

A WORD WITH YOU - By Ron Hutchcraft

8507 – “Changing Your Direction”

Luke 19:7

August 20, 2019

I've flown into the Anchorage, Alaska, airport before, but I've never driven around that airport before. I was returning my rental car, which had to go to one terminal, and I had to race to make my plane at the other terminal. It was still dark, which didn't help in reading the signs at an unfamiliar airport, and somebody else must have my sense of direction. I thought I was heading for the rental car return until suddenly it looked like I was heading out into nothing that looked like an airport at all. As soon as I realized I was going the wrong direction, I knew what I had to do. I turned around as fast as I could and I drove very quickly in the right direction. And hello, whew! I made it!

I'm Ron Hutchcraft and I want to have **A WORD WITH YOU** today about **“Changing Your Direction.”**

The only way I was going to get where I wanted to be was to totally change my direction, because I was lost. That might be the only way you'll get to where you want to be. God has a word for this spiritual 180 degree turn. It's called “repentance”—a word Jesus used a lot, the apostles used a lot, a word we don't hear too often in contemporary Christianity. It's the missing ingredient that's costing us so much of God's power and do much of God's blessing.

A picture of repentance might help us understand what it looks like, which leads us to our word for today from the Word of God in Luke 19:7. Zacchaeus, the crooked tax collector of Jericho, has stolen a lot of money from a lot of people in his town. Much to the villagers' surprise, it is Zacchaeus' house Jesus chooses to go to for lunch.

The Bible says, “All the people saw this and began to mutter, ‘He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.’ But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, ‘Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.’ Jesus said to him, ‘Today salvation has come to this house.’”

Zacchaeus really repented. See, repenting is much more than just feeling bad about some sin and asking for forgiveness. It's a total turn in the other direction! Notice Zacchaeus committed himself to restore whatever his sin had damaged, to make right what he had done wrong. Repentance means setting your life up to change! Like that morning I had at the airport, I had to realize I was going the wrong direction, totally stop going the wrong direction, and aggressively start going the right direction. That's what it took for Zacchaeus to make a new beginning. That's what it will take for you.

God has so much He wants to give you, but He can't; not while you're still hanging onto that sinful attitude, that sinful action, that sinful relationship. The renewing begins when you first renounce what you've been doing, including the burning of all your bridges to that sin. Then you need to do a Zacchaeus and announce the changes you intend to make, especially to the people who are still expecting you to be the same old you. You need to go on record that things are going to change from now on.

I'm going to guess that you might be sensing God's Holy Spirit right now saying to you in your heart, "You know the wrong way you've been going." Well, if you sense that, don't drive another mile in the wrong direction. It's only taking you farther from where you really need to be, where I think you really want to be, and where you were made to be.

Stop, turn around, and drive full speed in the direction of all the power and all the blessings that Almighty God wants to give you.

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