

Weekender Slide

Series Slide

Tell Potemkin Village story (1787- queen Catherine river boat, Grigory Potemkin Crimea)

Paradise Ghetto- in Terazin, Czech Republic. 1940 turned to Ghetto
Red Cross coming to town.
“I’m Alright in Terazin. I don’t miss anything.” in many languages.

Title slide- “The End of Potemkin Villages: Why Jesus is the Foundation for Real Life”- Luke 3:1-20

Read Luke 3:1-20

1) Repentance is changing your foundation- so God can build something real.

v 3 Baptism of Repentance.

How to do it

v 4-6

Prepare the way of the Lord-

King coming to a village...no road yet.
Send out Heralds that essentially said- move the big rocks out of the way.
Any huge valleys- these have to be filled.
EVERYONE will see the salvation of God.

- There is something HUGE that's happening.
- For centuries, the Jews had always had a representative voice of God among them.
- There was always a prophet telling them something.
- The Old Testament is full of them.
- And the Jews didn't always like the message of the prophets...but they always *some kind* of voice of God in their lives.
- But then, the prophets died. And for 400 years, *400 years*, God was silent.
- There was nothing. No prophet. No voice.
- Until this guy in a camel skin vest & a leather belt, that ate honey-dipped grasshoppers...shows up....not in a city. Not standing next to an emperor.
- Rather, he shows up in the wilderness, the desert, the middle of nowhere...and he says what essentially amounts to "Remember the last great prophet? Remember Isaiah's voice from 400 years ago. He's back. I'm picking up where he left off. And everything he told you about a King that was coming that was going to turn things around for us...a king that would deliver us, heal our hurts, lead us out of oppression...well...he's here."
- "So, no more time for playing around. Get the road ready."
- And note the way John tells them to get the road for the king ready.
- He tells them to "REPENT!".
- The way to get ready for this king...is not to get boulders out the road....it is to do whatever it means to REPENT.

v 8-9

The ax is already at the root. Don't go saying Abraham is your father.

BAPTISM used to be for conversion to Judaism. But these are the Jews COMING OUT to be baptized. Everybody needs this. Nobody gets in based on their pedigree, family, association, wealth. EVERYBODY NEEDS THIS.

You need to redo your foundation. What you have built your life on.

Jews

Change of Root (foundation) leads to Change of Fruit (action)

v11-

Crowds- Share your shirts. Scarcity (fear)

v13-

Tax Collectors- Don't take more for yourself- Scarcity (fear)

v 14-

Soldiers (more like police)- Don't take money by force, be satisfied

2) Pride & fear keep us from repentance...and make us children of the Snake.

Pride, fear

v 7-8

Brood of Vipers...connect with Genesis

Viper- wilderness snake camouflaged as stick...think they were gathering firewood...viper would bite and kill them (its own little Potemkin Village)

Genesis 3:5-7

"In fact, God knows that when you eat it your eyes will be opened and you will be like God, knowing good and evil." 6 The woman saw that the tree was good for food and delightful to look at, and that it was desirable for obtaining wisdom. So she took some of its fruit and ate it; she also gave some to her husband, who was with her, and he ate it. 7 Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

I know the way to flourishing. Safety. The good life.
God you don't know!

Ends up with their own little hiding. Potemkin Villages. Paradise Ghettos.

Gen 3:15

Are you a child of the serpent? Or in the line of the promised one.

Who will be your father? The Father of lies? or the Father of lights

John 8:44

You are of your father the devil, and you want to carry out your father's desires. He was a murderer from the beginning and does not stand in the truth, because there is no truth in him. When he tells a lie, he speaks from his own nature, because he is a liar and the father of lies.

James 1:16-17

16 Don't be deceived, my dear brothers and sisters. 17 Every good and perfect gift is from above, coming down from the Father of lights, who does not change like shifting shadows. --

Practical.

v11-

Crowds- Share your shirts. Scarcity (fear)

v13-

Tax Collectors- Don't take more for yourself- Scarcity (fear)

v 14-

Soldiers (more like police)- Don't take money by force, be satisfied

v 19-20

John rebukes- Herod because of Pride (YOU CANT TALK TO ME LIKE THAT- CONTROL- FEAR) Just like Hitler and the Paradise Ghettos

3) Jesus is the only King that made a way for you before he asked you to make a way for him.

You know what the most important difference between Jesus and the Empress Catherine is?

The most important difference between Jesus and the Red Cross committee that walked the streets of Terezin?

When Catherine floated the river in Crimea, and when the Red Cross strolled through the "Paradise Ghetto", ...they were there to make sure that Potemkin or the Nazis were getting it RIGHT. That they were doing their jobs properly. They were there to check up on them.

But Jesus did not come to check up on you. God came in the flesh in Jesus because he already knew...that you were NOT alright.

Remember back in Genesis...in the garden.
When Adam and Eve chose their own way over God's...he didn't simply pass out a curse...he gave a promise of a savior.

Gen 3:15

He told Adam and Eve, and he told the lying serpent, that one day, he would send someone who the viper would bite, but his head would be crushed in the process.

That's Jesus. See, God became a man not simply to identify and empathize with our limited nature...and our pain...he became a man because that was the only way he could die in our place.

Do you know the nickname Jesus called himself more than any other?

- **Not the son of God. No.**
- **The son of Man. The offspring of Adam and Eve.**
- Before you could ever humble yourself...Jesus humbled himself.
- Son of God...now Son of Man.
- Infinite....to finite.
- King...to peasant.

The bruising of the heel of theSon of MAN is the cross.
The ultimate expression of humility.

When Jesus died an embarrassing shameful death on the cross, he was absorbing your death. He was taking your place. He was dying the death you should have died. He was taking all the shame and condemnation that happens when your "Potemkin Villages" are knocked down.

He was making it safe for you to be seen by the King of the Universe.

Jesus made a way for you to be safe with the king before he ever asked you to make a way for him to come into your life.

Luke 3:16-17

Does it bother you that John the Baptist talks about Jesus as a judge here?

I mean, Doesn't it seem like he is talking about Jesus coming to throw people into hell? Unquenchable fire? **Hold up John, that's fierce, bro.**

When John says that Jesus is going to have 2 baptisms, one of the Holy Spirit and one with fire...he is saying that Jesus is going to come twice. He is saying that Jesus is the one who is going to finally divide what is pure, true, good, and beautiful ...from what is evil, defiled, ugly, and deceitful.

See, Jesus doesn't send anyone to hell. He simply divides the garden from the wilderness.

- The reason why he talks about the fires of hell as unquenchable, is because you can never be satisfied apart from being together with God. You were made for him.
- And when you choose to reject the king who has laid down his life to make a way for you to come back to God...there is nothing left but dissatisfaction.
- Your life is a preview of the fire of hell. It only consumes. And its never satisfied. Just like fire.
- Fire is also the presence of God.
- On one hand- fire dancing on the head of the apostles at Pentecost as they preached the good news.
- On the other hand...
- Fire burns down potemkin villages...but can't touch the house that Jesus builds for you.
- Fire purifies...which means to last- Jesus has to turn your life into gold. He has to rebuild it...You have to give up control...then the presence of God will purify...and save...instead of exposing and judging.

Luke 3:18-

Went preaching the good news. Exhortation (urging, encouragement, persuasion)

Like the Jordan river flowing out into the wilderness, the desert, Christ has come to you, offering you living water that satisfies forever.

When Jesus comes back, bringing with him the Kingdom of heaven, and you have made a way for him, For the first time in your life, you'll truthfully...with all the sincerity in the universe be able to say **"I'm alright. And I don't miss a thing."**

He has not asked you to love him without being sure that he loves you first. He died to make a way for you, before he comes and asks you to die to your old way of life and make a way for him.

LORDS Supper:

- But he doesn't just ask you to be baptized on the outside...he asks you to take him in.
- That's what the LORDs supper reminds us of.
- Jesus isn't an exterior façade, we take him in.
- He puts his spirit in us.