

Sunday, January 16, 2022
“Meet Your King”
Summary of What is Repentance?
Matthew 3:1-12, 4:17
Wayne Shelton

When he posted the theses, Luther was very troubled by what was happening in his church. He was troubled by the practice of indulgence peddling and by other practices in the church. In the preface to the Ninety-Five Theses, Luther wrote, “Out of love for the truth and the desire to bring it to light, the following propositions will be discussed at Wittenberg over the oversight of the reverend father Martin Luther, master of arts and of sacred theology and lecturer on these subjects at Wittenberg. As Luther studied the Bible and compared it to what he was seeing in the church, he saw that they were not compatible, that there was a wide gulf between them. So, he called for a debate. We can see in the first two theses what Luther was up to. In the first thesis, he wrote, “When our Lord and Master Jesus Christ said, ‘Repent,’ He intended that the whole life of believers should be repentance.” Studying the Greek text, Luther realized early on that the Latin text misconstrued Christ’s first sermon, in which He says, “Repent.” The Latin has *poenitentiam agite*, which translates to “Do penance.” Luther knew enough Greek to know that’s not a good translation. In fact, he goes on to tell us in thesis 2, “The word ‘repentance’ cannot be understood to mean the sacrament of penance. What is the meaning of ‘repent’ or the term ‘repentance’?”

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