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# It's Our Turn

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**Question** — Is there a REAL solution for the perilous times we live in? **YES!**  
Can anything be done for the troubling condition of the church and the nation? **YES!**  
Does God have anything *to say to us*? **YES!**

**Answer** — Yes. Yes. Yes!

## Message Today — **It's Our Turn**

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### **Solomon is dedicating the temple in Jerusalem... God speaks...**

- **2 Chronicles 7:13**
- “When I shut up heaven and there is no rain [*drought*], or command the locusts to devour [*devour*] the land, or send pestilence [*disease*]
  - **perilous times**

#### **2 Chronicles 7:14**

... **IF** My people who are called by My name will humble themselves, and pray and seek My face, and **turn** from their wicked ways, **then** I will hear from heaven, and will forgive their sin and heal their land.

- Calls us to recognize **perilous times** — look at church, society, world, **respond...**
- Humble, pray, seek, **turn from wickedness** — THEN, hear, forgive and heal — sounds awesome!
- Not just for Israel and the Jewish people — **any nation!**
- Assyria/Nineveh was wicked and violent — God wanted to show mercy to them
- God called Jonah — went opposite direction — he wanted them judged, not forgiven

**Question** — *I wonder if we want wicked people judged that God wants to forgive — just a thought.*  
**Do we need to repent of being angry and hateful?**

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### **Jonah**

- **Jonah 3:1-5**

Now the word of the LORD came to Jonah **the second time**, saying, "Arise, go to Nineveh, that great city, and preach to it the message that I tell you." So Jonah arose and went to Nineveh, according to the word of the LORD. Now Nineveh was an exceedingly great city, a three-day journey in extent. And Jonah began to enter the city on the first day's walk. Then he cried out and said, "Yet forty days, and Nineveh shall be overthrown!" So, the people of Nineveh believed God, proclaimed a fast, and put on sackcloth, from the greatest to the least of them.

- The word of the LORD was so powerful, truthful, convicting, that...
- eight words *from God* saved a nation- “yet 40 days Nineveh will be overthrown” turned over
- The people **believed** God’s Word — they **responded first**. We have got to quit waiting for Hollywood and Washington DC to lead us — and to believe God’s Word *ourselves* and turn — maybe we, the regular people in the church — will influence them.

### Look...

- **Jonah 3:6-10**

Then word came to the king of Nineveh; and he arose from his throne and laid aside his robe, covered himself with sackcloth and sat in ashes. And he caused it to be proclaimed and published throughout Nineveh by the decree of the king and his nobles, saying, let neither man nor beast, herd nor flock, taste anything; do not let them eat, or drink water. But let man and beast be covered with sackcloth, and cry mightily to God; yes, let every one turn from his evil way and from the violence that is in his hands. Who can tell if God will turn and relent, and turn away from His fierce anger, so that we may not perish? Then God saw their works, that they turned from their evil way; and God relented from the disaster that He had said He would bring upon them, and He did not do it.

**We need a Word from God — so timely, powerful, truthful and convicting  
that it wounds our hearts to true repentance, producing healing and life!  
Until that specific word comes — we can focus on the general Word of God...**

## Do not be deceived

- **Galatians 6:7-8**

Do not be deceived, God is not mocked; for whatever a man sows, that he will also reap. For he who sows to his flesh will of the flesh reap corruption...

- Do not be deceived — because you can be, start thinking wickedness is okay; evil = good
- Sow to flesh, reap corruption, no one is exempt, preachers, politicians, pew-sitters, producers, celebrities, etc. There are no excuses for wicked behavior.
- What is “flesh”?

- **Galatians 5:19-21**

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, sorcery, hatred, contentions, jealousies, outbursts of wrath, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that *those who practice such things will not inherit the kingdom of God*.

- Flesh is corruption of self and society for all eternity — *sin and flesh is not worth losing your soul over*.

## The unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God

- **1 Corinthians 6:9-10**

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the kingdom of God? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor homosexuals, nor sodomites, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners will inherit the kingdom of God.

- Don't be deceived — repeats what is in Galatians, emphasizing what sin is, and what it does
- ***Sin takes you farther than you wanted to go — for longer than you wanted to stay — and costs you more than you wanted to pay!***
- Pay attention to “acceptable” sins — idolatry, hatred, jealousy, outburst of wrath, selfish ambitions, envy, coveting, reviling, and the like. *Idolatry is anything that is more important to you than Jesus.*

**There's a general word from God — sin corrupts now,  
brings eternal judgement later — when practiced and not repented of.**

## **God's promise**

**We need to Believe God** — the Ninevites did!

**We need to Cry Out to God** — the Ninevites did!

**We need to Turn from our Evil** — the Ninevites did! **THEN...**

**God will Turn from His Judgement!** **HE PROMISED...**

- **Jeremiah 18:7-8**

“The instant I speak concerning a nation and concerning a kingdom, to pluck up, to pull down, and to destroy it, if that nation against whom I have spoken turns from its evil, I will turn from the disaster that I thought to bring upon it.”

**It's our TURN that causes God's TURN!**

**Turning — repenting is the key  
to personal and national forgiveness,  
healing and restoration!  
Nothing else will work!**

## **We are responsible for our condition**

**Aleksander Solzhenitsyn understood this very well...**

“All attempts to find a way out of the plight of today's world are fruitless unless we redirect our consciousness, in repentance, to the Creator of all: without this [repentance], no exit will be illumined, and we shall seek deliverance in vain. The other resources we have set aside for ourselves [besides repentance] are too impoverished for the task.”

- Aleksander Solzhenitsyn — repenting/turning only hope, nothing else works!

**He continues...**

“We must first recognize the horror perpetrated not by some outside force, not by class or national enemies, but within each of us individually, and within every society. This is especially true of a free and highly developed society, for here in particular we have surely brought everything upon ourselves, of our own free will. We ourselves, in our daily unthinking selfishness, are pulling tight that noose...”<sup>1</sup>

**We are responsible for our condition,  
we are responsible to turn!  
WHAT NEXT?**

<sup>1</sup> Aleksandr Isaevich Solzhenitsyn, *The Solzhenitsyn Reader: New and Essential Writings, 1947-2005* (ISI Books, 2006) 583

- **Joel 2:12-13**

“Now, therefore,” says the LORD, “Turn to Me with all your heart, with fasting, with weeping, and with mourning.” So, rend your heart, and not your garments; Return to the LORD your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.

**It's our TURN,  
that causes God's Turn —  
AND IT'S OUR TURN!**

- The time is now!
- That's kind of Old Testament — what about happy, hippy New Testament Jesus that's cool with everything?
- Five of the seven churches in Revelation were told by Jesus, with fire in his eyes, to repent — or else!
- **Act 3:19**  
Repent... that times of refreshing may come from the Presence of the Lord.

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## Conclusion

**If you have come under conviction today —  
turn, repent, humble yourself, pray, cry out to God,  
He'll be good to you, but you must turn.  
IT'S OUR TURN!**

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## Discussion Questions

1. After listening to the sermon today, do you believe this is the solution for the perilous times we live in? Why or why not?
2. Have you found yourself wanting wicked people to be judged — instead of forgiven? Do you think that desire will change in you?
3. Are the “more acceptable” sins any *less unrighteous* than the “really bad” sins? ... that “the covetous will not inherit the kingdom of God”?
4. How does “our TURN cause God's TURN”?
5. What did Solzhenitsyn mean when he said, “...we have surely brought everything upon ourselves, of our own free will... in our daily unthinking selfishness...”?
6. What do you as an individual need to repent of, to turn from, to ask for forgiveness, and pray for healing and new life?

# NOTES