

i. Luke 24.44-47: Because of Christ's death and resurrection, we can truly repent

a "Repentance," *metanoia*: lit. a change of mind

b Repentance is paired with "forgiveness," also translated "remission"

1 Repentance is not something that justifies me, that's another term

2 (Erikson) Repentance is Godly sorrow, knowing I've grieved the Spirit

a) Repentance makes me want to change, leave sin behind

b) It is real, no matter who's watching, w/ or w/o consequences¹

Church Historian, Merrill Tenney: "Repentance involves both a change of mind about sin, and a change of heart-attitude toward sin. It is at the time a renunciation of sin and an acceptance of the Holy Spirit's enablement to holy living."²

c Early Church discipleship involves accepting Christ AND renouncing sin

1 True repentance still involves turning away from sin, and turning to JC

2 We participate in His death in which He buried our sins

3 We also participate in His resurrection, His new life

ii. Lk 24.47: When we repent, we can participate in His ministry on earth

a We *proclaim repentance & forgiveness* "in his name"

b This is a historical term signifying the authority of a ruler

1 In NT times, the First Century, representatives act on behalf of a ruler

2 They're Ambassadors with the full authority of their kingdom

3 They're agents for their ruler, acting "in the name of" their ruler

c We often end our prayers quickly with the phrase, "in Jesus' name"

1 Do we know what we are really doing?

2 We are invoking the name and the authority of Jesus Christ

3 We represent the Kingdom of God, acting in JC's authority

4 Think about this truth next time you pray, "in Jesus' name. Amen"

5 So, "in his name" means something in history, kingdom authority

d Now for Church History, "in his name" or "in the name of Jesus"

1 This phrase represents those who are working in ministry

a) This does NOT apply to everything that we do . . .

b) It applies to *repentance & forgiveness* "proclaimed in his name"

* Don't get me wrong, God blesses our activities. There are plenty of churches that have a unique calling, with so many different activities each week, that they're like a civic center with services on Sunday. I love community-minded churches.

c) Let's guard our heritage of opening our doors for our community

2 Let's also remember that we're *proclaiming repentance & forgiveness*

¹ Millard J. Erickson, *Christian Theology* (Grand Rapids: Baker Book House, 1995), 938.

² Merrill C. Tenney, *Zondervan Pictorial Bible Dictionary* (Grand Rapids: Zondervan, 1967), 711.

a) We are literally Kingdom Ambassadors

b) We participate in Christ's ministry when we speak "in his name"

iii. The Gospel of *repentance & forgiveness* reaches everyone

a We've talked a lot about the *nations*, the *Gentiles*, the last 3 weeks, **Lk 24.47**

1 "nations," *ethnos*: NOT nations with boundaries & govts like today

2 *Ethnos* means tribe, nation, or people-group, Greek root for ethnic

b There are many different *people-groups* in our nation and in our neighborhoods

* *Race relations* is a hot topic, so let's consider other *Demographics*. *Best Places* analyzes Census data. TRAVERSE CITY METRO, 147,606 people.³

- Marital status | married: 55% | married with children: 26.8% | single never married: 26.3% | single widowed: 5.8%
- Finances | We have a variety of income brackets | TC is above Michigan's av. and the USA av. in some brackets | We have higher percentages from \$20k/year to \$150k/year | TC av. household makes between \$56-69k/year
- Age Brackets | ages 65-74: 11.8% | ages 25-54: 36.4%, approx. 53,729 | average age (median) in this whole region: 45.1
- Education | higher degree than USA - *pun intended* - of higher ed | Bachelor degrees, 4 year college, 32% in town (MI 28.1%, USA 30.9%)

iv. We're empowered to preach to everyone, GREAT COMMISSION, Lk 24.44-49

a Repentance positions me to reach anyone, *I'm not perfect, just forgiven*

b If we believe this, then let's go one step further with some Q's about town

v. Let's consider these questions as a prayerful response . . .

- How can we share the love of God with "never married singles"? | How can we create space for "families with children" to worship and meet their needs? | Do we realize these 2 groups are 53.1% of our population, approx. 78,379?
- Do we treat the person/family that is making \$20k with the same respect that we give to the person/family that makes \$150? | We're above average in all of the financial brackets in-between these 2 numbers, so who do we cater to?
- Can we pray that our congregation will reflect the ages of our region? | What will it take to reach the largest cluster of the population, ages 25-54, approx 53,729?
- Do we know we're 4 points over the Michigan percentage for education, more people with bachelor degrees, 32%, approx 47,234? | Are we communicating with everyone in our community, really talking about the Gospel?

³ Best Places, "Traverse City Metro Area," *Sperling's Best Places*, accessed July 29, 2020, https://www.bestplaces.net/metro/michigan/traverse_city