

**NEWS AND VIEWS**  
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*“Southern Baptists with the Full  
Gospel for the Whole World”*

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VOLUME 36

September 2014

NUMBER 9

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*Now after John had been taken into custody, Jesus came into Galilee, preaching the gospel of God, and saying, “The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel.” (Mark 1:14)*

I saw a TV testimony once of how a man outran a grizzly bear on his murderous charge. How did he do it? In a word...*Motivation!* The greatest changes in my life have always come as a result of the greatest motivation to change. An alcoholic will deny his addiction until he is given a reason to want to be something else. An obese person will eat to make herself feel better until she finds a reason to lose weight. Often the motivation comes in life threatening ways. To repent from sin we must perceive the threat of sin’s serious and deadly consequences.

It is a very painful thing to watch a sinner who has been confronted with the result of their sin and continues to engage in it. Sin is an addiction greater than any we have ever known. Addiction may be defined as worship out of order and sin’s addiction is the point of beginning. Sin is destructive in its nature, deceptive in its presentation, and always ugly in its manifestation. Only grace can restore us from sin.

God stands ready with His grace to heal us from our sin. The consequences of sinful lifestyle choices can be irreversible. But God always stands ready to comfort us with His grace. When we are motivated to repent, we are ready to receive forgiveness and grace...grace greater than all our sin. Consider the following...

**I. THE CATALYST FOR REPENTANCE CAN SEEM LIKE CATASTROPHE TO US.** In our passage we read that John had been arrested. The outlook for John was gloomy from our earthly perspective. But we find that God had orchestrated the stage for the next act in man’s redemption story. He still controls that which seems out of control.

**II. CHANGE CAN BE GOD’S MOST FERTILE FIELD.** Jesus came into Galilee. Into a part of the country that God was changing. The political power struggle was always in view and Galilee was often a cauldron of unrest. A lot of family scenarios portray this kind of anxiety and turmoil. God brings change to our culture.

**III. COMFORT IS FOUND IN GOD’S WORD.** The gospel of God is preached when things seem their worst. Jesus came preaching good news for bad times. The gospel message is always proclaimed in times of helplessness and hopelessness.

**IV. REPENTANCE IS POSSIBLE IN GOD’S TIMING.** The time is fulfilled. God’s timing is always best. His time to receive us is always up to Him.

**V. REPENTANCE IS POSSIBLE IN GOD’S PRESENCE.** The kingdom of God is at hand. Now God is near. And He is on His throne, hearing our pleas for forgiveness and justice and restoration.

**VI. REPENTANCE IS A TURNING OR CHANGING OF THE MIND, ENABLING BELIEF.** If you are ready to repent, you are ready to believe. Without repentance, there is no belief.

**VII. REPENTANCE IS NOT A SELF HELP EFFORT...IT IS THE CRUCIFIXION OF SELF WITH GOD’S HELP.** We need help getting on the cross and staying there.

Blessings to you,  
Pastor Sam