

Repentance and Rest: Part 2

Isaiah 30:15-22

Israel faced a national security crisis. Assyria was on their doorstep threatening attack. In their fear, Israel formed an alliance with Egypt. The alliance was not from God or of God – it was faithless. When our security, comfort, and deep soul rest is threatened we, too, are tempted to run to ‘Egypt’, which is faithlessness before God.

Another word for the faithless alliances that we form is idolatry. Idolatry is when we give our heart’s allegiance, loyalty, trust, love, and ultimately worship to something or someone other than God believe that the ‘idol’ will bring security, comfort, and deep soul rest.^[1] How do we abandon our idols? Our passage directs us to the mercy of Jesus as the means by which we abandon our idols. What does his mercy look like?

Jesus mercifully answers us (v. 19). How does Jesus enter into our story with mercy? We simply cry, ‘Help!’ The two obstacles to crying out for mercy are pride and unbelief. In our pride, we believe we are strong enough to change. In our unbelief, we do not believe that Jesus is as merciful as he promises. When we cry, Jesus promises to answer us.

Jesus mercifully teaches us (vv. 20-21). Jesus reveals himself to us as our Teacher. Through the power of His Spirit, Jesus gives us a heart that is receptive to his Word. He speaks to us through the reading and preaching of his Word. Jesus’s teaching always leads us to places of deeper repentance and rest (v. 15).

Jesus mercifully changes us (v. 22). Jesus changes our heart’s worship such that we cast off the idols we once trusted in and say, “Be gone!”. The power to cast off our idols is not found in trying harder, but in love. Our hearts are gripped by a greater affection – the beauty and love of Jesus.

As the hymn writer, Ora Rowan, put it,

*From the idols of the earth?
Not a sense of right or duty,
But the sight of peerless worth.*

*'Tis that look that melted Peter,
'Tis that face that Stephen saw,
'Tis that heart that wept with Mary,
Can alone from idols draw.*

*Captivated by His beauty, Worthy tribute haste to bring.
Let His peerless worth constrain thee, Crown Him now unrivaled King.*

Questions for Individuals, Families, and Community Groups

1) In your story, how has Jesus revealed Himself to you as your Teacher? Share a past or present story of how you heard Jesus' voice behind you saying "This is the way, walk in it." How is he teaching you right now? How can we pray for you in this regard?

2) How is Jesus changing your heart right now and leading you to defile your idol(s), scatter them, and say "Be gone!"?

[\[1\]](#) Influenced by David Powlison.