



Discussion Guide

July 8, 2018

Contrast: Regret That Leads to Life

Introduction: Read II Corinthians 7:1-11 Together

Let's get the context. Paul planted a church in ancient Corinth that had multiple problems. He wrote a letter [I Corinthians] and followed with a visit to try and straighten these problems out. Neither efforts worked, so he wrote a letter we don't have, a harsh letter. Paul was worried what effect this harsh letter might have. Would it end their relationship? Would it draw them back to God and right thinking? The good news was that it produced in them a sorrow, a good sorrow that brought them back to God and each other. There are many reasons to feel bad about sin on our lives. Godly sorrow over sin is the only and best resolution to the messes we make in life.

Discussion Questions

1. Paul speaks of both godly sorrow, that leads to repentance and life, and worldly sorrow that leads to death. Compare and contrast a couple of biblical examples of both. In I Samuel 15 it is recorded that King Saul violated a direct command from God, and then back-pedaled when confronted. In II Samuel 11, David is confronted by Nathan over his multiple sins. Where do you see examples of worldly sorrow vs. godly sorrow in the reactions of these two men? What was the eventual outcome of their sorrow and where did their brands of sorrow take them in life?
2. In Luke 15 is the famous story of the Prodigal Son in which Jesus describes the heart of God toward sinners. What do you come to understand about how a person caught in sin should express and live out godly sorrow in a return to God? What do you learn about God's response to us when we are genuinely sorry for our sin and have a desire to be in a right relationship with him again?

3. Bart suggested that the sensibilities of God should be considered first and foremost when we sin and feel bad about it. When you sin, behave badly, and then kick yourself over it, what is it about that, that makes you feel bad? Does it start with the fact that you have disappointed God, or another person, or yourself? Honesty with this question is allowed and encouraged. How often does God appear on your radar as you act and react in a typical day?
4. As you think back over apologies you have given or received in the past, can you think of any that ended up being rather lame, what some people call non-pologies? What makes an apology good and solid and well-received – or not so good?
5. This is a more personal question, but could you appropriately share a time when you had a moral failure, you sinned, and you worked through the progression of repenting before God, and apologizing to those you hurt? What was the outcome of that experience? Was it a life-giving relief, was a relationship restored or did it work out otherwise?

Moving Forward:

The Prophet Joel gives a helpful admonition as to how we should approach God in times when we know we owe him an apology. Making things right with God isn't a matter of going through histrionics to prove our regret – it is a matter of a broken heart because we have dishonored God. God is looking for true remorse and a desire to change a sinful course in life. With that comes the assurance that God has the loving heart of a good father, anxious to welcome us home.

Joel 2:13

Contemporary English Version (CEV)

**Don't rip your clothes
to show your sorrow.
Instead, turn back to me
with broken hearts.
I am merciful, kind, and caring.
I don't easily lose my temper,
and I don't like to punish.**