

Thinking Progressively!

by Wayne Goff

“We all want progress, but if you’re on the wrong road, progress means doing an about-turn and walking back to the right road; in that case, the man who turns back soonest is the most progressive.— C. S. Lewis

C.S. Lewis must be an intelligent man because I’ve said almost the exact same thing in my sermons! “How far down the wrong road can you travel before you wind up on the right road?” I have asked rhetorically. It is abundantly evident that if you are traveling down the wrong road spiritually, then you are not going to find a “fork” down the road which will surprisingly put you back on the right road! You have to turn around, go back and find the beginning.

Repentance is the concept we are speaking of, and people absolutely hate to admit they are wrong and repent. It is not surprising then that when John the Baptist and Jesus came announcing the immanent coming of the Kingdom of heaven that they began with the word **“repent!”** (Matt. 3:2; 4:17). The first gospel sermon preached on the Day of Pentecost in Jerusalem received a positive response from three thousand listeners, and they were told to **“Repent, and let every one of you be baptized…”** (Acts 2:38). The apostle Paul stood on Mars Hill in Athens, Greece, and spoke to the great heirs of Greek wisdom, and proclaimed, *“Truly, these times of ignorance God overlooked, but now commands all men everywhere to repent,”* (Acts 17:30).

Those who gladly received the Good News chose **spiritual progress** — they *repented* of their sinful ways, *turned around* and *followed Jesus*. Dear reader, if you want to find true progress, then do a turn-about on the road you are on and come back to Jesus Christ.

Malachi spoke of the **results** of a generation who would **repent** at the coming of the Kingdom of God. It is worth considering. *“Behold, I will send you Elijah the prophet before the coming of the great and dreadful day of the LORD. And he will turn the hearts of the fathers to the children, and the hearts of the children to their fathers, lest I come and strike the earth with a curse”* (4:5-6). John the Baptist was that “Elijah the prophet.” He preached *“Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand!”* Those who heard him were baptized by John in the Jordan River. They turned away from their sinful ways and turned their hearts back to their beloved children to teach them the ways of the Lord, and to be more like God in the process. What truly mattered became the thing of chief importance to them. Let us think about “progress” and how we can think more progressively. Sometimes in order to go forward we must first turn back and start anew.

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