

“Seek the Lord while he may be found.” Isaiah chapter 55 verse 6

We live in a special time. Jesus came to open a way so that people could find God. John the Baptist cried out to people to “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven has come near.” The apostle Peter told the people in Jerusalem on the day of Pentecost, “Repent and be baptised, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.”

In Jesus, God came near to every one of us. He became accessible to every one of us. Many people come to a place in their lives where they seem to have lost their way. All their plans for their lives have gone wrong. They feel as if they have hit a dead end and don't know what to do about it. It is these that Jesus calls to repent. They have been travelling on a road which has led nowhere, their direction dictated by wrong thinking. The call to repent is a call to a change of mind and a change of direction.

This verse from Isaiah challenges those who are lost to call out to God while they have a chance. We live in an age of grace in which God's grace in forgiveness is held out to all in Jesus. Today, if you are wondering what went wrong, or you feel that everything you have tried to achieve has come to nothing, or that you have failed to live the life you intended to do, Isaiah continues; “Let the wicked one abandon his way, and the sinful one his thoughts; let him return to the Lord, so that he might have compassion on him, and to our God, for he will freely forgive.”

Remember the matchless story of the Prodigal Son, which Jesus told. A young man takes his inheritance, leaves home and spends it all on pleasures, and he ends up with nothing in a pig sty. His sense of pride must have been telling him that the last thing he could do would be to return to his father's house. How would he meet with anything but judgment and condemnation. But he has no other way open to him. He returns to throw himself on his father's mercy, in the hope that he will at least take him on as a servant.

But he finds his father waiting for him, as he has been doing since the day he left. He embraces him and calls him “son.” Just as any one of us would welcome back into our families a child who has gone astray, so Jesus is telling us that God welcomes all who turn back to him as a son or daughter with open arms and great celebration.

God is always waiting for people to turn from their own fruitless ways to him, so that he can welcome them home. In our time, the door is open in Jesus. Now is the time to go in.

Prayer.

Father, thank you for your unending love and patience. You have given us your Son, so that whoever believes in him will live forever in you. Please open the hearts of many in these days, so that they may know your forgiveness and acceptance. In Jesus' name, amen.

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