



5 Day Devotional

Based on the sermon preached Sunday, September 20, 2026 — Pastor J Spurling

Genuine repentance makes room for the grace of God.

Read the passage for the day, sit with it, and don't rush past the questions. Repentance was never the price of admission to grace. It's the way we clear — so grace can fill every space.

Day 1 — Monday

Room Enough for Grace

Luke 3:1-6

"Make ready the way of the Lord" Luke 3:4

Dig Deeper by Reading: Isaiah 40:3-5, Revelation 3:20, 1st Corinthians 1:26-29, Psalm 51:17

When someone important is coming to your home, you don't decorate — you clear. You move the stack of mail off the good chair. You make a place for them to actually sit. That is closer to what repentance is than most of us think. It isn't tidying up your life to impress God. It's clearing out what's been piling up so there's finally room for Him to sit down.

Luke sets this scene in a crowded, powerful world — rulers, priests, an empire, everyone convinced the important things happen at the top. And the word of God quietly bypasses all of them. It travels out to one man on the ragged edge of the map. That's how God's word tends to move: downhill, toward the low and overlooked places, the way water always finds the valley.

Which is good news for you, because odds are you don't feel like the center of anything today. You don't have to be impressive for the word to come. It goes looking for the cluttered corners — the habit you keep

meaning to deal with, the friendship you've let go cold, the thing you'd rather not think about. And it doesn't come to shame you out of the room. It comes to help you clear one.

That's the idea to carry all week: repentance is not the toll you pay before grace shows up. It's how you make room for grace to move in. So don't spend these five days bracing for a scolding. Spend them clearing a chair.

APPLICATION

Pick one cluttered corner of your life today and clear one thing from it — not the whole room, just one item off the chair. Make the call. Delete the app. Open the drawer you've been avoiding. Then say it plainly: "There's room for You here now."

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Thank God that His Word came looking for you, not for the powerful.
- Ask Him which corner He wants cleared first
- Pray for a heart that clears space to receive Him, not to impress Him.

Day 2 — Tuesday

Recalculating

Luke 3:3–6

"... a baptism of repentance for the forgiveness of sins." Luke 3:3

Dig Deeper by Reading: 2nd Corinthians 7:10, Luke 15:17–20, Acts 3:19, Ezekiel 33:11

There's a moment every driver knows. You miss your turn, and the voice from the phone says — without a trace of judgment — "recalculating." It doesn't lecture you about the exit you blew past. It just quietly plots a new route from exactly where you actually are.

The Greek word for repentance is *metanoia* — literally, a change of mind. But in the biblical world, a changed mind was never a private opinion you kept to yourself. If your thinking turned, your feet turned with it. Repentance isn't sitting in the driver's seat feeling bad about the wrong road. It's taking the next available turn.

And here's what we tend to miss: the call to turn is never generic. Notice how carefully this passage is anchored — a real year, a real place, a real name. God doesn't broadcast repentance into the air like a traffic report meant for everyone and no one. He speaks to a person. Which means the call this week has your name on it and a location attached: the specific road you're on, the specific turn you've been coasting past.

So, the question isn't "should people repent." It's narrower and harder: what turn have I been meaning to take? You already know the one. You've driven past it a dozen times, promising yourself you'll get it next time. Grace doesn't shame you for the miss. It simply says, from right where you are: recalculating. Take the turn today.

APPLICATION

Name the one turn you've been coasting past. Then do the smallest real version of taking it today — not the whole trip, just the next exit. One honest sentence spoken. One thing deleted. One number finally dialed.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Thank God that His voice recalculates from where you truly are, not where you pretend to be.

- Confess the turn you've been driving past.
 - Ask for the will to actually steer, and not only to feel.
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Day 3 — Wednesday

You Can't Inherit This

Luke 3:7–9

"The axe is already laid at the root of the trees ..." Luke 3:9

Dig Deeper by Reading: John 8:39, Philippians 3:4–9, Romans 2:28–29, Mathew 7:19

Imagine inheriting a world-class home gym — top of the line, every machine you could want. You own it now, free and clear. But owning it doesn't make you strong. Fitness doesn't transfer through the paperwork. You could stand in that room every day of your life and never once lift a thing.

That's the mistake John confronts at the river. Crowds stream out to be baptized, and instead of congratulating them he calls them a nest of snakes and asks who tipped them off about the coming fire. Then he names their excuse before they can even reach for it: don't start telling yourselves, "We have Abraham as our father." Don't lean on the family name. Don't lean on how long you've had a seat in the building. Heritage is real — but it's inherited equipment. It can't do your turning for you.

We might keep a version of Abraham in our back pocket. "My family's always been part of this church." "I've believed since I was a kid." "I know every word to the songs." None of it is bad. All of it is beside the point. God, John says, can raise up children from the rocks on the ground — so your pedigree doesn't impress Him.

And notice the tense. The axe isn't being sharpened for someday out in the shed. It is already resting against the trunk. Not a threat hanging over the future — a question pressing on the present: is anything actually growing on these branches, or is it just an impressive family tree? You can't inherit fruit. You have to bear it.

APPLICATION

If you catch yourself reaching for your "Abraham" today — the credential you lean on instead of Christ or the excuse you make for not taking responsibility for your baggage — name it out loud, set it down. Then ask God for one real thing to grow on the branch where that excuse used to hang.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Confess the inherited credential you've been leaning on or the excuse you use to rationalize sin.
 - Thank God that He wants you, not your résumé.
 - Ask Him for fruit that is actually your own.
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Day 4 — Thursday

Evidence in the Ordinary

Luke 3:10–14

"... be content with your wages." Luke 3:14

Dig Deeper by Reading: Matthew 7:16–20, Micah 6:8, James 2:14–17, 1st Timothy 6:6–8

An apple tree does not fake it. It doesn't strain to look fruitful in the spring; it simply is what it is, and by late summer everyone can see exactly what it's been all along. Fruit isn't a performance. It's evidence.

When the crowds ask John three times, "What should we do?" you'd expect a preacher to point them toward more religious activity. Pray more. Read more. Come to another meeting. He does none of that. Every answer he gives is about ordinary life. To the crowd: if you have two coats, give one away. To the tax collectors: stop padding the bill. To the soldiers: quit shaking people down, and be content with your pay.

Look at what those three touch — your money, your power over other people, and your appetite for more. That's where repentance actually shows up. Not in the volume of your worship, but in how you handle a wallet, a position, and a paycheck that feels too small. Real change leaves its fingerprints in the least spiritual-looking places.

Here's a good test of the real thing: how do you treat the people who can do nothing for you? The one who can't repay the favor, can't advance your career, can't even thank you where it counts? Fruit shows up right there, in the margins, when no one is keeping score. So don't only ask, "Do I feel repentant?" Ask, "What would someone find if they looked at how I spent this ordinary Thursday?"

APPLICATION

Do one concrete thing today in the area of money, power, or contentment: give to someone who can't repay you, deal honestly where you could quietly pad something, or choose gratitude out loud where you'd normally grumble about not having enough. Make it something a bystander could actually see.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Ask God to grow fruit in the unspiritual corners — your wallet, your work, your wants.
- Bring Him the place you're tempted to pad, grab, or grumble.
- Pray for one person you can bless who can't pay you back.

Day 5 — Friday

The Best Man Steps Aside

Luke 3:15–18

"He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and fire" Luke 3:16

Dig Deeper by Reading: John 3:27–30, Malachi 3:2–3, Acts 2:1–4, Colossians 1:28

Everyone loves a wedding, but nobody comes for the best man. He can give the funniest toast of the night, and even though he's good at the job, not one person leaves talking about him. His entire role is to make the day about someone else — and then step out of the frame.

That's John. The crowds are so stirred that they start to whisper: maybe he's the One. And John kills the rumor on the spot. Someone is coming, he says, so much greater that I'm not fit to do even the lowest servant's job for Him. His whole ministry — the preaching, the baptizing, the crowds — was never a destination. It was an arrow, pointing past himself to Jesus. Repentance, it turns out, was never mainly about repentance. It was about getting people ready for a Person.

And that Person, John says, will baptize with the Holy Spirit and fire. Then he reaches for a harvest picture the crowd knew by heart. On the threshing floor you toss the beaten grain up into the wind: the

heavy, real kernels drop back to the floor, and the light, worthless husks blow away. The wind doesn't destroy the harvest — it saves it. It separates what has weight from what was only along for the ride.

Don't miss the quiet wonder in it. The word for Spirit is *pneuma* — the same word for wind. The very breath that carries off the husks is the breath that fills the grain. And Luke calls this whole thing — the warnings, the fire, the winnowing — "*the gospel*," the good news. Because it is. The sorting isn't God against you. It's God clearing away everything that was never really you, so that what remains can finally be gathered in.

APPLICATION

Picture the winnowing wind blowing across this past week. What in you has weight — redeemed, God-given, worth keeping? And what's only husk — light stuff clinging on that you already know wouldn't survive the wind? Name one husk and let it go today. Then thank God that the same Spirit who clears it is the One who fills you.

PRAYER PROMPTS

- Praise Jesus, the greater One that John and all of this was pointing to.
- Invite the Spirit — the wind — to blow across your life and separate the husk from the grain.
- Thank God that the sorting is good news: He is gathering you in, not casting you off.