

U-TURN AHEAD

Introduction: Report from road trip

- One church called their congregation to repentance.
 - Repentance – change of thinking followed by action.
 - Parachute illustration
- Change our thinking about God:
 - Autocratic dictator?
 - Whimsical being?
 - Absent from our world?

1. God Doesn't Make U-Turns

- God doesn't make U-turns; he may adapt to circumstances.
- (a) Adam to Noah – about 1,000 years
 - In this period, we see:
 - Adam and Eve's relationship with God.
 - There was a break in that relationship.
 - Promise made.

Genesis 3:15 *And I will put enmity between you and the woman, between your offspring and hers; he will crush your head, and you will strike his heel.*

- Satan will always be the enemy of humanity.
 - One will come who will crush him.
- (b) Humanity's road to Destruction (Genesis 6)
 - People had 100 years to avoid destruction.
 - God's promise still stands.
- (c) Noah to Abraham – approx 500 years
 - God did not do a U-Turn – but Abraham did!
 - Abraham became the father of a nation.
- (d) Abraham to Moses – about 500 years

Exodus 19:3-6 *Then Moses went up to God, and the Lord called to him from the mountain and said, “This is what you are to say to the house of Jacob, and what you are to tell the people of Israel: ‘You yourselves have seen what I did in Egypt, and how I carried you on eagles’ wings and brought you to myself. Now if you obey me fully and keep my covenant, then out of all the nations you will be my treasured possession. Although the whole earth is mine, you will be for me a kingdom of priests and a holy nation.’”*

- (e) Moses to David – about 500 years
 - Israel cemented as a nation under David and Solomon.
- (f) David to Jesus – about 1000 years.
 - The One who will crush Satan’s head is born.

2. The New Kingdom

Matthew 4:17 *From that time on, Jesus began to preach, “Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is near.”*

- Heaven’s reign is near.
- The call given to the Israelites in Exodus 19 is now given to the church.

1 Peter 2:8b-10 *They stumble because they disobey the message – which is also what they were destined for.*

But you are a chosen people, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people belonging to God; that you may declare the praises of Him Who called you out of darkness into His wonderful light.

Once you were not a people, but now you are the people of God; once you had not received mercy, but now you have received mercy.

3. Kingdom of Change

- Christianity should never be stale or musty.
- Truth never changes:
 - Illustration: building projects.

Mark 2:21-22 *“No one sews a patch of unshrunk cloth on an old garment. If he does, the new piece will pull away from the old, making the tear worse. And no one pours new wine into old wineskins. If he does, the wine will burst the skins, and both the wine and the wineskins will be ruined. No, he pours new wine into new wineskins.*

- Don't try to patch up a tear with an untried / unshrunk patch.
 - Wine illustration speaks of flexibility.

Matthew 5:6 *Blessed are those who hunger and thirst for righteousness, for they will be filled.*

- Am I worthy - or thirsty?
 - A Fixer - or open / nothing needs to be hidden.
 - Focused on my destination - or my direction/journey.
- Ethiopian Eunuch story (Acts 8:26-40)
 - He had gone to Jerusalem to worship.
 - He would not have been able to enter the temple.

Isaiah 56:4-7 *For this is what the Lord says: “To the eunuchs who keep my Sabbaths, who choose what pleases me and hold fast to my covenant – to them I will give within my temple and its walls a memorial and a name better than sons and daughters; I will give them an everlasting name that will not be cut off.*

And the foreigners who bind themselves to the Lord to serve him, to love the name of the Lord and to worship him, all who keep the Sabbath without desecrating it and who hold fast to my covenant – these I will bring to my holy mountain and give them joy in my house of prayer. Their burnt offerings and sacrifices will be accepted on my altar; for my house will be called a house of prayer for all nations.”

4. God's heart – our U-Turn

2 Peter 3:8-9 *But do not forget this one thing, dear friends; with the Lord a day is like a thousand years, and a thousand years are like a day. The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise, as some understand slowness. He is patient with you, not wanting anyone to perish, but everyone to come to repentance.*

- The Lord is patient.
 - Concerned for you – not wanting anyone to perish.
- Time for change of thinking
 - U-Turn.