

## 3.23.2025 Sermon

# Metanoia, a New Awakening

### **SPEAKERS**

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Well, I am Reverend Sandra Anderson. Yeah, this is going to be interesting. I already feel a shift, so we're going to let God do his thing.

So, welcome to another gym series. If you are visiting with us, don't get alarmed by the word "gym." We are not going to pull out our weight to make you work out. However, we are going to spiritually work you out.

So that's been our framework here, getting the mindset of the gym. Spiritual maturity is what we own right now. Nobody likes to be called immature, right? Everybody, especially if you grown, you want to feel like you know something.

We were introduced to Hebrews five and six a couple of weeks ago, and that author right there, he just straight out put it to them and said, "You guys drinking milk when you're supposed to be on solid food." Yeah. And he doesn't pacify them and say, "Well, we're going to, you know, transition you." He says, "Therefore, therefore we move on."

So, ready or not, here it is. I'm not going to spoon-feed you and let you suck on a bottle this morning. And just like babies, once you introduce them to solid foods, they may spit it up. You may spit it up, but therefore we move on.

It's just like the gym. You can't go into the gym and be on a treadmill, running the same pace for months or lifting the same weights at the same reps for months. At some point, you gonna plateau.

You gonna start off and be like, "Yeah, I'm doing this." And after a while, you're gonna plateau. And you gonna be like, "Ain't nothing happening." If you don't increase your weights, increase your reps, increase that incline, you can walk, but increase that incline, increase the distance, increase the speed, that's when it becomes difficult, and the shift is going to change.

And that's what we're talking about in Hebrews. This is the foundation. It's just like Jesus said, "I didn't come to abolish the law, but I came to fulfill it." It's opening up our mindsets to a wider perspective, a panoramic view. It's bigger. It's deeper than what we know.

And this subject we're on this week is repentance. And I know y'all did y'all homework. Y'all looked up what repentance meant. Anybody did their homework? Anybody? Yeah, Pastor James did it last week. Anybody else do they homework?

Oops, yeah, the dog ate your homework.

So, if you did look up repentance, you probably found that the English version is going to tell you something like, you know, "Be sorry for doing something and apologizing." And you know, half the time, you don't even mean it.

Half the time, people gotta force you to say you're sorry. And don't get me wrong, that's okay for your human-to-human interactions. If I step on your toe, I'm gonna say I'm sorry. You know, that's understandable.

But when it comes to the word and our thought process of what repentance means when it relates to Jesus, it's deeper than that. It's deeper than just coming and saying the same stuff that, half the time, we know we ain't going to change.

Because guess what? We're human. It's not about coming up with the sinner's prayer and saying, "Oh God, forgive me," and we move on.

Repentance in the Greek means *metanoia*, an awakening of your mind, a shift in your thinking.

If you think back to when we was in the John series, it said John the Baptist was saying, "Repent, for the kingdom of God is at hand." He wasn't telling them people, "Hey, go say what we say all the time. Go repent, ask God to forgive you for your sins, because guess what? He coming tomorrow."

We still do that mess today. At the end of the day, we've been taught to do that. "Go pray and ask God for forgiveness of your sins, just in case you don't wake up tomorrow. You got a probably better chance of going to heaven."

That's not what that's about.

What he was saying was: awaken your mind, because Jesus is coming, and he's about to blow our minds with something new, a new way of thinking.

If you think of the context of this whole chapter, it's post-resurrection. So, you have people who are believing in God, and Jesus has come up on the scene. He's turned the kingdom upside down. The Pharisees are like, "Who is this guy? We don't believe this."

Jesus has come and told them, "Hey, this is how it's supposed to go." And you have people who are trying to be new Christians, but they got the Pharisees operating in the culture, saying, "I don't care what Jesus has told you."

And now that Jesus is gone, they're like, "Alright, everything back to normal. Forget what you heard. He ain't even here to bother us. Let's focus back on the law, because we wasn't buying that mess anyway."

So, how do you move forward?

"Hey, Jesus was on the scene. I was believing. I was ready to roll. And now that he's gone, the law is telling me, 'Oh no, you gonna bring that sacrifice. You gonna abide by the law.'"

And you saying, "Wait, I thought he came to fulfill the law?"

So, what are you doing?

We're still in that now.

Two thousand years later, we're still wondering, "Do I believe in the law, or do I believe in the freedom that Jesus gave when he nailed it on the cross?"

And this is why repentance, the *metanoia*, is so important.

Because we're just like them.

We are.

I was at the African American Museum in February, and I read this thing about slaves. It said that when Emancipation happened, there were slaves that were upset because they were so used to believing that they were less than.

They were so used to believing the lies. They were so used to the way things were, the order. And now I'm free? And I ain't got no house, ain't got no land, ain't got nothing? I want to go back to slavery because I knew how things were supposed to go.

It all made sense.

Now, this freedom? I don't even know what to do with it.

That's how we are.

Jesus has freed us, and we still saying, "No, but this makes more sense. This is the way we have to do it."

We sound like the Pharisees.

He said, "I have shifted your mind and awakened you to a direct communication with me."

However, we still want to do it the way we knew it.

He opened that door for this face-to-face communication, and we want to go back to, "No, Imma do it the way we've been doing it for the last 4,000 years."

That's the awakening.

That's why repentance is shifting your mind, your perspective, to say, "Hey, maybe what he's saying is true."

It's like the woman at the well. When he says, "Go and sin no more," he wasn't telling her to sin less.

He was telling her to *hamartia*, there is you believing in an identity that I haven't even given you.

They call you an adulterer. They call you a Samaritan. They call you less than.

And you believed it.

And he said, "Go and stop believing the lies."

That's why that was an impactful story. Not because he told her, "Hey, I see what you're doing, and go and don't do it again."

She went and freed more Samaritans because she had an awakening in her mind that, "Hey, I'm a Samaritan, but I'm still God's chosen. I'm not less than because I was born a Samaritan."

And that's what we have to understand.

We have to own our belovedness.

We have to own who God has called us to be.

But when people say, "Hey, you a sinner," we will accept that.

So much so, as soon as you hear that, you say, "Yep, I am. I'm unworthy. I gotta repent. I gotta do this. I gotta do that."

And all that striving, where is it getting us?

All that leaves you with is a disconnect.

That's why you have to repent, to orientate yourself.

Not from the lies. Not from what you want to believe.

But from what God is still saying:

"I've still called you. You haven't lost who you were."

But we rather believe the lie and continue to strive for something that's already ours.

We don't believe it.

We don't believe that God loves us that much.

That it's just that simple.

That we'd rather say, "You know what? This is how it's supposed to be. If I don't do that, he's going to love me."

And guess what?

There are some people who live a very strict life.

And guess what? You still don't know God. You can do all the right things, you can say all the right things, and live a very strict life. And guess what? You still don't know who you are in God. You still don't have that connection with God.

It's like Luke 15, and the Pharisees are saying, "Who is this man that sits and eats with sinners?" You know what was so powerful about them sinners? It said they were magnetically drawn to Him. Then, while the Pharisees are saying, "I don't need this," He said, "This is the people I came for, the ones who, regardless of what you call them, hunger and thirst after Me."

They have had an awakening. Regardless of what these people label them as, they see something in Jesus. They focus on Him and what He's saying rather than what these other people are saying about them. Even when the people don't understand it, even when the Pharisees, the church people, your friends, and your family don't understand why God is still moving in your life, He sits and eats with you, regardless of what they label you as.

They're not above God. They're not above the noise in your head that's telling you that you're less than. That's what repentance is.

I want to do this shift. Joni, I want you to, yeah, yeah.

What I found out in life is sometimes I can sit here and talk until I'm blue in the face, and it probably won't even connect with you. One thing that works for me sometimes is worship because it ushers in something that you may not even know you needed, repentance.

For me, repentance was the whole book of Luke 15. After the Pharisees said this, it sparked something in Jesus, and He gave them three stories.

One was of the lost sheep. Maybe the sheep didn't even know that they were lost. Sometimes we don't even know that we're lost. Maybe we got distracted, and somebody died. Maybe we got distracted by being overworked. Somehow, while we were sitting here, worried and focused on our situation, everybody else moved on.

It's not that you purposely got lost, but what does God do? He said, "I will leave the ninety-nine for the one who repents." And it's not the sheep that repents because it has done something bad. Repentance is that the sheep has awakened. It has awakened to the fact that God sees it. It has awakened to the fact that His love is so deep that He has chased it down to find it, even when it didn't know it was lost.

That's the love of God.

Then, the lady with the lost coin, she loses the coin, and she goes up into every nook and cranny until she finds it. And guess what? Even when you are lost, you don't lose your value. That dime or that coin didn't lose the value it held just because it was lost.

You are still the sons and daughters of God, whether you're lost or not.

So, if you find yourself lost, know that He still values you the same. You haven't lost anything. And that coin couldn't miraculously find its way back to the owner. It may have been sitting in the corner, saying, "Hey, I'm here! Please find me!"

In those situations, it was never about the sheep or the coin having to do anything. It was the Father, the Father who searched high and low until you were found. He called you back and said, "Hey, you are who I called you to be. You are worth everything I said you were before you got lost."

And then, the last story was the prodigal son.

We always say, and it reads that way because that's what we've been taught, that, "Hey, oh, I gotta come up with this rehearsed speech. I gotta say, 'Father, I have sinned against you and God, and hey, I am on my way back home.'"

That boy didn't care anything about his family. That boy had a need. He said, "If I say this, at least I'll be a servant."

That's what we do sometimes. We want to come back less than what God has already called us to be, and we'll accept that.

"Hey, God, I've sinned. Let me, let me come back and usher. Let me come back and sit in the back of the church. I'm not worthy to sit in the front."

And He said, "That's not what I said."

If you read the story, by the time the boy came and said, "Oh, Father, " the Father didn't even let him finish his statement.

It wasn't about the rehearsed apology.

It wasn't about anything the son had to say. The Father was looking down, waiting for that boy to come home. And what did He do? He ran after that boy.

Because in that culture, for the son to have left in that way, guess what? The elders in the town were ready. They were waiting for a day like this. Just like the church people do, we do this all the time.

We wait for the sinner to come back to the church so we can say, "Come on up here and admit what you did wrong."

But what did God do?

What did the Father do?

The Father ran to that boy.

He lifted up His garments and ran. That was against all normality at that time. He took on the shame that should have been waiting for the son. He took on that shame for us. He said, "Hey, I'm going to protect you from all this that they are ready to give you."

And in all of the stories, repentance was a celebration, not an act of shame, guilt, humiliation, or condemnation to make you feel bad.

Repentance is a joyous occasion because it's an awakening.

It is the realization that, no matter what I do, God still chases me down. Fights till I'm found. And He leaves all the righteous people who say I'm not good enough because we matter.

You.

To awaken your mindset and shift from the lies.

I used to sing this song for my life. I see today because I know it to be true. Sometimes we sing these songs as a prophecy until we believe them, until they come to pass.

I, I just like the song.

Before, they said, "Hey, if He did it for me, He'll do it for you."

I am here in front of you right now because God chased me down.

I, I fought till I was found. Because I was like the sinners, I was magnetically drawn to God. And people said, "No! Why are you eating with the sinner?"

And He came and shook the foundations for me.

He shook the normality in this church for me.

A couple of years ago, I couldn't even be up here before you. And that's what God will do.

He will fulfill the law for you.

So, I want you to let this song sing over you until you believe it.

If you are lost, know that you are found, and nothing will separate you from His love.

Position yourself in love today.

Not the lies.

Not what people call you.

Not what you call yourself.

Not the shame.

Not the condemnation.

Position yourself in love, because that's what the Father gives.

Straighten your back in this season.

Know that you are loved by the One who created you, who calls you by name.

Whether you continue to repent the old way or not, He will always run after you.

Amen.