



**HILL COUNTRY**  
BIBLE CHURCH | AUSTIN



## **The Message**

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Well good morning. We want to welcome you to Hill Country Bible Church, and for those of you who are joining us at our Steiner Ranch Campus, we're just so excited to be together to study God's word together and to worship Jesus Christ. And so I encourage you to grab a Bible and turn to Matthew 28; that's where we're going to start today.

Now as you're turning there, let me just ask you a question: How many of you in this room are fairly certain that by the end of the evening you will know who won the Super Bowl? (raise of hands) So some of you are not very certain about that, but how many of you are certain that if you wanted to know who won the Super Bowl - I know, I know, your team's not playing. If you wanted to know by the end of the day that you could know? (raise of hands) Okay. Almost everybody in here believes that. How many of you believe that when Jesus Christ came to earth, invested 33 years of his life, communicated to His disciples why He was here, died on a cross in a miserable, bitter, sacrificial death, rose from the grave, spent 40 days after that explaining to the disciples what the future had to hold. Had in store. How many of you believe that at the end of that time the disciples couldn't understand for certain how a person could have confidence that they would have eternal life?

Do you think that Jesus didn't make it clear? Do you think that He would go through all of that so that people would wonder? I, I just have this strange feeling that a lot of people who are sitting here today are probably more hopeful than confident. More kind of believing that, you know, maybe if I keep on the track that I'm on or maybe if I keep doing the right kinds of things, or maybe if I believe hard enough or long enough or - that maybe, maybe it will work out. Maybe I'll have eternal life. But do you believe that Jesus Christ invested what He invested so that you might wonder? So that you might scratch your head and think, 'I hope I know enough.' 'I hope I do enough.' 'I hope somehow He's kind enough or He's gracious enough to me.' You see I think it's very clear in the world of religion today that there are lots and lots and lots and lots of people that are confused. And it just seems - does it seem weird to you? I mean think about. Does it seem weird to you that Jesus would leave us in a cloud of confusion? That He would do so much and then kind of (shrugs shoulders) go to heaven and say, 'Okay guys, I hope you get it. I hope you get it.'

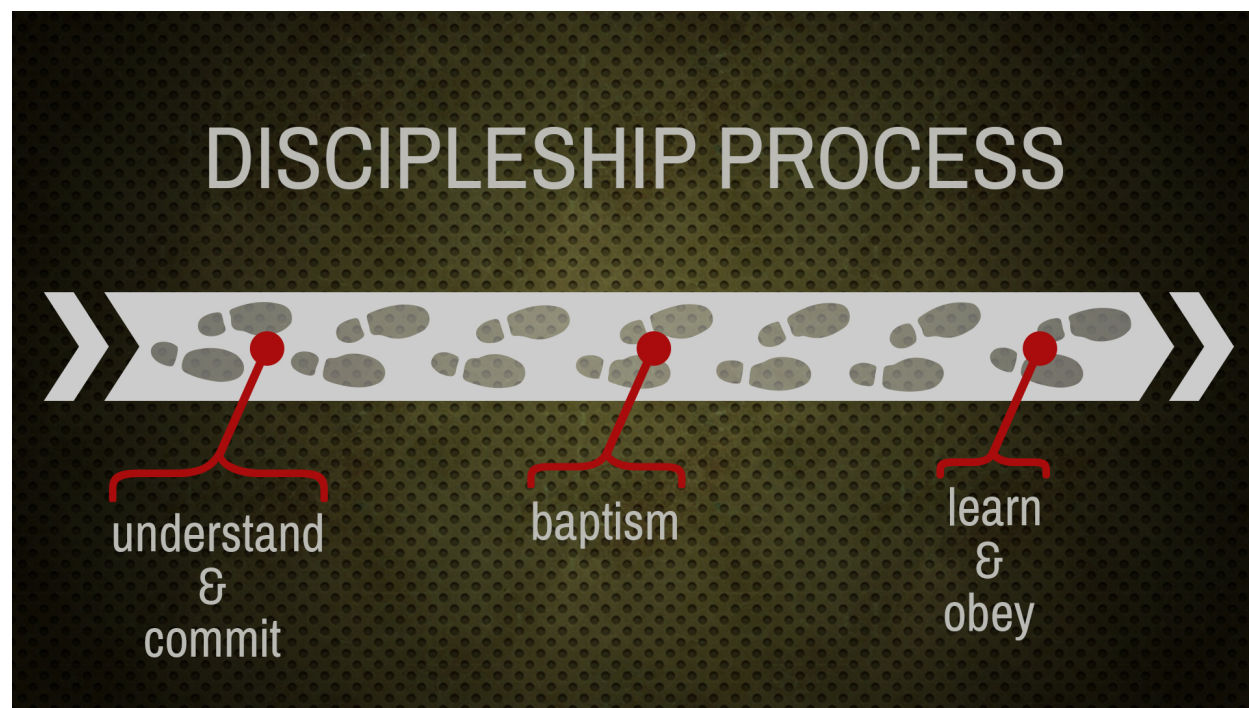
We're in a series called Commissioned, and in that series we're looking at the 40 days from the time Jesus rose from the dead until the time he ascended to heaven, and what did He tell His disciples during that time and what did He tell us? So what do we know about that. And as we've looked at this we saw the first commissioning passage, the upper room the night of His resurrection Jesus walks in and says first of all, 'As the Father has sent me, I'm sending you.' In other words we have the model for the commission. As Jesus Christ came to live among us He's saying I am sending you to go out to live among people. That's the first one. And then last week we looked at Matthew 28 - I had you turn there to start with because I want to refresh your memory on what we talked about.

The second is about a week later Jesus meets His disciples on a mountain in Galilee, and here's what He says in verse 18:

*"Then Jesus came and said to them, All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Therefore, go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you. And surely I am with you always, to the very end of the age."*

And we understood from this commissioning that He was giving us The Method that we are supposed to go into all the nations, every ethnic linguistic group. All 16,302 of them that are on the planet today and make sure that we are making disciples of all those people. So that's the commission. The Method is to go make disciples.

Now last week we talked about the three aspects of making disciples. He says, *"Therefore go"*, or as you are going baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son, and the Holy Spirit. And then teach them to be obedient to, to obey everything I have commanded you. So let me just put a little easy diagram up here on the discipleship process that is very easy to follow.



The discipleship process looks like this. As you are going – that's what the feet represent. As people are traveling through life in the normal course of life, as

you are going, you are supposed to make disciples. Now what's involved in disciple making? First of all people need to come to a place where they understand the basic gospel message and come to a place where they believe it or commit to it. We're going to talk about that today. Once they do that the next step is baptism. They're baptized into a Trinitarian God. In other words, you go public that you belong to the Father, Son, and the Spirit, and you go personal in that you actually identify with the death of Jesus by being buried and raised again. And by the way, if you haven't done that yet as a believer, let us know. Okay? We'll help you take that step.

And then the third part of it is kind of that ongoing process of learning what Jesus said and then obeying it. Learning it and doing it – that's what discipleship is. So if you say 'Well I've trusted Jesus, I've been baptized, I want to be a disciple maker, what do I do?' Well as you are going, that is every day in every way everywhere as you're going you're supposed to be helping people understand what the message of the gospel is and help them commit to it. Once they do you're supposed to be baptizing them into the death of Jesus into a Trinitarian statement, and then you're supposed to keep going with them teaching them to obey. That's how straightforward and how simple it is.

Now the question is what am I supposed to understand and commit to. And that's where Jesus goes in His third commissioning passage. And so if you'll turn over to Luke 24, Luke 24, we pick up with our next commissioning passage. And this is The Message. So what's the message that people need to understand, embrace, and commit to in order to truly have eternal life, to be in a relationship with God. That's what we're going to be looking at today. Now the setting for this particular time takes place really close to the end of the 40 days. In fact it may, some commentators actually believe it may have taken place the night before the Acts 1 passage that we're going to look at next week when Jesus says His final words before He ascends to heaven. We're not exactly sure. Part of the struggle here with Luke's gospel is Luke is trying to wrap up here, so he takes all of these events that took place in that 40 days and he puts them all together, compresses them, and doesn't put the breaks in so you don't know exactly when each part takes place. So it's a little bit confusing, but most, most of us believe that this was toward the end of the 40 days. And here's what he says, starting in verse 44:

*"He said to them, 'This is what I told you while I was still with you:'"*

In other words before my crucifixion this is what I told you:

*"Everything must be fulfilled that is written about me in the Law of Moses, the Prophets and the Psalms."*

So what Jesus was telling them is, “Remember when I used to teach you before, and tell you about what was coming. My crucifixion, my resurrection, my Messiahship -- that’s all in the Old Testament. If you go back to Moses, the first five books, the Pentateuch, and you read that, you read about me, you read about me starting in Genesis Chapter 3 where the Father talks about the seed that’s coming. You read about me in Genesis 12 where Abraham is told that from you will come someone who will bless the nations. You read about me in Deuteronomy where I say there’s going to be someone who’s going to be raised up that’s going to be better than Moses that will come and change everything. You read about me in the Prophets, where the Prophets like Isaiah prophesied a suffering servant that would come 600 years before where the Prophet Daniel predicts to the very week, to the very week. Some 490 years before, to the very week when the Messiah would actually die.” A lot of people don’t even know that. I mean here’s a guy writing almost 500 years before, that’s predicting to the very week when Jesus would die. We’ve got the historical records to prove all of that. And Jesus is saying the prophecy is in the Psalms when David writes in Psalm 22 about this terrible experience he went through. He realized that that’s just exactly parallel to what Jesus experienced on the cross. Even down to the statement *“My God, my God, why have you forsaken me.”* And Jesus took the whole Old Testament, begins to tell them ‘Hey look at this is all talking about me, what’s taking place here is not God’s plan B. This is God’s plan A.’ From the beginning, throughout all of history there’s one central message that everybody needs to understand. It was true in the past, it’s true in the present, and it will be true forever. That’s why it’s crazy that we aren’t confident in this, okay?

But if Satan were trying to confuse a group of people, wouldn’t this be the one thing he would try to confuse. As to how you know that you have eternal life, how you know you could go to heaven. Wouldn’t that be a great win on his part if all of us were scratching our heads wondering, ‘Well what is it really?’ ‘What is it really?’ So it says in verse 45:

*“Then he opened their minds so they could understand the Scriptures.”*

Now it says “he opened their minds,” the phraseology there is not talking about some kind of a supernatural illumination, though I know the Holy Spirit was working there, but basically what he’s saying is he explained it in a way that they could so clearly see it that they went ‘Wow, okay yeah I see it Jesus. It was there all along.’ And then He says this:

*“He told them, ‘This is what is written:’”*



And he says in one sentence everything you really need to know to have confidence that you have eternal life.

*"This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*

That one sentence there, from the lips of Jesus contains the good news that if everyone simply understands that and believes that and responds to that, you have your sins forgiven, you have eternal life. You don't need ten volumes of theology, you don't need any Puritan writers, you don't even need any pastors preaching sermons to you. This is the words of Jesus very clearly, here is the simple gospel.

Now there's certainly a lot more nuances to the gospel that you could understand, but this is the basic thing, okay? This is the basic thing. In fact, John writes in 1 John 5:13:

*"I write these things to you who believe in the name of the Son of God so that you may know that you have eternal life."*

Not hope. You may **know**. And so as we talk about this this morning I just want you to ask yourself the question: Do you have 100% certainty right now that if you drove out of this parking lot, pulled out onto 620 and got run over by a truck, the EMS looked down at your lifeless form and pronounced you dead, that you would be in the arms of Jesus waking up in heaven. Do you have 100% confidence of that, because before this service is over you can know for sure. Okay? You can know for sure.

So what is he saying here? He lays it out very, very straightforward to us here. He says,

*"This is what is written: The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and the repentance and forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all nations, beginning at Jerusalem."*

So very straightforward, it tells us who Jesus is. Jesus is the Messiah, the one sent by God into the world to save the world. It tells us what Jesus did – He suffered, He died on the cross to pay for sins, He rose from the dead. It tells us what we are supposed to do. It says we are supposed to repent. That repentance will be proclaimed in the nations. That's our response, we're supposed to repent and the result of our repentance is the forgiveness of sins,

our sins are forgiven. We're in a right relationship with God. And He's telling them, this is the message of the gospel. Now watch what He says at the end of it, and then we'll come back and talk about repentance. In verse 48 He says:

*"You are witnesses of these things."*

In other words 'You saw this. You saw me suffer, you saw me die on the cross, you now understand the Old Testament prophecies about this. You saw me rise from the dead, you're with me right now risen. You are witnesses of these things. And he goes on to say:

*"I am going to send you what my Father has promised;"* talking about the Holy Spirit, *"but stay in the city until you have been clothed with power from on high."*

So I'm going to send you the Holy Spirit so that you can go out into the world in power to proclaim this message. Okay? So let's, let's just pause and talk specifically about what your response is, what my response is. In other words, understanding the gospel what do we do with it? Here is the big "R" word. Repentance. I believe that this particular concept has been used to confuse people all over the place. Okay? So what is repentance? Well let me start with what repentance is not. Okay? The word repentance does not mean remorse. It does not mean that you find your way to an altar someplace and you breakdown and you feel bad and you weep and you mourn and you wale even though that might not be a bad idea for most of us, right? I'm not talking about the quality of whether that's a good thing to do or not. I'm talking about what the word repentance actually means. So it doesn't mean to feel emotional, to feel sorry, to feel remorse, to weep and to cry. That's not what the word means.

The second thing the word does not mean is it does not mean that you change your behavior. In other words, that you start doing the righteous things. So it doesn't mean remorse and it doesn't mean that you start doing righteous things. Now to start doing righteous things is really good. It's really good - those are good things to do. I'm not arguing against doing righteous things. That would be kind of crazy to come to church and have the pastor tell you "Hey guys, you don't have to worry about doing anything righteous." No, righteous things are good. That's not what the word repentance means. In fact, John the Baptist makes it clear. He tells the people who are coming to hear his message *"Repent and be baptized and bring forth the works of repentance."* He separates repentance, what it means from the works that should come as a result of that. Okay?

So let me talk about what it actually means. The word repentance, *metanoeo* in the Greek, the word **“Repentance is: Changing My Mind About”**. Repentance literally means to change your mind. To change your mind, to change your point of view, to change the way you see something, to change the way you think about something. And in many ways it’s synonymous with the word believe. Now it’s nuance, but it’s synonymous. Let me explain it to you. So, you know I’ve been to the grocery store a couple of times in the last ten years. But let’s just suppose that, you know, Cindy said ‘Hey, would you go to the store and pick up some bread.’ I said ‘Oh yeah, I’ll do that. I’d be happy to do that honey. Anything you ever want just let me know, and I’ll do it.’ I’ll go get some bread. And she says to me, ‘Um it’s on aisle two. It won’t take you long, just go in, go to aisle two and get the bread.’ And I’m thinking to myself, what does she know about where the bread is because the last time I was in there it was on aisle seven, or at least that’s what I remember. And so in my mind, my point of view, the way I’m thinking about it is bread, aisle seven. So I go to the store with that mindset, it’s in my mind. I believe it’s on aisle seven. And so my actions logically would take me to aisle seven, right? And when I find out that on aisle seven I’m staring at the butter beans, suddenly I have a revelation. I begin to believe that maybe what I believed is not true. That what I believed does not correspond to reality, and at the moment when that becomes clear to me and I change the way I think, I begin to travel back to aisle two where I will find the bread. That’s what repentance is. It’s thinking and embracing and believing one idea, and then coming to realize that what you’re thinking, what you’re believing, what you’re embracing is not true. It’s wrong. And it’s that moment when you then change the way you think, your point of view, to adopt something that’s different than that. That’s why I say it’s synonymous with the word believe because the word repentance literally refers to that change, that moment of change when you move from thinking one way to thinking another way; from believing one thing to believing another thing. The word belief simply means to embrace the new thing, to embrace a new thing, to own it, to believe it, it’s yours now. So I travel over to aisle two and guess where it is? The bread’s right there in front of me on aisle two. What happened to me? I repented, I repented, I changed the way I think. I hope that makes sense to you.

Can you see the difference between some of these misconceptions of repentance and the truth of what repentance really means. Because you see if I think that repentance is really emotional, it’s an emotional sorrow, an emotional response, now repentance becomes about me. Can I feel bad enough, did I feel bad enough, did I weep enough, did I cry enough, did I spend enough time at the altar on my knees? And all of a sudden salvation becomes a work of me. And I wonder because now it’s not about what Jesus did, it’s about what I



did to be able to get it, or if repentance refers to me doing righteous things. And I will constantly live in a state of wondering if I did enough righteous things. Have I gone to church enough, have I fed the poor enough, have I loved my neighbor enough, have I done all the right things, have I done enough of those – now salvation becomes something that's about me, right? Salvation is never about what I did. In fact, it's the opposite of that. It's what He did, that Christ would suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, that repentance would be preached so that people would now change from what they did think before to believing that Jesus died for my sins to pay for my sins, and then He rose again to give me life. Now that I believe that I am granted as a free gift the forgiveness of sins.

I just want to let that soak in with you for a minute because it's not uncommon. It is not uncommon for people, even church people to not get this clearly in their mind and to be confused and to keep thinking 'Have I done enough.' 'Have I wept enough.' Have I – and salvation now becomes a work of me, it's all about me. And that's not what the word repentance actually means.

I remember, a number of years ago after service, I was teaching through the book of Galatians and I was talking about His free grace, how God gives us grace freely. We don't have to work for it, we don't have to earn it, we don't have to come up with something to make God happy with us so we get it. And I'm teaching through this, and I'll never forget. After the service I'm standing down front and this guy comes down the aisle and he walks up to me and he says, 'I've gone to church my whole life.' And he tells me the denomination he was apart of. And then he says to me, 'And I've been coming here for a year. Now I think what I just heard you say is that I don't have to do good works to get salvation.' And I thought to myself I know that I'm not the greatest communicator that's ever lived, but you've been listening to me teach about grace for a year and this is the first time it's making sense to you? And at that moment I realized how deeply ingrained these false ideas are in our thinking. That somehow we can merit or we can talk God into giving us something based on our sincerity or our efforts, or of the purity of our actions, or the amount of religious things that we do. That's not what repentance means. It simply means to change from one point of view to embrace a different point of view.

So let me just quickly walk us through that change. What would that be? So I'm going to give you four things where you might be thinking one way and you need to change your thinking to the truth, the other way. Let me give them to you quickly. The first one is about God, about God. Now what do you believe about God. So a lot of people are believing something about God that's not true and they need to change their mind or they really don't know the God that they're embracing. Some people believe that God is a different God than the

God of the Bible. So they are worshiping one of the 3 million Hindu gods or they're worshiping Allah or they're worshiping some other idea of what God is. Some people, they believe that God is just kind of the absent watchmaker. He's not personally involved or that God is simply the sugar daddy in the sky. And when you begin to turn from that, repentance is to start thinking correctly about God. And when you start thinking correctly about God there's only a few things you really need to begin to know.

Okay, the first one is that God is holy, and the second one is that God is loving. **"God: Holy and Loving"** You just need to begin to believe that God is holy and God is loving. His holiness is very important because His holiness says that God is perfect and pure in every way. There's nothing imperfect in Him, there's nothing impure in Him. So therefore God does not tolerate evil, destructive, bad things into his presence. And the kingdom that Jesus is building is going to be absent of evil. So God is going to eliminate evil because He's holy. He's not going to tolerate it; He's going to eliminate it. In those people who personally desire to do evil and want to practice evil, they will be eliminated too.

At the same time God is entirely loving. He loves people and so in that, He sent Jesus Christ His Son into the world to provide a way for us to receive forgiveness for the evil things we've done. So when you turn from whatever concept of God you might have, and you start believing the truth about the God of the Bible you're going to begin to understand and embrace the fact that God is perfect, He's holy, but God is also loving. He's for us, he's not against us. That's why He sent Jesus on a rescue mission. That's why He ordained the church to go out and reach out to the world, to reach out to the nations with this incredible message of the gospel because God loves us. He's for us.

The second area is the whole issue of sin. What is your view of sin? Now there are lots and lots of people that believe that sin is simply the violation of some human's religious rules. Other people believe that sin is only bad if it hurts someone else. Some people believe that sin is a human construction made up by a social group who decided that they were going to pick some things that were negative and make those bad, shame people into conformity into their social system. According to the Bible you'd be changing your mind from one of those views of sin to a view of seeing sin as something that is evil and destructive. **"Sin: Evil and Destructive."** It's evil and destructive. It's evil in the sense that it opposes that which is good, and it's destructive in the sense that it hurts us, it destroys human thriving. It destroys human thriving. So sin diminishes us. It may diminish our physical bodies, it may diminish our moral conscience, it may destroy relationships, it may damage society, it might ruin

our creativity, it may laden us with all kinds of burdens of lust that we drive after. Sin is dangerous and it's evil.

One of my favorite books of all time, I don't recommend books very often, but somebody asked me the other day to list my top five favorite books and this book came up in that list, and so I'm going to recommend for those of you guys who want to study the effects of sin, this was a life-changing experience for me. Cornelius Plantinga wrote a book called *"Not the Way It's Supposed to Be: A Breviary of Sin."* He goes through and describes sin in the Bible and in contemporary culture and how it works. But an excerpt from that book, let me just share with you. After I read the excerpt you guys may not want to read the book, but it's really good for me.

Talking about sin as being parasitic, as a parasite on us and a parasite on good. He says "The reason is that sin is a parasite, an uninvited guest that keeps tapping its host for sustenance. Nothing about sin is its own. All its power, persistence, and plausibility are stolen goods. Sin is not really an entity, but a spoiler of entities. Not an organism, but a leach on organisms. Sin does not build Shalom, it vandalizes it. In the metaphysical perspective evil offers no true alternative to good, as if the two were equal and opposite qualities." So no yin and yang, no white side of the force, dark side of the force. All that stuff is a bunch of lies, okay? That's a false understanding of evil. So God created good, evil is the parasite that tries to take the power out of good and exploit it in a way that's destructive.

"Goodness," says C.S. Lewis "is so to speak, itself. Badness is only spoiled goodness. Good is original, independent, and constructive. Evil on the other hand is derivative, dependent and destructive. To be successful evil needs what it hijacks from goodness." And that's why we're often confused, because we look at the world around us and we see some good qualities that have the potential to produce some really good things. Some good desires have the potential to produce some really good things, and actually some of those things might be present in the experience, but overall they end up doing incredible damage. Why? Because sin leaches on to the good and perverts it and distorts it.

He gives a really good example here. He said "Sin is fruitful because, like a virus, it attaches the life force of and the dynamics of its host, sewing and reaping, human longing, children's natural trust. Such things belong among the springs and root of a good creation. Sin does not remove these things, it attaches them and converts them to new uses." Here's the example: "A faithful father, for instance, accepts his small daughter's trust and love, strengthens

them and tries to extend them toward God and toward the world. A sexually abusive father also accepts his daughter's trust and love, but he uses them to bind his daughter to his lust. Sooner or later he converts trust to fear and love to resentment. He strengthens these emotions with each episode of abuse, and whether he wants to or not, may extend them toward God and out toward the world."

Trust and love are good. Sin attaches to those and perverts those for evil. Until we get to a place where we understand that God has given us instructions for how humans can thrive in the world, and even though we may not understand the full implications of these, to obey them and to follow them will give us life. To disobey them, to twist them, to change them up to work within our own desires, that is destructive and damaging even though at times it may seem like it's working for you a little bit. Like it's working for you a little bit. And because of that coming to grips with repentance is to say, 'You know what. Sin is not just some human construct. It is devastating, destructive evil. Which brings us to the third truth, and the third truth is about Jesus. It's about Jesus.

Some people view Jesus as a good man, a good teacher, kind of a radical revolutionary, early for his time, great philosopher, great example. All kinds of false views of Jesus. But this passage is teaching us that Jesus is the Messiah. He's the Messiah, the one sent by God from God, who is God. He's the Messiah who paid sin's penalty with His substitutionary death and His resurrection. **"Jesus: Messiah who paid sin's penalty (Death and Resurrection)"** Jesus Christ when He died was literally taking the punishment for our sins. And coming to a point of repentance is beginning to move from your view of Jesus, whatever that may be, to a belief that Jesus Christ truly is the Son of God, and when Jesus Christ died on the cross, He was taking the punishment for what you did yesterday, what you're going to do today, and what you'll do tomorrow that is evil, bad, sinful. He took all of that upon himself. That's an understanding of Jesus.

And finally, the understanding of self. A lot of people see self as basically good. We see self as sometimes misguided, but trying the best. At the core of humanity we're basically great people. That's not what scripture says. Repentance is coming to an understanding that humanity is not basically good, but we are guilty. We are guilty and in need of a savior. **"Self: Guilty and needing a Savior."** All of us, all of us. From the very best Mother Theresa lookalike in this room to the very worst Adolph Hitler type in this room. Every single one of us stands guilty before God. We've all sinned. And when we come to an understanding of that we realize that the coolest news of all the greatest

good news is that there is someone that can save us from that. We can be saved from that. Not try to dig our way out of the hole. Not try to cry enough or do enough good things to try to figure it out and make it work, but to really truly say, "Jesus Christ, He came to save me." Jesus says Listen, repentance, change your mind about you, about me, about God, about sin. When you change your mind and you believe, you believe the gospel. When you do that, you get forgiveness for sin. You get eternal life.

So let me ask you. We started off with a certainty question. Has there ever been a time where you personally have repented. Where you've come to a place where you've changed the way you think and start thinking these words, from the mouth of Jesus

*"The Christ will suffer and rise from the dead on the third day, and repentance for the forgiveness of sins will be preached in His name to all the nations."*

You came to a place where you said, "Okay, I, I get this, I'm turning. I'm believing now." If you've come to a place where you've done that, you have eternal life. You have eternal life. You've passed from death into life. There's no questions, there's no confusion, there's no doubt. You say 'Well Tim, I think I'm coming to that. Maybe I'm even coming to that this morning.' That's awesome because today can be the day that you know. I would encourage you to do something very simple. In just a few minutes when we bow our heads, do something very simple. Just confirm that, just confirm that. From your heart say to God, "God I know I'm a sinner. I know that I'm guilty. I believe Jesus that you are the Son of God who died on the cross to pay for my sins. You rose from the dead securing my future. I believe that. Today, forgive me of my sins. Come into my heart, I repent, I believe you, I embrace you. Come into my life and take over." If you'll do that Jesus Christ will absolutely forgive you of your sins and give you eternal life. And then the journey, a cool, amazing, incredible journey, but it starts with conversion, with that repentance and belief.

So here's my second question. For those of you who say 'Oh yeah, I get this Tim. You know you're preaching to the choir. This is something I get, I get this. I'm really clear on this. I know, I know, I know that I have eternal life.' Let me ask you the second question: Do your friends know this? Do your friends know this? Do your co-workers know this? Do your neighbors know this? See what Jesus said is this message needs to get out. It needs to get out beginning in Jerusalem he said to those guys. Like that's at home, and then it needs to keep extending until it gets out to every group of people on the planet. It needs to get out. This is good news. People can be forgiven. They don't have to work.

They don't have to weep, they don't have to wail, they don't have to fake it. They just need to believe it. To repent, to embrace it, and believe it. That's all they have to do. And when they do that they receive forgiveness as a free gift. You say, "It's so simple it's hard to believe." You're exactly right. God is so amazing. So amazing. Do your friends get this? Let's bow our heads.

For just a moment as we have our heads bowed, it's real important that nobody leaves the room with doubt. Now you may not believe, you may not be convinced yet – I get that. Don't fake a prayer. But if you believe today's the day to have confidence, some of you guys have been hanging around church and even involved in church for years and still wrestling with doubt. Today's the day to believe what Jesus said. To take Him at His word, to have eternal life. I want you to think about two or three friends. Maybe get their faces in your mind. Do they know this? Do they know how simple and how awesome this message is? What would it take for you to say, 'Hey, want to grab lunch? I just have something I just need to tell you. I need to get it off my chest to make sure you know this. You may not agree with it, I don't care. I just need to talk to you about this.' Who would that person be? Could they hear this week? Today might be the day that sets in motion the transformation of their life as you respond to the gospel.

Father in heaven I just thank you that you didn't set up a system that only people who went to seminary could figure out. Or that only people who crawl on their knees over rocky paths doing penance can somehow earn. Father it's just something that we need to embrace, change our mind, believe the truth and then you take over. Father we just thank you that in a room this size, that your spirit is speaking to each person individually. That you've got something that you're doing here, and Father we want with all of our hearts. We want with all of our hearts, to allow you to have your way with us.

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