

Getting Out of Town
A message delivered to
MAYER COMMUNITY CHURCH

August 15, 1999

TITLE: Getting out of town!

TEXT: Acts 3:19-21

THEME: Salvation

THRUST: Refreshment is a result of conversion

INTRODUCTION:

Last week we had the privilege of having Luke Upson minister to us.

At the close of his message, he referred to 2 Chronicles 7:14

2 Chronicles 7:14 If my people, who are called by my name, shall humble themselves, and pray, and seek my face, and turn from their wicked ways; then will I hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin, and will heal their land (KJV).

That passage is speaking *to* God's people.

It is speaking of a *two-step* process ...

Step-One: Humility, prayer, and seeking God's face.

Step-Two: Turning from our wicked ways.

Christians today have become very adept in the *one-step*.

We do not really believe there is a need for *step-two*

because we are not convinced that our ways are *wicked!*

Wicked – bad or evil;

root – to spoil; to make good for nothing

What are religious people like? "They are like a lot of people sitting around a railroad station thinking they are on a train. Everybody is talking about travel, and you hear the names of the stations and you have got the tickets, and there is the smell of baggage around you and a great deal of stir, and if you sit there long enough you almost think you are on a train. But you are not. You only start to get converted at that point where you get on the train and get pulled out of the station." ~Sam Shoemaker, in a July 1955 speech commemorating the 20th anniversary of the founding of Alcoholics Anonymous. Christianity Today, Vol. 35, no. 2.

Acts 3:17-21

- Requirements for Our Covenant Walk
- Results of Our Covenant Walk

I. Requirements for Our Covenant Walk

- *Repentance*: "to change one's mind"
 - Mind · Heart · *Attitude*
- *Return (NAS)*: KJV-converted.

We are too caught up with the mind-set that dictates conversion is something that happens only once.

There are several points to our error:

We have reserved this word for the activity that needs to take place in the life of a sinner.

“When were you converted?” “At 8 years of age.”

We fail to understand the pure meaning of the word.

It can mean *to turn about* (i.e. initial)
or *to turn again...return* (i.e. subsequent)

We have so incorporated this activity into that of repentance as to make them synonymous.

We say: *Repentance means to turn around!*

This is a *two-step* process:

First: *Repentance is to change one's attitude about sin!*

We can *change our attitude* till the cows come home and never *change* our direction!

Second: *Conversion is to change one's action toward sin!*



There was a cartoon several years ago in the *Saturday Review of Literature* in which little George Washington is standing with an axe in his hand. Before him lying on the ground is the famous cherry tree. He has already made his smug admission that he did it – after all, he "cannot tell a lie." But his father is standing there exasperated saying, "Alright, so you admit it! You always admit it! The question is, when are you going to stop doing it."

Return: “The word means properly to "turn; to return to a path from which one has gone astray; and then to turn away from sins, or to forsake them." It is a word used in a general sense to denote ‘the whole turning to God.’” ~Barnes Notes

II. Results of Our Covenant Walk

- *Removal of our sins*

The expression to "blot out sins" is taken from the practice of creditors charging their debtors, and when the debt is paid, canceling it, or wholly removing the record. The word used here properly refers to the practice of writing on tables covered with wax, and then by inverting the stylus, or instrument of writing, smoothing the wax again, and thus removing every trace of the record. This more entirely expresses the idea of pardoning than blotting does. It means wholly to remove the record, the charge, and every trace of the account against us. In this way God forgives sins. ~Barnes' Notes Bible Commentary

1 Peter 4:1-2 Forasmuch then as Christ hath suffered for us in the flesh, arm yourselves likewise with the same mind [*repentance*]: for he that hath suffered in the flesh has *ceased from sin*; [*conversion*] ² That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the

flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.
If we are still struggling with the same sins of yesterday,
it means that we are still in the station talking about
our destination rather than getting on the train
and leaving those sins behind.

Get on the train & get out of sin-town!

How? **Let...**this mind be in you that was also in Christ Jesus...

- *Refreshment for our souls*

“In order that times of *refreshing* may come from the face of the Lord.”

“*Times of refreshing* means properly ‘breathing’”

Breathing space....

This is what Jesus was referring to when He spoke

to His disciples about “*finding rest unto your souls....*”

Lack of refreshment should signal the same critical situation
as lack of deliverance! Our souls are in trouble!

Too many have looked at their salvation

as a point in time past and are ignoring the warning signs
of both scripture and personal experience.

What must we do?

Change how we think about sin – *attitude*

Change our direction away from sin – *action*



Ephesus: *Repent and do the first works....*

Pergamos: *Repent or I will come and fight against you....*

Thyatira: *I gave her space to repent ... and she repented not....*

Sardis: *Remember ... and repent....*

Laodicea: *Be zealous therefore and repent....*



We *must* also have a corresponding change in our *action*.

We *must return* to the place of our error

and seek God’s face for His perspective!

Return to the time when you became angry with God.

Return to the time when you decided to do it your way.

Return to the time when you began to withdraw

and ignored your Christian responsibility....

Return ... Return ... Return ... Repent and Return to God!

Isaiah 28:12 “... This is the rest wherewith you may cause the weary to rest; and this is the refreshing... ”

“... *yet they would not hear.*”

“He that has ears to hear, let him hear what the Spirit says to the churches.”

CONCLUSION: Hymn #392 *Showers of Blessing*