**Scripture Reading:** Exodus 20:1-17 and Acts 17:16-34

**Singing:** 226:1-3 – 41:6-7 – 384:1-5 – 138:1-4 – 102:1-4

Opening questions to ponder

* What would be a good nickname for our type of Christianity?
* When is the last time you repented before God?

**You are commanded to repent**

I. Who is commanding? II. What He is commanding?

**I. You are commanded to repent by God**

A. As Paul addressed the Athenians, he simply is God’s mouth (2 Cor. 5:20)

 1. Paul was moved with righteous anger while in Athens (vs. 16)

 2. This motivated him to ‘dispute’ with Jew and Gentile (vs. 17)

B. Be clear: *God commands* us to repent

 1. What is God and why does He have this authority?

 a. vs. 24, 26: *He your Almighty and Sovereign King*

b. vs. 27, 29: *He is Personal and Living God* with feelings

 c. vs. 25,28: *He is your secret of being alive and taken care of*

d. vs. 30-31: *He is your Judge*

C. Be clear that He has every right to *command* His laws

 1. He commands you *to love Him more than anything/anyone*

 a. Do you love Him?

 b. Do you love me and others as you love yourself?

**II. What is He commanding:***to repent today of all your sins*

A. His command doesn’t allow for delay

B. His command applies to all men of us

C. His command is to repent

 1. This begins in a *fundamental change of your heart – thinking about*

*God – self – sin – holiness – justice – righteousness*

a. How you view God will affect repentance: Rom. 2:4; Is. 55:7-9

 b. yet though God’s goodness and readiness may encourage, unless

you have a personal sense of your guilt and sin, you will not.

 2. Repentance is recognizing your sin and to turn back upon a life or

thought pattern that is godless – God-dishonoring

 3. Repentance includes a confession of particular sins that need to be

named and shamed

 4. Repentance is *more than remorse –some tears – feeling bad*

a. possible to hate the effects of sin without the sin itself

b. to repent is *thorough change of your heart on subject of sin*

 5. Repentance is also a *turning to God for mercy* (Acts 20:21)

 a. though something we do as fruit of Spirit’s power, it has no merit

**Take home thoughts …**

A. God commands repentance of all us: *Let the wicked forsake His ways*

*and the unrighteous man his thoughts and let them return unto Me.*

B. Listen closely to God’s examination of your ways and thoughts

 1. Take inventory of your life using God’s standards

 2. Take each of these sins like soiled garments to God to be washed

C. Make use of the attached *questions* or use the Q & A of the Heidelberg

 Catechism on the Law of God to do your personal examination.

***That everyone consider by himself his sins*** and the curse due to him for them, to the end that he may abhor and humble himself before God, considering that the wrath of God against sin is so great, that (rather that it should go unpunished) He has punished the same in His beloved Son Jesus Christ, with the bitter and shameful death of the cross.

(Quoted from the Lord’s Supper Form)

**Questions to Examine yourself while praying**

Search me, O God and know my heart.

Try me and know my thoughts.

And see if there be any wicked way in me,

And lead me in the way everlasting.

1. Is your prayer-life consistent – regular – meaningful – priority?

2. Is your Bible reading a searching Scriptures to find Christ? Do you

 reserve daily your best time to sit as Mary as His feet?

3. Are you preparing yourself for the worship service as you do for

work or your outings – vacation – school exams? Do you follow up what God calls you to do upon coming home like we expect our children to follow up what we tell them?

4. Are you one of those who *is turning Sunday into a fun day* in which

visiting family or friends takes priority over God and the church fellowship? Am I obeying His command to work to the extreme so that we have no time for anything else on Sunday but to catch up on sleep or on family time or relaxation?

5. Are you still feeding angry or bitter thoughts towards your

neighbors or perhaps you own child/rent or spouse because of their failures? Is that because they hurt your pride in that they didn’t bow down before you and worshipped your will, ideas, thoughts or traditions?

6. Are you a husband neglecting to love your wife as Christ does His

 people? Or lazily neglecting to culture your marriage and your family as the head of your family?

7. Are you still seeking sexual thrills by gazing at pornography feeding your selfish and adulterous fantasies and being unfaithful to God and family?

8. As woman, are you still pushing God’s boundaries in how you dress

 yourself outside of God’s boundaries of decent, modest, concealing rather than flirting, suggestive?

9. Is your mouth used for assaulting and undermining the reputations

of others with vicious gossip, slander, sharing faults? Are you really praying more for them as you talk about them?

10. Are you the man who bullies, shoves verbally and even physically

to throw his weight around to sit enthroned above your wife and kids?

11. Are you a child who is lying to his parents so they won’t find out

what you are doing in internet, at school, with friends or siblings?

12. Are you one of those disgruntled church members who arrogantly

pushes your weight and opinion on others?

13. Are you one of those church members who exist within our church

family as the ‘sand kernels on the sea shore’ without any vital connection or positive involvement with others around you because you either don’t seek it, or you feel too good for it or you simply only come here to soothe your conscience or hold up the reputation or please your parents or church leaders?

14. Can even the most needed and legitimate things wait for God or can

God quickly be pushed off to the side? Do God’s issues matter so much that we voluntarily express our urgency and desire in regular fasting along with our prayers?

15. Are the world’s needy the objects of our compassionate ministry or

are we working hard to provide for over-indulgent and excessive budgets, laying up treasures far beyond what we will ever need on this earth while we place the real poor and needy on a drip feed?

16. Are the conversations we have about others upbuilding? Are we like

God who winked at the evil of His creatures while seeking their repentance in love and kindness? Or do we belong to that class who love to magnify the faults or failures of others while we justify our own frivolous, empty, worldly, shallow, uncompassionate attitudes towards the ‘prodigals or the lost sheep?

17. Is our work – our homes – our yard – our reputation – our

popularity – our hobby – our religious traditions *more important* than actively and practically and really loving God and our neighbors?

18. Are you doing all to obey God’s command to ‘grow in the

knowledge and grace of the Lord Jesus Christ?’ To work out your salvation with fear and trembling? To not be filled with ‘wine’ but be filled with the Spirit, redeeming the time, walking as children of light?

19. How often have we witnessed of God’s grace to outsiders who visit

us in our church rather than giving them the look of disapproval or

the cold shoulder, or worse, the rejection because they were not

exactly coming up to the standard?

20. How is our obedience to wrestle together in prayer for the salvation

of the unchurched through evangelism or mission work?