youth, use the name "Jesus Christ" in cursing four times. He dropped the F-Bomb several times, and inadvertently used other nasty expletives without remorse. He and his live-in girlfriend have one child, and the home reeked of alcohol.

Booth was right. Forgiveness without repentance brings reproach on the gospel and tells the world that serving Jesus Christ makes no difference in one's life. May God help pastors and church leaders to downplay "churchiness" and lift up Jesus, always providing individuals the opportunity to genuinely repent and be saved.