

HBC Pulpit Curriculum
Christ's Victory: How To Make the End of the Story Your Daily Reality
by Pastor Kurt Gebhards
Ephesians 4:20-22

This material is designed to help give you ideas for discussing the sermon profitably and applying the truth effectively. We trust the LifeGroup leaders to choose the questions that will be most helpful to their groups. Don't try to complete ALL the study nor the questions. Offer extra resources and guidance for those interested to study on their own.

Make Repentance of Sin Your Reality Today

Introduction

Open by having three people read each of the following: Jn. 16:33; Rom. 8:37; Eph. 4:20-22. Take some time to interact as a group to firm up their grasp on the imagery of victory and overcoming sin in this life. After interacting ask, "Why do Christians often live in an alternating reality of victory and defeat?" Call the group together to pray that you would fully grasp the offer of victory now and the first step to that end of repentance.

1. The Lord Jesus Christ, your personal discipler

Pastor Kurt referred to the black backdrop of our sin served up in Eph. 4:17-19, How does this portion picture the condition of one in need of repentance? Paul goes on to give us hope with the phrase "that you walk no longer just as the Gentiles walk...". This would suggest that victory is available now. Explain.

Paul highlights three elements of the school of Christ in verses 20 and 21. Expand on our three duties if we are going to be good students in the school of Christ. [hint: find 3 words describing a student's duty in vss. 20 & 21] Pastor Kurt shared, "*Jesus Christ wants to be your personal discipler*"- Why do most people miss out?

2. The first lesson in the school of Christ: repentance

Pastor Kurt identified the theme of repentance found in Jesus' ministry and the apostles' ministry [Matt. 4:17; Acts 17:30] How does the identification, from the beginning of our New Testament, of the priority of repentance affect our priorities as Jesus' followers?

A. Repentance is your responsibility. Read verse 22 and identify the word that points the finger at us. What are some of the ways that we deflect responsibility for our sins? One of Kurt's pet peeves is sticky hands. It illustrated how our old self's desire to corrupt us? Discuss it. The action that can "unstick" us is to "lay aside" the old self. Compare Rom. 13:12 and 2 Pet. 2:22 and explain what is going on in us. Pastor Kurt made a point that the work we do is continuous. Why is that so important?

B. Corruption is your fault. Spend a moment sharing how good we are at putting the blame on others. Where does the real problem lie? "*There is an ongoing corrupting work of our hearts by our desires*".

Read verse 22 again and respond to the illustration of the rotten cucumber. Make the text connection and discuss the implications of it, "Can you be deceived and know it at the same time? What does this suggest about great importance of incorporating accountability in our Christian experience?"

3. Five steps to Biblical repentance [briefly review 2 Cor. 7:7-14 and underline the 16 markers of true repentance]

Each of the steps of repentance was defined for us. Describe what each should look like in real life.

- 1- Regret over consequences – *Biblical or godly sorrow*. 2 Cor 7 describes an inadequate sorrow. What's that?
- 2- Realization of guilt – *the behavior ends*. Why is this an inadequate stopping point for real repentance?
- 3- Responsibility over sin – *taking ownership*. See Psa. 51:4 Why is it important to say "it's my fault"?
- 4- Risk exposure – *Openly pursue forgiveness*. How often you actually do this can verify God's work in you.
- 5- Restitution of wrong – *Pay it back*. Lk. 19:8 suggests the level of restitution. Why is that important?

Pray for us to practice God's truth in our lives. Pray for people with willing hearts to volunteer to serve and for God's leading regarding our next pastors, specifically for Worship and Family ministry.