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THE TWELVE COMMANDMENT
by Paris Reidhead

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Summary: The sermon emphasizes the importance of repentance as the Twelfth Commandment and its role in loving and serving God.

Duration: 47:08 Topics: "Commandment"
Scripture References: Luke 13:3, John 3:3, Acts 2:38, Acts 17:28, Acts 17:30, Acts 26:19–20, Ephesians 2:8–9

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DESCRIPTION

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In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the 12th commandment, which is to love the Lord with all our heart, mind, soul, and strength. He emphasizes that loving God means seeking to please Him and aligning our lives with His will. The preacher highlights the importance of repentance, stating that whenever our attitudes conflict with God's, we should acknowledge that we are wrong and He is right. He also emphasizes the need for a personal relationship with Jesus Christ and the importance of having the witness of the Spirit in our lives. The sermon encourages listeners to fully surrender to God and allow Him to transform their minds and lives.

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CONTENT

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Our theme this evening, the Twelfth Commandment. You understand that there's always great hazard in adding to the biblical numerics. Ten commandments we have, and it's very debatable as to what others should be included.

But I have felt that God has made it clear to us through the teachings of our Lord Jesus and statements of the word in general, that a summary of the law is contained in the commandment, thou shalt love the Lord

thy
God with all thy heart and mind and soul and strength. This, I
believe,
is fair. It's a fair statement of commandment.

This he has truly set forth as his will and purpose and law for us.
And
to love God with all our hearts and minds is to endeavor purpose to
please him. It's that simple.

Whom you love, you seek to please. If you love God with all there is
in
you, then the purpose of your heart is to please God. Love is the
intention to seek the best interests of and the greatest happiness of
another.

And therefore, we are, I believe, correct in saying this is, could be
well called the eleventh commandment. But I am asking you tonight to
stretch your minds and hearts to agree with me, at least for the hour
we're together, that the twelfth commandment is contained here in this
seventeenth chapter of Acts. You may wish to change the numerics, but
you cannot change the fact that it is a commandment of God.

Perhaps if I read from verse 22 through 31, it will give the setting.
Then Paul stood in the midst of Mars Hill and said, Ye men of Athens,
I
perceive that in all things ye are very religious, literally. For as I
passed by and beheld your devotions, I found an altar with this
inscription to the unknown God, whom therefore ye ignorantly worship.

Him declare I unto you. God that made the world and all things
therein,
seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples
made
with hands, neither is worshipped with men's hands as though he needed
anything, seeing he giveth to all life and breath and all things, and
hath made of one blood all nations of men who are to dwell on all the
face of the earth, and hath determined the times before appointed and
the bounds of their habitation, that they should seek the Lord, if
happily they might feel after him and find him, though he be not far
from every one of us. For in him we live and move and have our being,
as
certain also of your own poets have said, for we are also his
offspring.

For as much then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think
that the Godhead is like unto gold or silver or stone, graven by art
and
man's device. In the times of this ignorance God winked at, but now
commandeth all men everywhere to repent, because he hath appointed a

day

in the which he will judge the world in righteousness by that man whom he hath ordained, whereof he hath given assurance unto all men, in that

he hath raised him from the dead. And thus our text for the evening is the thirtieth verse, Now God commandeth all men everywhere to repent.

The word repent is the heart of what we shall call the twelfth commandment. He has commanded, and his commandments have not been amended or rescinded or abrogated in any sense. It is tonight as binding

as it was when God first commanded it.

The word repent is probably one of the least understood, most abused words in Christian vocabulary, and I believe that we, especially as we face this time of meeting with our brother Gestwein, owe it to ourselves

to find out whether or not we are obeying the twelfth commandment.

Let's

go back for just a moment and see the background of the word. Let's look

first to the first use of it in the New Testament when John appeared before his generation and said, There came one after him, preferred before him, the latchet of whose shoes he was unworthy to loose, and that he had thus been sent to prepare the way for the one who was to come, who would baptize them with the Holy Ghost and with fire.

This preparation was embodied in the word repent. Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand. Repent.

Over and over again was this message announced to the people of Israel.

And remember that it was so important to the Lord that three times it is

given in the New Testament. Three times is this message of John embodied

in Matthew, Mark, and Luke.

It must be that the Spirit of God was extremely desirous that you should

understand how important this is. Isn't it interesting that only once it's stated you must be born again? Not, of course, that this is less important than repentance, but God wanted you to understand that it is imperative that repentance be understood before the new birth is possible. John gave this message continually, and when our Lord came, he

preached his head John, saying, Repent.

In Luke, the 13th chapter, verses 3 and 5, he has gathered the people around him and is commenting on the events of the day, and he makes

this

statement. Nay, but I say unto you, except you repent, you shall all likewise perish. Our Lord has made repentance the condition for, the inescapable condition for, salvation, saying that unless one repents, they certainly will perish.

We find that this was not only the message of John the Baptist and the message of the Lord Jesus, but also after Pentecost, when the Spirit of

God was poured out upon the 120 in the upper room, the message that God

gave Peter to deliver to his generation was, Repent and be baptized, every one of you. It hadn't changed. I recall years ago being told by some of my teachers that repentance was Jewish, that it had no relevance

to the church dispensation, and that it was not to be preached, for if anyone preached repentance, now they were actually displaying their ignorance and saying that they did not know or understand that the difference between law and grace, and they could not rightly divide and

discern the word of truth.

But this was always prefaced by such a statement as, Well, after all, when Paul came, all he said was, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ. And that sounded good and was repeated by me and others of us who were so instructed. Without criticism or debate, we didn't certainly want to make the mistake of confusing dispensations, and so we would agree with

our teachers that repentance had no place or part or importance now.

But you know, it's amazing what happens when you begin to read the word

of God and forget some of the lessons that you've had from earnest men who taught you. And this particular teacher that was so influential in my life used to say repeatedly, Now, students, remember, truth is not what you've been taught. And I used to ponder that and question it a little, and then he would repeat it again.

Now, remember, truth is not what you've been taught. What you've been taught may be true, but it's not true because you've been taught it.

You

always have to check what you've been taught against the word of God, for the word of God is true.

And many times your teachers have derived some opinion from the word that will not stand closer scrutiny and comparison. And I didn't know that it would be one of the things he emphasized most that I would have

to bring to that test, but such was the case. And recall reading carefully the word repentance in the book of Acts and discovered that

here on Mars Hill the Apostle Paul was speaking to a group of Gentiles and pagans, and he says, God has commanded all men everywhere to repent.

And I didn't see anything in it about belief. This was no contradiction.

In the previous chapter to the Philippian jailer, he'd said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved.

But obviously, if you read it carefully, you'll see that what the Bible means by repentance had been pretty well evidenced by the jailer. And I suggest to you that when you find people in the condition of the jailer that you just forget about talking about repentance, and you say, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, obviously they'd been prepared. There had been clear evidence of repentance.

But when Paul stood before a hard-faced, stony-visaged company of philosophers who were skeptical of everything Jewish and everything Christian, certainly, and began to declare unto them the fact that God in whom they lived and moved and had their being was concerned that they know him, but the condition for knowing him was to abandon their idols and their altars, and that God had commanded all men everywhere to change their mind and repent, that's the meaning of the word, that there seemed to be good evidence that even by this time Paul hadn't changed his message at all. And then subsequently, in chapter 20, when Paul is leaving the Ephesian elders and bidding them goodbye as he departs and commends to them the ministry of the months he spent with them, you recall what he said, I was with you night and day, from house to house, teaching repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ. And by that time he certainly hadn't changed.

And then when we find he's standing before King Agrippa giving an account of his years of ministry, saying that the Lord had appeared to him on the road to Damascus, that he'd heard the voice saying, Stand upon thy feet, for I have appeared unto thee for this purpose, to make thee a minister and a witness, to turn them from darkness to light, and from the power of Satan unto God, he then could conclude by saying, Wherefore, O King Agrippa, I was not disobedient to the heavenly vision, but I delivered to them of Damascus and Jerusalem, the Jews and the Gentiles, how that they must repent and bring forth works meet for

repentance. And thus throughout the entire ministry of Paul, this has become the cardinal message that he has given to all whom he has met. Repent.

Since we are establishing it as the twelfth commandment, it's obvious, therefore, that we cannot overemphasize the fact that it is the prerequisite for forgiveness. Let me say it again. Repentance, therefore, is absolutely essential.

The message of John, the message of the Lord Jesus, the message of Peter, the message of Paul, the continuous message throughout the Word, and finally summarized when Peter writing says, God is not willing that any should perish, but that all should come to repentance, indicating that it is the essential condition for forgiveness. What do we mean? If this is so terribly important, so important as to occupy the place we've ascribed to it from the Word, what do we mean by repentance? And to this congregation at least, it will bring back memories of messages in the past when I tell you that to repent is essentially to change one's mind. Mind standing not just for a mental whim or a fancy or an opinion, but mind standing for the fix or the direction of the entire personality.

The illustration that I use in my own thinking to isolate what I mean here by mind is the kind of conversation that you'd have when three people are talking and one says, come on, Mary, come on with me. And she says, no, I'm not going to go. And finally, Betty says, oh, leave her alone.

Mary's made up her mind. What do you mean made up her mind? That morning when she got up, she sort of combed her mind the way she would comb her hair and set it with pins and it can't be changed. No, that isn't what's meant at all.

That's absurd. What's meant is she's decided. And mind stands now for the entire personality being brought to the point of decision and choice.

And this is what we mean when we speak of repentance being a change of mind, a change of choice, a change of direction. It's exactly what's meant by the word metanoia that's translated repentance. Unfortunately,

it's a Latin-derived word that has no meaning in Anglo-Saxon.

Repent means nothing at all in the language of our fathers, in English or in Anglo-Saxon, the language we speak, has no meaning at all unless we translate it into Anglo-Saxon from the Latin to which it's been brought to us. It's so grievous to me that such a good word had to suffer so along the way, because in its very Latin derivation it has the idea of penitence or sorrow, but in its Greek connotation it means a change of mind or a change of will, a change of direction. So it suffered by translation.

As we pointed out in the past, we're indebted to good Jerome, the dear man who is said to have pulled a lion to the thorn from the lion's foot, certainly put a thorn into the foot of the church, when he mistranslated the word metanoia by the word repentance. He has caused the church to limp through the centuries by this. He didn't know a great deal of Latin, and so translating from the Greek into the Latin, he took this word, repent, instead of another word that might better have expressed the Greek idea.

And so today we have the idea of penitence or sorrow associated with repentance. I sometimes wondered if we shouldn't completely abandon the word to its misuse and try to take another word, but even there you're facing the pressure of history and it's necessary, therefore, to continuously seek to redefine the word in term with the meaning of Scripture. Years ago, as a young prejudice preacher, because of the teaching that I'd had, a book was put into my hand by a seminary professor from Louisville, Kentucky, the meaning of repentance.

I read it, but I read it with anger. In every page I got more angry. As the pages wore, I just felt as though somewhere along the line I was going to have to go to Louisville and set this man straight.

More unmitigated nonsense on that book, page by page, the accumulated weight was not evidence. But you know, by the time I finished the book, I began to realize that he's right, I'm wrong, and I'd better find out about it. And so I allowed my prejudices to suffer the pressure of investigation, went back to the word of God, and I found that the word repentance means, as we pointed out, a change of mind or will or direction.

And of course, it has to do with the matter of who's going to rule in your life. This is the point of conflict. This is the point of issue.

This is the point that Paul is making. You see, as long as their God is a God of stone, then they can be boss because the stone doesn't. If he's a God of wood, then they can be boss because the wood won't.

And always you discover that in the matter of sin, it's self on the throne, and all the gods that have been created by all the artisans that have carved and molded have been substitutes for ego, for self, for I. And essentially, therefore, the essence of sin is self-will or self-rule. It's this, of course, that was Satan's suggestion to Eve, ye shall be as God. And a sinner is, down the centuries, none other than the actual lineal and direct descendant to Eve.

And at the age of accountability, the same proposition, breathed now in the very atmosphere, not necessarily communicated by direct apparition of the serpent, is the decision of every one of us that we're going to rule, we're going to choose, we're going to govern. A sinner is a person who, by virtue of his inherited tendencies, his fallen nature and disposition, and the committal of his will at the age of accountability, has decided that he's going to live according to his own rule and make his own pleasure the end of his being. In other words, a sinner is a person who rules his own life.

A sinner is a person who has decided that he's going to be his own God. A sinner is one that, with the people of Israel who face the Lord Jesus Christ on their own soil, had the rashness to say, we will not have this man to rule over us. And down across the centuries since, sinners have been people that have ruled their own lives.

This is the essence of sin. And this may be manifest in any kind of form of idolatry, any form of religious system, but it's always, in its irreducible essence, it gets back to the same thing. The sinner echoes that which was the attitude of the father of sin when he said, I will be like the Most High.

I'll rule, I'll govern, I'll control, I'll direct my life. Now seeing this, we understand why Paul should here, at this particular point, have said as he did to these people, God has in the past winked at your

ignorance, worshipping gold and silver and stone, but now he's commanded every man, everyone, to change his mind, to repent. This is it.

This is what it means. But what's the issue? The issue is that Jesus Christ is the one that he has appointed to judge the world in righteousness. Jesus Christ is God come in the flesh.

Jesus Christ has lived and walked in the paths and plains of Judea. He submitted himself to the law of the Jews. He's died under their cruelty, under the sentence of death they've imposed upon him because he was obedient to the father.

But God has raised him from the dead, signifying by the resurrection that he is the one whom all must serve and who will judge all for their service. And therefore, Paul is saying to the people on Mars Hill, there on the Acropolis by the Pantheon, he's saying to them, all of these idols, all of these altars, all of these images that you have, are but a testimony to the fact that you have multiplied your deities to escape submission to the one God of heaven and earth. And this God is Jesus Christ.

And if you're to ever escape from death and all that that would mean, you must submit to Jesus Christ. You've got to abandon these idols, these gold images, these stone altars. They've got to be left behind completely.

Now this is what was meant by repenting in this context. God has winked at your idolatry, he hasn't raised the issue of before, but now he sent me, said, Paul, I'm here and I'm here to tell you that that pile of stone and that image and that altar is nothing but the trash of which it's made. It has no meaning at all.

God is not there. In him you live and move and have your being. He's the omnipresent, eternal, all-powerful being for whom you seek and grasp after and grope after, said Paul.

And if you're to ever know him, then you've got to abandon this God and that idol and this deity and you've got to leave them all. And you've got to make an unqualified, uncompromised abandonment to the man whom he's appointed to judge the world, Jesus Christ. This is what repentance

means.

A change of mind about who's going to be God in your life, because that's the point of conflict. There's no conflict in heaven, they all know who's God there. And there's no conflict in hell, they all know who's God there.

The only point of conflict is in your heart, in the heart of man, who said, I will do what I want to do. The open defiance of the rightful governor. And therefore, repentance means that one has to abandon all idols.

This is exactly what Paul said when he wrote to the church at Thessalonica. He said, you have turned to God from idols to serve the living and true God and to wait for his Son from heaven. This is repentance.

To turn to God from idols is to turn from all self-rule and government as a matter of principle, a matter of government in the life. Obviously, it can't be fulfilled any more than a person taking a marriage vow. Someone says, well, if I won't know I'm saved or repented until I've perfectly obeyed Christ, how could I ever know? Well, no, it's not that at all, any more than a marriage service.

You said you promised to love, honor, and cherish. If anyone were to say, well, you see, I do and I don't, I don't think we'd go through with the ceremony. I think it would sort of stop right at that point.

We'd have to say, well, we just dismiss this now, and when you've made up your mind, we'll see what we will do. But right now, it's going to have to stop. Or if someone were to say, well, yes, you see, I do, but on the other hand, I've got lots of other friends, and any such absurdity as that would just mean that automatically the service would have to stop.

There has to be a commitment. Well, how do I know that how I'm going to feel in two weeks or six months? This is a pretty big thing to say. Isn't it strange we don't have any questions about it? You say, well, look at all the marriages that are broken up.

Yes, I know that, but look at all that aren't too. That's something to consider as well. How many people in good faith have said, yes, I do, and they meant it, and yet they didn't realize that down the road there'd be sickness, there'd be poverty, there'd be grief, there'd be all the things that would come along.

But you see, they'd made a commitment, the commitment which they were willing to implement step by step. And this is what's meant by initial repentance. A commitment to the Lordship of Christ that you're prepared to implement step by step, made in good faith and in good conscience.

A tearing down of the idols, an abandonment of the deities, an abdication of the altars. And a commitment to Jesus Christ. Repentance, therefore, in its essence, is a turning to God, God the Son, from idols to serve the living and true God.

We must understand that this is what's involved. Our Lord has put it in his own words in Luke 14, when he has said, if any man hate not his father and his mother, his brother and wife, and his own life also, he can't be my disciple, saying that the Lordship of Christ has to transcend all human loyalties. Again, he said, if any man does not forsake all that he hath and does not take up his cross and come follow me, he can't be my disciple.

He's further illustrating repentance by saying the Lordship of Christ has to transcend all plans that one has made. And he concludes by saying if he doesn't forsake all that he hath, he can't be my disciple. And he's indicating here that the Lordship of Christ has to transcend all personal possessions.

So it's just a matter of recognizing that somebody else is to be in charge. Up until this point, you've been in charge, but to receive Jesus Christ is to receive him as Prince and Savior, as Lord and Christ. And to repent, therefore, is to change your mind by saying, I'm not going to rule anymore.

He is. I'm not in charge anymore. He is.

He's going to tell me what to do, and I'm going to do it. It's just the very opposite. We will not have this man to rule over us.

We will have this man to rule over us. It's just that different. This is what repentance is in its principle.

Now, if you see this, then you can examine your heart and say, well, have I really repented? Has there come a time in the past when I've

actually changed my mind about who is to be boss, or did I just want to accept Jesus as kind of a ticket to heaven while I could still go on doing what I wanted to do? Has he given me sort of a carte blanche credit card so that I can have heaven and all of this as well? Well, this certainly is a far piece from anything that the Bible teaches. It teaches us that to receive Jesus Christ is to receive him as a person, and that person is one who is both sovereign as well as Savior. We are receiving him as the one who's to rule as well as the one who's to deliver us from hell.

So except you repent, that is, except you change your mind about who's to rule, you will perish. You can't have his saviorhood until you've embraced his sovereignty. You can't cut him in two, in other words, and say, well, I like to have somebody that'll keep me out of the flame, so I'll take Jesus as Savior, but I don't want anybody to interfere with my rights, my life, my plans, so I won't take him as sovereign.

No, you can't do that. The liberals cut him in two halfway, you know, say, well, we don't like this one who's God and man, we're just going to take a nice man that's a good teacher and an example. So they put a Dutch door, if you please, into their church, and you don't need the upper part, you just can slide in underneath.

But sometimes I'm afraid evangelicals may put in a French door. They just open the right hand side, well, I'd like to have a, I'd like to have a Savior, but I don't want to have anybody bothering me, and so I'll accept him as the Savior now, and I'll accept him sovereign, no, five or six years from now at a summer conference. Now, this just doesn't work, friend.

This just isn't the Bible at all. If thou shall believe on the Lord, the Lord Jesus Christ. Well, now, let's settle that.

Let's get that clear once and for all, fix it, and then proceed to share this when we talk to sinners. When you talk to an unsaved person, how do you face them? Perhaps you don't talk, but you should be, because he said, after that the Holy Ghost has come upon you, ye shall be witnesses unto me, and all of his grace in your life is to make you a witness. What do you say to this? What's it mean? They say, well, what does it mean to believe on Jesus? Do you say, well, it just means to agree that

what the Bible says is so? You're misleading them.

It means more than that. It means to receive a person. You can't receive
a person from a page.

You can read about the person in a page, but you can't receive a person
from a page because he's not the page, he's a person. Well, who is this
person? The page tells you. But the page tells you that he's God, that he's been exalted by the right hand of the Father, that he sits upon a throne, and that he pervades the universe by his presence in the Holy Spirit, and that you receive this person, and he'll come into your heart, and salvation is this person come into your heart.

And so you can't cut this person in two. You have to receive him as he's
presented. It's just as easy to say to a sinner, look, it means an absolute abandonment to the sovereignty of the Son of God, as well as an
absolute trust in the sufficiency of his sacrifice.

And just as many people are going to take that as will take the other. But the difference is that you winnow him on the outside instead of the
inside. And this is the message that God wants you to give in our day, in our generation.

I'm convinced that this is the only message that God has intended to be
associated with the gospel. It's just as easy to face the person with what's meant now as later. I believe that we therefore should not say, just put it this way.

Here is the door of the tabernacle. There's the panel of blue, the heavenly dweller. There's the panel of white and fine twine linen, the sinless man.

There's the panel of red, the sacrifice. And there's the panel of purple, of the sovereign. And he says, I am the door.

I am the door. And this is the picture of who he is. He's the eternal God by whom all things were made.

He's the sinless man. He's the all-sufficient sacrifice. And he's the ruling sovereign.

Now you can't say to a sinner, now come up. It's like a cafeteria. Pick

the panel you want to go through.

No, that won't work. Because he can't take the red one and say, well, I don't want the white or the blue, the sky. It's impossible.

It's a person they're receiving. And this is what's involved with repentance. This person must rule as well as save.

He may have not only made the world, but he'll remake you. And you're presenting Jesus Christ. We preach Christ.

Christ is salvation, and he that has the Son has life. We don't preach a formula. There are certain truths that become simple and clear, but we're not preaching a formula.

We're preaching a person. A person that comes into your heart, making you alive. And when he's there, you know it.

For he that believeth on the Son of God hath the witness within himself.

But he doesn't come in until we've repented. Now you may have never even heard the word repentance and he came in.

I'm not concerned about your vocabulary. I'm concerned about your attitude. And if you repented and didn't know how to spell it or never heard it, he came in.

If he came in, I'm satisfied. I'm not having you go back and question your past. The only question I'm concerned about is, did he come in? If he came in, then repentance is there.

That's all right. We're clear. Your heart's saying amen.

That's what happened to me. I didn't know about it. I never heard the word.

Couldn't have spelled it if you'd have paid me. But that's what happened. Praise the Lord.

This is what took place. Now I'm satisfied, and you ought to be. Let's not try to remake anything.

But on the other hand, if there's any question or uncertainty, this is the point where you ought to bow. This is the point where you ought to settle it. Who is Jesus Christ and who is he to me? Because it's so extremely important.

It's so extremely important that you should have the witness of the Spirit that you've been born of God, and not just the verse. Oh, how essential it is to crowd people to Christ until he, Christ, tells them they're his. A great harm has happened to good children of God because some well-meaning preacher like myself has said, now do you believe this? Okay, what's that mean? Now you're saved.

And we've usurped the work of the Holy Ghost instead of crowding them to the Lord where he said that they're saved and they come out and say, God told me. We tell them, and then we have to go on reassuring them constantly every week or so or thereabouts. Oh, how much better it is that people be crowded to the Lord until they meet him and then they come out saying, yes, he's met me and I know he's met me.

Well, how will they know? Look, this one whose voice fills the universe can fill the redeemed heart. Don't penalize him. He can tell you, he that believeth on the Son of God knows within himself.

That's all it means. He just knows. Why is it so important? Well, friend, how are you ever going to have full fellowship with God if you haven't had beginning fellowship with God? If you haven't heard in the first place that you're his child from him, how are you ever going to know anything further about him? If all your life you've based your thing on what was told you by a preacher, an evangelist, the rest of your life God's going to be nothing but someone that told you, someone says, well now you're filled with the Spirit, so you go out on the same basis.

You've got to meet God. God wants to be met. God wants to be known.

Not just have someone tell you you've met him. You meet God and you know it. Therefore, it's imperative if you're to know God and walk with him that you understand that the twelfth commandment wasn't something that you obeyed at a point and forgot about.

Any more than love the Lord thy God is something you did one day and then promptly forgot about. Repentance is a continuous commandment that must be repeatedly obeyed. It has to be carried with you, just as two and two is a law of arithmetic, and my little David knows it perfectly.

Two apples, two oranges make four apples and oranges. He knows it. You can't stump him, get up to one and three and he's sort of perplexed,

but
two and two he's got fixed.

You see, that's settled. Now there's no question about that. That's a law.

That's a law. Oh, that you should understand that repentance is a law. What do you mean a law? Whenever you find out that your attitude is in conflict with God's attitude, who did you say was going to be boss back then? Well, Jesus Christ.

All right. Now, what's the fuss? You're wrong. He's right.

Let's not fuss about that. You've already settled that issue. Why go through this battle every time? So, why do that? Let's get this settled one, shall we? He's going to be boss.

He's going to rule. So, today you're wrong? Why fight anymore? You're wrong. He's right.

Don't you understand what Romans 12.2 means? Oh, listen to it. I beseech you, therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that you present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be transformed.

How? By the renewing of your mind. What do you mean? Listen, when you were that first day, when you said, I receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Savior, and you repented, and he was going to be boss, you didn't realize how many things there were he had to change, and how many deeply ingrained attitudes, how many habits of response, how many principles of operation. You didn't know.

And every one of these things has to go. Everything that has its origin in the old life has to go. So, how are you going to be transformed? By the making new of your mind.

What's this mean? Well, back there at the beginning of the Christian life, you gave Jesus Christ a quick claim deed to your life, and now he comes along and says, I'll take this, please. Your attitude's wrong on that. Well, I'll just put my fist up and fight you, Lord.

That isn't... Now, wait a minute. Who did you say was going to be in

charge? Well, you were, Lord. All right.

Now, I'm saying that's wrong. Let's not go into any fuss anymore.
Let's
just count it that it's wrong.

This is what is meant by the transform, by the renewing of your mind.
At
every step of your pilgrimage, when you find that your previous
attitude
is in conflict with his attitude, you automatically give up your
previous attitude without contest. Why fight it out every time? Let's
get this business as to who holds the sword over, shall we? You recall
when General Lee came into the tent of General Grant, the Appomattox,
that General Lee held out his hand, and General Grant's hand was at
his
side, and he said, your sword first, sir.

Oh, yes. Excuse me. And General Grant took it, and now he said, your
hand.

There couldn't be a hand until there was a sword. He had to be
disarmed
before there could be grounds of fellowship. And there has to come a
point somewhere in your pilgrimage where you just make an
unconditional
surrender, and that ought to be right at the threshold.

Why fight with the Lord Jesus down along the way? Someplace, you've
got
to hand the sword over. Someplace, you've got to hand the scepter
over.
Why be in conflict every Tuesday? The Lord says don't.

So every Tuesday you go through this don't battle again. Let's get
this
finished, shall we, once and for all. He's in charge here.

We've already abdicated the throne. We've already surrendered. This is
what's meant by continued repentance.

This is what's meant by renewing of your mind. Wherever you find your
attitude, your action, the policy of your life, the principle of your
government is in conflict with his. You've already settled about the
issue.

You don't have to fight the war all over again. He's won. And he's won
in this and that and all the rest that you haven't seen.

This is what it means to receive him. He didn't have time at there at

the threshold to tell you everything that was going to be involved.
But
he said I'll take over from now.

And you said yes, Lord, you take over. So now he's taken over. And he says I don't want you to read this.

Well, I don't know what. I don't want you to read. I don't want you to talk.

Well, I don't. I don't want you to talk this way. And you're going to be transformed when your attitude conforms to his attitude and not to the world.

Do you see? Now this is the 12th Commandment in its continued application. But there comes a deepest application to the 12th Commandment. Major Thomas spoke about it when he was here as what he called deeper repentance or the deepest aspect of repentance.

We've been talking about the threshold. We've been talking about the continuous use of the 12th Commandment. But let's go to the deepest aspect.

And what is that? It's when you change your mind about the right to your legitimate and your proper rights. You have legitimate rights, you know.
We've been talking up until now about sin.

Now we're not talking about sin. We're talking about the legitimate and proper use of your life and the substance of your life. For instance, you have a right to your talent.

Previously you may have used it for yourself, but now you want to use it properly, with honest remuneration, for honest service, and you're facing the fact that the Lord is speaking to you, and you've got to change your mind. Up until now you said, well, I have a right to my talent. I've given the Lord the tithe and my offerings, and I don't see any reason for me to, and God is saying, now I want you to give me the right to your talent.

The right to your talent. You know that Paul Kenyon, for instance, was a trombonist, I believe, or whatever it was, some kind of an instrument. I think it was that long pipe you swallow to play it.

You know, that was the one that he had. And he was in Paul Whiteman's band, and someone said, oh, it's wonderful that you're a saint now, Paul. You can use your great talent for the Lord.

He said, no, I can't. You see, the Lord doesn't want this talent, and he won't let me use it. And he's very, very seldom ever used this at all.

Not that it's wrong. It was just that in his case, the Lord was simply saying, I don't want you to use it. And Paul had to be perfectly willing to lay it by.

It was a right. It wasn't anything wrong. It could have been used very happily, very joyfully in the Lord's work.

Certainly Homer Rodeheaver used his gift and his talent wonderfully for God for many, many decades, actually. But when Paul Kenyon was saved, the Lord said no. It was a right to a right that the Lord asked.

Now, I don't know that he'll do that with you, but it certainly is true that you've got to come to the place of our Lord. You see, he was the Son of God by whom all things are made. So for 30 years, the Father said, I want you to be a carpenter.

And he was a carpenter, and he laid aside the right to act in his essential deity of Son. Oh, he could have preached. He could have done miracles.

Look at all the people that might have been healed. But the Father said for 30 years, I want you to lay aside the right to your rights. And so he was the finest carpenter, I'm sure, in Nazareth.

Honest work. I'm sure that the ox yoke he made never galled an ox upon whom it was fitted, and that the tables that he made held together even in the dry season when otherwise they might have shrunk. He used honest wood, and they were well formed and shaped.

But all God the Father said is, I want you a carpenter. He finished his apprenticeship when he was 19, and for at least 11 years he served as a master carpenter in the little village of Nazareth, the eternal Son of the living God, laying aside all rights. And he said, I do only those

things that please the Father.

This is the deeper aspect of repentance. When you change your mind about the right to your rights, the right to your time. You have a right to your time.

You have a right to your leisure. You have a right to your time. But there comes a time when God says, you know, I'm asking you now to relinquish into my hands your legitimate right to time.

You might like time to be alone. You might like to keep certain periods of your day sacrosanct. You might like to keep it free.

On the other hand, there may be times when he'll send you alone for purposes that he has with you. But you see, the deepest aspect of repentance is when you've relinquished the right to your rights, perhaps your reputation. Our Lord had a right to a reputation, but you see, he was willing that his name should become the offscouring of all things.

And even now, 1900 years and more afterwards, it's a curse word. And in their vilest moments of evil thought, men call upon the name of the Son of the living God, because his name has become a term of opprobrium, a curse word. And he was willing to lay aside his name and his reputation.

You have a right to your reputation, but in the will of God, are you prepared to lay aside the right to your reputation? This is the deepest extension of this twelfth commandment. And God commands all men everywhere to change their mind, not only about who's to be boss, not only about the details of their life as they progress, but there comes this deepest aspect of repentance, when you have to change your mind about the right to your rights. And into his nail-pierced hand, you relinquish the right to your time and the right to your talent and the right to your treasure and the right to your body.

You pass it all over to him. All right, Lord. And so you've now given over the last thing you have to give, which is the right to your rights.

And you look into his face and you say, well, I don't understand it. And it'll certainly be on a level far below his, but I understand a little more of what my Lord meant when he said, I do only those things that please the Father. I can do nothing of myself.

Do you understand something of what the extension of this twelfth commandment is? God commands all men everywhere to repent. It's not just an act that you perform. It's an attitude that you require about yourself.

Christ is always right. And wherever there's a conflict, I'm wrong. No use to fight this battle over again.

He has a right to all my rights. And these I resign into his hands. Perhaps this is what people mean by receiving Jesus as Lord.

I don't know. We have such arbitrary things, these words, symbols of meaning mean one thing to you and another to me. But nevertheless, this is what he wants when he asks for repentance.

Not just an event at the threshold, but an attitude in the whole pilgrimage. And reaching clear down into the deepest, most sacred privileges of a human being. Until we can look into his face and say, Lord Jesus, not my will but thine be done.

Here's my body, here's my mind, here's my memory, here's my personality, here's everything of the past and the future. It's all into your hands. This is what I believe we are to understand by the twelfth commandment.

God commands all men everywhere to repent. Notice we haven't said anything about sorrow for sin. We've talked about direction.

We've talked about attitude. We've talked about repentance in the extended meaning of the past, right out through the present and into the future. Where are you? You're somewhere, either outside the door, in the pilgrimage, or you're approaching the place where he's gaining control of the right to your rights.

And it's this he asks for. For as you are prepared to give to him that which is dearest to you, the right to your rights, he's prepared to give himself to you. He asks everything, but he gives everything.

But he can't trust all he is to you until you've trusted all you are to him. When you do, then it's possible. Oh, how wonderful it is to realize

that this is the extension of the word repentance, and it's to be a constant experience, not just a crisis somewhere in the past.

Well, what will you do? There it is, as best you're able to present it.
Do you know these things? Happy are you if you do them. Shall we bow in prayer? Our Father, we've sought tonight to understand something of the scope and meaning of this enormous word, to see it as it applies to our lives, and to realize that thou hast not asked us to repent so much that thou would have us give something up as that thou would have us prepare to receive something.

And that something that we are to receive is the fullness of thyself, the fullness of the Holy Spirit. And oh, what folly it is for us to cling to some little attitude that thou hast condemned as wrong, or to hold to some cherished right to an imagined right, when thou art giving thyself and all thy fullness to us. Grant, therefore, that we may see and understand some of the dimensions of this word repentance that thou hast commanded all men everywhere to do.

May it be, Father, that here I gather to people that are wise that the wisdom is from thyself, and instantly realize that thou art asking us not to give up something precious for nothing, but to give up something that's nothing for that which is precious. For in the light of eternity, all that we abandon is as dross compared to the gold of his presence, the fullness of thyself.

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