

Running Scared

When I was about eight years old, back in the dim, dark recesses of history, our family lived in Edmonton, Alberta, Canada, where my dad's new job was to design, build, and run a steel pipe manufacturing plant in Edmonton: Alberta Phoenix Tube and Pipe Co., Ltd.

Because he hobnobbed with politicians and other well-knowns, he met all sorts of people, and one couple who became great friends were Frank and Marilyn Anderson, both Americans as we were, which created a special bond between us. Frank was a professional football player for the Edmonton Eskimos of the Canadian Football League (CFL).

In addition to their football lives, Frank and Marilyn were strong believers and followers of Jesus Christ and attended a small church, McKernan Church of Christ. They bugged my folks to come along, and wouldn't let up until my folks gave in and began attending, taking us kids with them.

The minister's name was Francis Bruce, a man I loved dearly in my childish way of hero worship. He was the one person most responsible for my dad's transformation from a typical American Christian-in-name-only to a committed Follower of God as we know Him through Jesus the Christ, by the Holy Spirit.

Mr. Bruce put up with my dad's challenges and questions for days, probably weeks. And when he made the decision to give his life to God, he did it with all his might, with abandon, as he would say. He truly repented, or turned around, from his life of being a "good" human being who was on a path of business success, to a life centered on God and finding and then carrying out His will.

Gommel's (my dad) life was a great example of what it means to repent, or to turn around, as Ray Bentley points out nearby. He recognized that he was falling down that rabbit hole, chasing after accomplishments and praise from the business world, and then coming to

realize how empty that was.

When he did make that turn-around, he gave to God all of the talents, all of the training, all of his creativity and drive that he had developed all of his life.

The song was written by my mother, Barbara Gommel, and as you may recognize, tells the story of the Prodigal Son, one of Jesus' most famous parables. It, too, centers on turning around, as the son wasted his life in self-indulgence and high living, but then came to see that his life was meaningless and that he must return to his father, who then received him with joy and warmth, the way God will receive us who believe and live for Him.

Maybe someone who reads this is in that situation, living an empty life, stuck in the muck of drugs or alcohol or addictions of many kinds, or just shallow lives that mean nothing. And maybe that someone will see the way to repent and turn to our Father, who greets him (you?) with that wonderful love and joy. Wouldn't that be great?

Linda Gommel



Ray Bentley

This Day

Pastor Ray Bentley
June 21, 1957 - January 4, 2022

Forever In Our Hearts

You can turn around! There is a way. There is hope! "Repent, for the Kingdom of Heaven is at Hand!"
~ Matthew 3:2

When we hear the word "Repent!" we often picture an angry preacher pointing his finger, shouting at us. Or, a street preacher holding a sign.

But here is how I see it: You are falling down a rabbit hole, grasping at the sides of the tunnel to keep from falling. But you don't know how to stop the slippery slide into darkness, as fear and anxiety torment you. Until you hear a voice, louder, stronger than any of the whispering voices pulling you down. This voice says, "Stop! Come to Me! Turn Around!" It is a voice that imparts strength and hope and gives you the courage to skid to a stop and dare to look back at the light at the top of the hole. Flooded with empowering light and hearing that encouraging voice, you find the strength to go back. To turn around and find freedom. Soon you are going faster and faster as the ground levels out and you are running toward light and hope and LIFE!

Did you ever read John Bunyan's Pilgrim's Progress? The scene where the main character, Christian, runs toward the Celestial City is how I see the joy of repentance.

The word gospel means good news and repentance is the first word of the good news.

You CAN turn around! There IS a way out of the dark hole. There is hope!

The Hebrew word for repent is teshuva, which literally means to turn around and go back. Quit sinning and doing what will hurt you. True repentance requires a change of mind, and a change of behavior.

When God calls us to repent, it is with the heart of a father who loves His wandering child.

It is a picture of a loving father waiting with open arms to embrace you and welcome you home, to heal your wounds, and set you on the path of righteousness that will restore your soul.

LVEDA Meeting

(Lucerne Valley Economic Development Association)

Monday, August 25
5:00 pm at the Moose Lodge
on Foothill Road, just west of Tradepost Road.

LVEDA provides an important community forum recognized by County, State, and Local Representatives. Supports real economic development consistent with our rural goals. Opposes projects that harm our land-use integrity and quality of life.

Is something bugging you?
COME TO THE NEXT MEETING TO EXPRESS YOUR OPINION!

On The Lighter Side of Serious Stuff . . . from the Web