

If you have your Bibles, why don't you go ahead and grab them. We will be in Luke 7. I have to do quite a bit of work before we get there, but we'll just look at that story primarily as a piece of this puzzle we're trying to fit together. This is week three of *Recovering Redemption*. Up until this point, we have just kind of been talking about the longings of the human heart and the desire for the human heart to be fully satisfied.

We've said we kind of run to one of four and sometimes all four of these kind of crooked paths that don't lead us to where we think they're going to lead us. We're looking for fullness of life. We're looking for satisfaction. We're looking for fullness of soul. It just seems to be elusive. We have this kind of gnawing in us that always wants more and can't ever seem to get there. We're looking in one of these four areas. This is all of us. There is nobody in here who wouldn't find themselves on one of these paths.

We try to solve this idea of redemption, this angst in our souls with ourselves. By and large, the predominant buy-in of our culture is that a better version of us is going to somehow satisfy our souls. "If I could just make me better, I'll be a happier person. I'll have more joy. There will be more meaning in my life. I just need to be a better person than I am now." Our money, our time, our energy will always be pushed into, "I have to be a better version of me."

At nearly 40 years old now (I used to kind of say this kind of stuff when I was 20, and everybody would roll their eyes), let me just lay this before you. You will always be disappointing to you. You will always. All right? It doesn't matter how you transform. What you think you're... If that's getting all chiseled and fit, it's still not going to be enough. Getting a ton of money is still not going to be enough. You will not be able to fix you, because as we covered last week, you're actually the problem. If you're broken, any trying to put together of brokenness by what is broken only breaks it all the more. That's one of the crooked paths.

Another one that is wildly popular is others. We begin to seek others to validate us, to speak highly of us. We need them, whether they are our bosses or our spouses or those who work for us or our friends. God help us if it's our children. We just need them to tell us we have value. We put an unfair, sinful, almost wicked expectation on them to satisfy a longing in our hearts that they simply cannot satisfy. Why? Human beings make crummy gods. They really do.

You have never met one who would be good at it. Never. The greatest human being you know would be a crummy, crummy, crummy god. The greatest leaders in human history would make terrible gods. A lot of

times, they didn't make great humans. Ultimately, you're not going to find someone who completes you. Would you please put a bullet in that idea? Stop it. You're not going to find someone who completes you.

We also run to the crooked path of the world. We can either be on the crooked path of, "A better version of me is going to satisfy this angst in my heart," or, "I'm going to find the mythical 'one' who is going to satisfy this angst in my heart," or we run to the world. What I mean by running to the world... I'm trying to frame it in a different way than maybe you've heard it. We take the good gifts from God, and instead of relishing in those good gifts in such a way that it leads to greater worship of God, we simply abuse those good gifts and then get frustrated at God for giving us those gifts to begin with.

I used what I considered both to be big buckets as well as some provocative examples of this. Food, wine, and sex are great examples. They are all three given by God. They are all three created by God, manifested by God, and granted to all men by God. We talked about this. Lost people can eat good food, can't they? Somebody better talk to me here. Lost people who don't like Jesus, don't love Jesus, don't like God can eat a great steak and drink a great glass of wine. Correct? Let me ask you this. Do lost people enjoy sex? Yes.

Now here's what's different about the believer. If you're not a believer here, I'm telling you. This isn't meant to be offensive. This is true. For the believer, all of those experiences can roll up into a greater pleasure that doesn't just terminate on that pleasure itself. What I mean by that is for the believer in God, for those who have put their trust in Christ, the experience of a good meal should not terminate on the good meal but rather roll up to the God who not only provided but also created the flavors.

Now dinner with friends is a spiritual experience and doesn't just terminate in and on itself. The same is true with sex. On and on I could go. This is what happens when we submit our lives to a Creator God. When you try to soften that angst in your heart with the world, you end up abusing the world and then getting frustrated at God that it's not satisfying you. What I mean by that is we run to food for comfort.

Listen. After a long day, a bowl of Blue Bell will knock it out, won't it? It just feels better. "Golly. Tin Roof. Thank you." It just feels better. Wine can make you forget for a season, can it not? Sex is a great escape, but all three of those make terrible gods. When you run to those things to satisfy what only God can, you abuse the good gift, and it won't take long until there is collateral damage, and you'll begin to accuse the giver of the gift when you're the one who misused it to begin with.

He gives you a golf club. You beat your dog with it, and you're angry that your dog died. That's what's going on. He has given you good gifts. "Here is food. Here is wine. Here is sex." You abuse it, and then you get angry that he gave you the gift to begin with. It's madness. That's what I mean by running to the world. The

fourth crooked path, if you will, is religion. It's an attempt to tilt the scales in our favor. It's an attempt to try to be good enough for.

Look right at me. The scales don't exist. There are no scales. They don't exist. You are either completely justified by the blood of Jesus Christ, or you are not justified at all. There are no scales. There never were. You cannot be good enough. The prophet Isaiah clearly says all your righteousness is as filthy rags. You on your best day are still problematic outside of the grace and mercy of Jesus Christ. Religion is enslaving yourself to a type of performance-based acceptance that made Christ sick. It's what he went to the cross to destroy.

All four of these are crooked paths in all of us. We're not just victims of these things; we're active participants. When sin entered the world through the fall of Adam, did that fracture everything? Absolutely. Are you simply a victim of that rebellion? Absolutely not. You have gladly joined the rebellion against God by participating in all four of these things in different fashions. You have said, "I am the answer to my own problems." You have said, "Others will satisfy me." You have said to God, "I don't want you; I want your stuff." Every time you do that, you are aggressively rebelling against your Creator.

We said last week there is nothing we can do to fix this. Then we marveled at Romans 5 that laid out to us that while we were enemies, Christ died for us. Since we cannot rescue us, God did not leave us in that rebellion but actually came and rescued us out of it all while we were his enemy. He has this great question about, "Who would you be willing to die for?" He states that nobody would die for a bad man, although some of us might die for a good man.

Christ shows his love for us in this: that while we were yet sinners, he died for us. Then it goes on to say that while we were enemies of God, he rescued us. Then we marveled last week in the gospel in that these paths start to get straightened out when we put our faith in God, that he is who he says he is, and he has accomplished what he says he has accomplished. Then those crooked paths start to straighten up, not completely straight, but they just start to straighten up a bit.

Now, if I'm believing what God has said about me in the gospel through the person and work of Jesus Christ, then I know I am definitely not the solution. I need something other than me in order for me to be complete and full in heart. I don't need you to validate me; I've been validated. That is great news. There is nothing more freeing than the world not being about you, nothing. Now, think about that. Think how hard we fight to make the world about us, yet freedom is found in it not being about us.

Freedom is found when I am validated by God, accepted by God, called a son of God by God. I like you to like me, but I don't need you to like me. I like you to be here; I don't need you to be here. I've been set free

to love my wife like the Bible would ask me to love her, not demand, because I don't come home with a list of things she had better do to make me happy, because I don't need her to be that for me.

I love that my wife likes me. I'm not saying, "I wish she didn't like me. I don't need that." No, I like it. I like that she likes me. I like that she spends time with me. I like that she still likes to go out. I love all of that, but when all is said and done, my validation doesn't come by you accepting me, her accepting me, my children doing what I want them to do. I've been set free at some level. I'm not saying all of that is gone, but I'm saying the longer I follow him, the more he puts this to death more and more and more.

I get to be set free, and it's not about me. When really ridiculous things happen, I can just lay it down at the Lord's feet and just go, "Listen, I trust you. When all is said and done, I want to hear you say, 'Well done.' Nobody else has to say, 'Well done.' I want you to say, 'Well done,' to me." Then I just sit under his delight in me that is found in Jesus Christ.

In the world, I'm set free to enjoy it but not be enslaved by it. I'm set free to enjoy good meals with good friends and let that roll up into worship. When the Bible says, "He who finds a wife finds what is good," I have been set free to fully enter into the relationship with my wife and let that roll up into worship. We did that for the first seven years that were extremely difficult. We've been continuing to do that in the last seven years that have been extremely beautiful.

In the end, it has put to death or at least really straightened out this road of performance-based religion that would have me trying to earn what has been freely given to me. The illustration I used last week is that I still study my wife. I still date my wife. I still do sweet things for my wife, and it's with a great deal of discipline that I do those things, and none of those things are done so I can get her to marry me. I'm already married to her.

I'm doing those things because in a disciplined pursuit of my wife's heart, my intimacy and relationship with her grows and flourishes. Discipline is not legalism. It's important that you get that. Discipline is not legalism if discipline is applied toward the ongoing maturation and deepening of intimacy. When I'm talking about religion, please don't hear me saying, "Oh you get up early and read your Bible. That's legalism." No, it's smart. It's discipline.

It's posturing myself under the Word of God to see and understand more clearly that I might worship him more fervently, that I might be set all the more free to enjoy him. We said that by putting our faith in the life, death, and resurrection of Jesus Christ on our behalf, justifying and adopting us (which we'll talk about length next week), we are saved, born again, made children of God.

The question I want to answer this week in this line of sermons is, "What is the fruit of faith? How do we know if we have put our faith in the Lord?" I'll tell you why I think today will be both difficult and necessary. Again, my 11 years here has taught me quite a bit. My second year here, I asked a man how long he had been a Christian. He said, "Well, I was born in San Antonio." I love the Hill Country, but being born in Texas doesn't make you a Christian.

I could go on and on and on with the ridiculous things people have said to me about what makes them a Christian. I talk to you about this all the time. Unfortunately, what I'm so concerned about is it seems to be just fine here where we are for people to say, "I'm a Christian," with there being no transformation, no repentance, no hatred for sin, nothing about their lives that has ever been different, except for the fact that when they were six years old, they got scared of hell and got baptized, or their mama and daddy were Methodist, or they grew up in *this* church, or they went to *this* VBS, or they went to *this*.

There is no real transformation of soul; there is just, "I've been to church a bit, so I'm a Christian." Listen, the Bible is not going to let us get away with that. The fruit of faith is repentance, lives that are marked with repentance. That's difficult, because we live in a culture that doesn't want to ever say anything is wrong. It can be wrong for you, but it better not be wrong for anybody else but you. You are the beginning and the end of any moral reasoning.

The second you think there is moral reasoning that is true for everyone, you're a bigot. To demand repentance like the Bible is going to demand is to really set ourselves up to be misunderstood, set ourselves up to be marginalized, set ourselves up not to be the cool kids. I want to try to bring some clarity to this idea of repentance, because when all is said and done, repentance is a beautiful, beautiful thing.

When the Bible says you'll know a tree by its fruits, it's basically saying you'll know what's inside of you by what your life is bearing. In regards to faith, if the sight of apples on a tree reveals that the nature of the tree is one of being an apple tree, so repentance is a fruit of the inner essence of a man or a woman who has put their faith in Jesus Christ. I want us to talk about repentance, because I think it has been misunderstood.

I think oftentimes, what happens is people think repentance is kind of like Old Testament. It's not happy God. It's not New Testament stuff. It's Old Testament. We get this kind of idea of some crusty old, probably with a beard, with some manna in it, yelling at everybody. He's angry. He's calling fire down to kill. She bears are mauling teenagers. We kind of get that imagery in our heads.

Here's what you need to know. The ministry of Jesus Christ wasn't fluttering about sprinkling love dust on everyone. Rather, Christ's ministry was one of calling people to repentance. I'll show you that in Mark 1:14.

You can stay in Luke. I'll put it on the screen. It says this. **"Now after John was arrested..."** John the Baptist. There is your guy. He didn't cut his hair, camel skins, eating bugs and honey. There is your old school, repent...

Then Jesus shows up after John the Baptist is arrested, and he's going to fix all this repentance nonsense. He's just going to come in and go, "You know what, forget about it. You guys are awesome. Come on." Surely he's going to do that, right? He's just going to take out the fairy dust and start throwing it around on everybody and go, "You know, forget about that crazy old coot. He's going to get his head cut off here in a second." That's not what Jesus does.

He says this. **"Now after John was arrested, Jesus came into Galilee, proclaiming the gospel of God."** Now remember, *gospel* means good news, and for news to be good, it invades dark spaces. The dark space is we've been on crooked paths. The gospel of the kingdom is Christ is here. Repentance is now possible. New life is available. He ends this by preaching, **"The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand..."** What? Oh, you don't want to read that word. What does that word say? **"...repent and believe in the gospel."** "Repent and believe the good news, the good news that invades dark spaces."

What does repentance look like? I mean, is it crying? Is it regret? Is it sad? What does it mean to repent? Is it just that military term that means to turn and walk the other way? Well, let's chat about it. Second Corinthians 7:10 is going to help us. It's going to build some framework that I think will be helpful. Here is what it says. You're still there in Luke. We're going to get there in just a second.

It says in 2 Corinthians 7:10, **"For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death."** Here's is what you have. You have two types of grief, two types of sorrow. Let's do this. There are two types of regret. Hurt. "I wish I wouldn't have done that." Here is what the Bible just said. There is a type of grief, a type of sorrow that is godly, that leads to repentance and salvation without regret. Life without regret. That's a Nike commercial. *Bam*. Swoosh on it. Life without... Sell that.

All right, now you have this idea of life without regret, salvation without regret. Then you have worldly sorrow that leads to death. It's important to note there will be sorrow. There is a type of sorrow that is going to lead to repentance and salvation and a life without regret, and there is a type of sorrow that ultimately just leaves you dead. If I have to walk in grief of some kind, and I have a type of grief that leads to a swoosh, and I have a type of grief that leads to death, I'm going to go life-without-regret section if I can.

Here is where it might get confusing. How do you know the difference between godly grief and worldly grief? Let's start with worldly, and then we'll roll back to godly. Here is what it means to walk in worldly grief. Here is what it means to walk in sorrow over sin, over failings in a way that isn't really godly but has some sorrow to it. I have four things here.

Worldly grief is almost always horizontal. How many of you have kids? Do you have kids who are just sad they got caught, not really sad for what they did? They're just sad they got busted. They're saying, "Sorry," but they're not really sorry. They're more sorry that they just got busted. This is horizontal grief. It has nothing to do with God. There is no acknowledgment that I have sinned against God. It is not spiritual at all.

It is simply, "Man, I've blown it. Man, my wife is really angry. Man, my kids are really frustrated. Man, my coworkers don't trust me." It's just horizontal. It is emotional and not spiritual. In worldly grief, will there be snot and tears? Maybe. Can you wail and weep and it only be worldly? Absolutely. Here is the thing. You'll also have some tears and snot in some godly grief.

Here's the interesting point. Worldly grief is purely emotional and not spiritual. The reason that's problematic is because emotions calm down, don't they? Everyone in this room knows you will impulsively make some decisions around emotion that you're not or that you are, and then when those emotions settle down, what do you do? You go right back to what you were doing, right?

It's not transformative. It's horizontal grief that has you in an emotional state, promising you'll never do it again, but there are no spiritual roots. It doesn't have anything to do with God. It's just that you've made some mistakes. Your life is burning down, and you hate the fact that your life is burning down. Thirdly, worldly grief is passive toward the cause of grief. It's not serious about putting sin to death in their lives. It's more about trying to train sin. Maybe this will help.

Several years ago, I went out to... Some of our members have a cabin in East Texas they let me use to write. I went out there and was doing some writing. They have four-wheelers and rifles and everything a Texan would love. I went out there and goofed around a bit. I came in and was cooking dinner. I turned on the television, and the show *When Animals Attack* was on. Have you seen this show? I love this show. I mean, I'm not going to lie.

The second thing is I always cheer for the animal. I always cheer for the animal, because I believe the person involved is a fool. All right? If you're riding a bull, and you get the bull to buck by doing what you have to do to get the bull to buck, I'm cheering for the bull. I'm watching this. It's a commercial, and it

comes back, and they show this man walking a lion in with a chain like the thing was a dog. He's like, "You sit." The lion sat. He's like, "Lie down." The lion lay down. I was like, "Whoa! I want one of these!"

Then this scantily-clad woman comes out holding this bottle of shampoo, and then she leans against the lion while they shoot, and she's saying something. Then the lion slaps the thing out of her hand and then mauls the lady. She doesn't die, or I wouldn't use this as an illustration, all right? The lion mauls her. Listen to this. Then they're interviewing people, and it has blown everybody's minds that this has happened.

I'm thinking, "No, of course this happened." A lion is an apex predator. When it's not killing stuff, it's thinking about killing stuff. That's literally all it does. There is no other purpose it has in the system it's in except to kill off certain things. Someone thought it would be a good idea to put this woman in a swimsuit and lay her across the animal, and then has the gall to look into the cameras like, "I can't believe it," because I can believe it.

Listen. If you put a fajita in front of me (I'll be straight), I'm not going to eat it right now. I'm not hungry. I already ate. Later on this afternoon, it doesn't even matter if you're still... I'll take that fajita and eat it. This woman gets mauled, and it blows everybody's minds that this happened. Now listen to me. Worldly sorrow is not interested in killing the lion; it's interested in training the lion.

Worldly sorrow is not, "I'm going to seriously fight my sin." It's passive. It's, "Man, I can't believe that happened. This time, I'll tell you what, I'm going to train the lion even more. You sit! Bad lion!" In the hopes the lion won't maul us later as we show it who the boss is. That's what I mean by worldly sorrow being passive. It's a lack of seriousness about the danger we're in with sin. It's a playing with forces that are monumentally more powerful than we are, all the while believing we can hold it in check.

It doesn't matter how many limbs we're missing. "He won't get me again." Like, "Bro, you don't have any more arms. You're gambling now with limbs you're running out of." It's that kind of game. "I can make him do what I want. I can keep him in his kennel. I can teach him to roll over. I can..." All the while, he's destroying... You're allowing, you're letting this thing destroy you.

Worldly sorrow is not serious about killing sin. It's trying to train it. It doesn't want to kill it. It thinks the lion is cute. You should have heard this trainer. "I've had him since he was a cub." No, no, no, brother. He's had you since he was a cub. You're the pet; he's not. In the end, it's not serious about sin. It's passive.

The fourth marker of worldly grief is worldly grief is full of pride and avoids responsibilities and consequences. How it works is, "Man, I really regret that." Tears. "I can't believe he or she has left me. I

can't believe this has happened. I'm being fired from my job. I really, really hate this." People enter the fray to try to serve as those things come out, and then all of a sudden, "Well hey, man, you're not taking my lion from me. Who are you to tell me I can't have a lion?"

All of a sudden, "I'll tell you whose fault it is I have that lion. It's your fault I have that lion. I didn't buy that." "No, you actually bought the lion." "Well, you told me to buy it." All of a sudden, it's blame-shifting. It's, "No consequences are on me." It's that kind of apology you'll hear athletes make sometimes. "I'm sorry if that offended you. I didn't mean for that to offend anybody." That's not an apology, man.

You're actually putting it on other people. "I'm sorry you were offended." I didn't do anything. It's you who are wrong. That's what happens in worldly sorrow. "I'm sorry you..." It's not an apology. It's not owning it. It's not owning up to the consequences. It's actually putting the consequences for your sin on other people. Collateral damage. It's wicked. This is worldly sorrow, and this leads to death.

Godly sorrow doesn't operate like that. Let's talk about godly sorrow, godly grief. What I'm about to teach through is not original to me. Thomas Watson who is a Puritan wrote a 90-page little pamphlet (if a Puritan thing can be called a pamphlet) called *The Doctrine of Repentance*. I'm pulling these six things from his little pamphlet. You can download that PDF for free online and read it. It's a great little booklet. You'll love it.

He says there are really six things that come together around godly grief that lead us to repentance, lead us to the salvation with a life with no regrets. Here is what they are. Godly grief has sight. It can see. That sounds silly and elementary, but man, don't ever despise the gift of sight. To be able to see sin is a great mercy and grace from God, because most of us are blind to our rebellion against God and our sinfulness toward God. We're just blind to it.

When God grants sight to people, it is a beautiful gift. I think you see this most clearly in Luke 15, the parable of the prodigal son. He took his inheritance, and he squandered his wealth on prostitutes and alcohol. He really made a mess of his life. He was buying friends. He was buying drinks for his friends, buying girls for his friends. A famine hit. He lost all his money. He ends up in a pigsty eating the slop. This is royalty, son of the father, in a pigsty, eating the slop meant for pigs.

In Luke 15:17, one of the most beautiful sentences in the Bible is found. Here is what it says. **"But when he came to himself..."** When he woke up, when he was able to see... He woke up, and he was like, "I'm in a pigsty. I'm eating the food that was meant for pigs when I'm the son of royalty, when I have a father whose slaves live better than I live." He comes to himself. It's the gift of sight.

Listen to me. Here is why the proclamation of the whole Word of God becomes so important. The Word of God is surgical. Are you tracking with what I mean by that? The Word of God is going to cut. It's going to reveal. It's going to show us where our rebellion is. When the Word of God is preached or when you read it, if you feel discomfort, if you don't like it, if you feel uneasy...look at me...don't ever despise that. That is a gift from God to let you see.

You see, the Word of God serves the type of MRI purpose on our lives. It reveals where a tumor is. It reveals where cancer is. It reveals where we are sick. The full counsel of God being proclaimed to us becomes important so that we might see where we're weak, where we're diseased, where we need. The gift of sight is the first marker of godly sorrow. "I have sinned." To be able to see it.

If you don't have sight, man, this is where you really need to ask the Lord. If you feel like there is no sin in you, this is problematic. That's 1 John 1:5-10. "If you say there is no sin in you, you lie and deceive yourselves." The truth isn't in you. The apostle John is going to go so far as to say if you think you're sinless, you're not saved. If you think you're sinless, that's not a marker of a converted heart.

Ultimately here, the gift of sight then leads to the gift of sorrow. You have sight, and sight flows to sorrow. We see our sin, and then we feel sorrow about our sin. In fact, sorrow in the Bible or grief in this text really means the embitterment of the soul, and if you read how men feel the weight of their sin in the Bible... These aren't things I would recommend to you to do. Jeremiah beat his own thigh. He punched himself in the thigh repeatedly when he became aware of his sin. Ezra pulled out his hair.

Again, these aren't, "So let's get to it today. It's lab time. Yank out some hair." You have the tax collector in Jesus' parable of the tax collector and the Pharisee who beat this breast. You have Isaiah in sackcloth and ashes. There is an embitterment of the soul. "I have sinned against the living God. Let's look in Luke 7 at some of this sorrow. It's just one of my favorite stories just to think on and look at and watch this beautiful woman here. It's hard to get our minds around what's really going on here, but let's look at it. Luke 7:36.

"One of the Pharisees asked him [Jesus] to eat with him [a Pharisee named Simon or Simeon], and he went into the Pharisee's house and reclined at the table. And behold, a woman of the city, who was a sinner, when she learned that he was reclining at table in the Pharisee's house, brought an alabaster flask of ointment, and standing behind him at his feet, weeping, she began to wet his feet with her tears and wiped them with the hair of her head and kissed his feet and anointed them with the ointment."

Now, this "woman of the city" doesn't mean she had a flat downtown. Are you tracking? This "woman of the city" is a woman of ill repute, more than likely a prostitute who hears Jesus is at the house of this

Pharisee, this Pharisee who clearly knows who she is and who feels she is an unclean woman, not worthy to be touching the feet of Jesus. If we had time, we could keep reading the story. You would find all of those pieces present.

She's walking into this home where she has been cruelly judged, has been shown no compassion. No one, when they're in third grade, goes, "I'd like to be a prostitute when I grow up." Certain things happen to get you to that point. All of them are gut-wrenching. Here is where this woman is, and she enters into this house where she has been shamed. She has been hard-pressed. She had been belittled, and she had been pushed to the margins.

She owns her sin. She goes behind Jesus, falls at his feet, and she sobs. We'll talk about this here in a second, but Jesus, between the dialogue with her and the Pharisees, lifts up her face. "You see this woman? You have not done for me what this woman has done for me." Then he begins to attack the self-righteousness the Pharisees walked in to extend grace.

Note her sorrow. Does she have people she can blame for her position? Probably. I can only imagine what some of the work we have done with women coming out of strip clubs and prostitution that this woman has had some legitimate hurts and has felt backed into a corner and has felt lost and hopeless. Just a mess of a life, but she's owning it. She's owning it at his feet, sobbing.

This sorrow has to be vented. This sight that leads to this sorrow has to be vented, so that takes us kind of to Watson's third point. This sorrow vents, and godly grief, after it sees and feels sorrow, then begins to get active in both confession and other actions. If you remember how worldly sorrow is passive, godly sorrow is active. It's going to put a bullet in the head of a lion by the power of the Holy Spirit.

It's not going to give it comfort. It's not going to buy it a kennel and a new chew toy. It's not going to grab a new leash. It's going to chamber around, drag it out into the street, and pop it probably multiple times over a course of decades. Let's look at some of this biblically. First of all, the most common place sorrow works itself out is in confession. There are two ways confession goes, vertical and horizontal.

Psalm 32:5 says, "**I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord,' and you forgave the iniquity of my sin.**" Do you remember how worldly sorrow was completely horizontal? In this case, confession is vertical with an acknowledgement that some horizontal things have happened.

David, after he commits adultery with Bathsheba and then has her husband killed says, "Against you and you alone have I sinned." Okay, David, but you killed a dude and then slept with another man's wife. You

have sinned against others. The point the Bible is making is it is the sin against God that enables the sin against others to even take place.

First and foremost, we confess unto the Lord, but it doesn't just go vertical. It often goes and often should go horizontal. Psalm 40 is a wildly popular psalm, predominantly because of U2, but it's better than even that. Here's what King David says in Psalm 40:10. **"I have not hidden your deliverance within my heart; I have spoken of your faithfulness and your salvation; I have not concealed your steadfast love and your faithfulness from the great congregation."**

Again, I love this idea. Not only is confession going up vertically to the Lord, but now he is talking about it in the great congregation. "God has saved. God has lifted me. God has delivered me. God has rescued me." Lest you think that's all kind of warm and frilly, the first part of this psalm says, "I was in the muck and the mire." Later on in the psalm, he says, **"My sins have overtaken me, and I cannot see. They are more than the hair of my head."**

This isn't just, "Rah rah! Yay, God!" This was, "I was in a dark spot, and God saved me." It is a testimony to the faithfulness of God despite our brokenness. Oh that we might be a people who embrace the confession of sins among one another for the good of our own souls and for the glory of God. You do realize it's really difficult for the Enemy to accuse you of anything if you're fully known. Have you ever thought about that?

When you lie in bed, "I hope people don't find out I'm a fake," you know what would be great? To put all your stuff out there so you can't ever be found out as a fake. Just think about how refreshing that would be. If you're constantly trying to hide stuff... Listen. David said, **"When I kept quiet about my sin, my bones wasted away..."** This kind of white-washed, pretty, real Christians of the metroplex has to die. It has to.

You have no shot at legitimate freedom if you're constantly trying to put out this vibe that you're further along than you are, that you're not struggling like you are, that you're not wrestling like you are. That's a façade that enslaves you and does nothing to let you walk in the freedom Christ has made available to you. See, if I'm just laying it out there, I sleep well. I'm not wondering, "What if I get busted?" I'm not going to. I've already laid it out there.

I don't know what you believe about the literal Devil, but if the Devil comes and is like, "Hey, man. All these people think they know you. I know who you are." "Yeah, I know who I am too. That's why I told Josh and Brian and Brad that this is what I was struggling with and gave that to them. They prayed for me, so why don't you get out of my bedroom?"

You think of how impossible it is to be accused. I feel like where I am in my life right now that if you came up and said, "I need to talk to you," my first thought would not be, "Oh no." I just don't have to walk in that. See, I'll say this. I've said it a lot. I want to always say it to you. To be 99 percent known is to be unknown. If you have your little 1 percent, and you're giving away 99, nobody knows you.

In that moment, when you choose to walk like that, you've made it impossible to receive love, impossible. Here is why. If someone actually tries to love you, you'll justify not receiving that love by going, "They don't know who I really am. If they knew who I really was, there is no way they would love me like that." You've done that. You've enslaved you to that by not being known.

Listen. You are more concerned protecting the image you're projecting of yourself and being enslaved to that image than you are actually being set free by being fully known and then tangibly experiencing the grace of God among a covenant people who say, "Struggle well, brother." See, here is the great thing about the church. We'll kill the lion with you. We're dragging our own, so why don't we drag both our lions out and take some bats to them.

Is that too violent? Is that too much? I probably need to back off the television. Let's put these things to death together. That's the beauty of the church. We all have lions. If you think you don't have one, chances are you're in his mouth. If you think you don't have one, chances are you're already in his mouth. Sorrow leads to action. If you're still in Luke, go to Luke 19. We'll start in verse 8. I love this wee little man we're about to read about.

Starting in verse 8. **"And Zacchaeus stood and said to the Lord, 'Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor. And if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I restore it fourfold.' And Jesus said to him, 'Today salvation has come to this house...'"** Now, I'll just stop there. Here is what has just happened. Zacchaeus is not only repentant of his sin, but notice now he is literally saying, "I'm going to go above and beyond repayment of anything I've ever done."

He's doing it with gladness. "I'm not only going to give back, but I'm going to give fourfold back," not under the command of Jesus. Jesus didn't go, "Here is your penance." That's not what happened. Jesus literally went to the man's house and ate with him, and the presence of Christ so compelled Zacchaeus toward repentance that he not only gives back to those he stole from but gave them back fourfold.

Can you imagine that knock on the door? "Hey, I stole from you, but here," just emptying his pockets with gladness. It seems there is a type of freedom that is better than being wealthy and comfortable under the banner of a lie. Real repentance, godly grief, leads to sight that leads to sorrow that leads to action, namely confession and a seriousness to put sin to death.

There is also this element of shame in godly sorrow, but it's not the type of shame the world experiences. I'm running out of time in a bad way here, but I need to unpack this so you can get it. I think it will be helpful moving forward. The cycle many people find themselves in in regard to worldly grief, the reason it leads to death is because more often than not, the thing that causes our shame and guilt is the very thing we run to to medicate our shame and guilt. Right?

Probably the most common that people have heard of, or if you've watched *Intervention*, is someone will, if they're an alcoholic, get drunk. They can't believe they did it again, so they begin to spiral into shame and guilt. What do they do to get rid of the feelings of shame and guilt? They drink. Then they can't believe they did it again, so they medicate it again by drinking or with drugs or with food or with sex or with whatever idol you want to plug in there.

The shame we feel under the weight of God's holiness is not a type of shame that leads us into sin, but rather a type of sin that leads us out. It's the lifting up of the prostitute's face by Jesus where he goes, "No, no, no. We're not doing this anymore." He leads her out of that bondage. It's a type of nakedness we find true warmth in. It's not the type of shame that leads to the downward spiral of medicating shame with what caused the shame to begin with, but rather a lifting of the head and a leading toward life.

Then godly grief produces a hatred for sin. We begin to hate the lion. We hate it. We don't think it's cute anymore. We don't like his tricks. We want him to die...violently, painfully, quickly die. That's what happens. We hate our sins. To belittle the name of our God is no longer acceptable to us. We want it dead. All that grief and all those pieces come together by the power of the Holy Spirit to lead us into repentance and a life without regret.

Am I saying you won't look back on your life and wish you would have done things differently? No, I don't even think that's what the text means when it says a salvation without regret. I think what happens once you get under the covering of God's grace is you begin to see how he has redeemed your mess-ups, how he redeems your failures, how he redeems the things you've walked through and now actually turns them on their heads. It means God is celebrated rather than belittled.

This is what the author of Hebrews means in chapter 12 where he says Christ went to the cross scorning its shame. He scorns the shame we once walked in, because God has delivered us from those things and therefore has shown us he is greater than those things. We seriously begin to attack our sins. See, here is the thing about repentance. For its bad rap, repentance is just a really sweet surrender. It's just, in weariness, giving it over to the Lord.

I find that people, when you think about repentance, think about big things. "I have this huge chunk." Oftentimes, it's the roots that need to be laid at the Lord's feet. It's control. It's fear. It's anxiety. It's a failure to trust. Those are the roots that produce the fruit that so many of us are battling in our lives.

I want you to watch Nina Sanchez's story. I actually met her one of her first weekends here. She was just a mess, in tears. She dragged me out into the side hallway at HV and talked to me for about an hour about what was going on in her life. It was a beautiful story of God's redemption and repentance. Here is Nina's story of sweet surrender.

[Video]

Nina Sanchez: Hi, my name is Nina, and I grew up kind of back and forth between my grandparents and my mom and my stepdad. I just kind of became a really rebellious child. That kind of lasted until I was about 20 years old. A friend of mine handed me the number to a Christian counselor. I started meeting with this counselor, and he shared Christ with me. The Lord just really began to work on transforming my heart. Whenever I came to know the Lord, I saw him more as someone I had to please.

I couple of months after that, I started dating a guy who I was going to Bible study with. We got married. Everything kind of started out okay. A couple of years in, it got a little bumpy. One day, about 10 years in, I got a phone call from my husband at the time who was at work. He said, "I'm not coming home." I said, "You're not coming home tonight, or you're not coming home ever?" He said, "I'm not coming home ever."

At the time, we had a 4-year-old, a 3-year-old, a 1-year-old, and a 1-month-old. I kind of looked around at these little babies and thought, "What in the world am I going to do?" The Lord allowed me to go to this worship event one night, and I really felt like he said, "Take an envelope and just tear it into pieces." So I tore it into a couple of pieces. He said, "No, like tear it into a lot of pieces." I sat there and tore it into a lot of pieces. Then I felt like the Lord said to me, "Now put it all back together. Nina, that's what you're trying to do."

It was just a night of sweet surrender of just like taking all of these broken pieces I had and just surrendering them up to the Lord and seeing that when I try to manage things that it just creates chaos. Since that time, I actually have gotten remarried, and Mark and I have a sweet little boy who is two years old now. He is a wonderful gift. The Lord has done a mighty work in allowing us even to have him.

I still feel like I struggle sometimes with when circumstances around me get tough and I get squeezed, do I really trust the Lord in that? Do I really believe he has good for me? I still come back to that place of, "I

just need to surrender. I just need to take all of these pieces and just lay them before the Lord and just surrender them all to him."

[End of video]

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