

Watch week 3 of Starting Over here (https://youtu.be/KEr_GH2vXUc) or on the oneChurch.tv App (<https://subsplash.com/onechurch/app>)

STARTING OVER, PART 3: RELEASE YOUR REGRETS

When we have done something wrong or when something undeserved has happened to us, we can easily get hung up in guilt, blame, and grudge holding. The questions and emotions inside us can prevent us from moving past our regrets in a new direction. Once we recognize our regrets, it's time to begin to release them. This is a critical step that often demands that we forgive or seek forgiveness moving us one step closer to breaking out of the Sorry Cycle. So if regret has become a useless burden around your neck, drop it. Let's learn to let it go. Release it.

BIG IDEA: Holding onto Grudges keeps us stuck. Forgiving let's go and gets us unstuck.

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. If you could take a time machine into the past to warn a historical character before they made a regretful decision, whom would you pick? Explain.
2. When you hear the phrase "release regret," what picture does that paint in your mind?
3. Why do we have a tendency to hold on to our regrets?
4. In the [video for session 3](#), what part of Greg's starting over story did you find most helpful to you? What role did forgiveness play in Greg's story? How are you beginning to see that forgiveness will play an important part in your starting over story?



Releasing your stick keeps you from getting stuck.

Looking back to the story of David we covered last week, we see that David struggled to keep his lie for a year before he decided to make things right. David was famous for loving God. He was called "the man after God's own heart." He was the warrior who stared down a giant calling out, "The battle is the Lord's!" He worshipped God with such abandon it made other people despise him. He wrote many meaningful songs of spiritual depth. Now, he was exposed as an adulterer and a murder.

Living at peace with everyone requires starting with us. When we are living with a lie — distracting, numbing, and controlling — peace is not likely something we feel inside. The path to helping change starts with first acknowledging something needs to change.

5. Can you recall a time you tried to assert control to keep something hidden? Have you ever tried to distract from a nagging feeling inside?
6. Stressful situations and regrets keep many of us awake at night. Tossing and turning instead of falling into restorative rest. Lack of sleep actually increases anxiety and depression. Can you recall the difference between ending your day with peace in your heart and ending it carrying burdens?

What did he do next? David did what he had done in moments of distress and situations of powerful emotion ever since he was a youth. He picked up his harp, headed for a place of solitude, and strummed out his feelings of guilt and sorrow before God. The song David wrote on that occasion is recorded in Psalm 51.

7. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Psalm 51.*

For the choir director: A psalm of David, regarding the time Nathan the prophet came to him after David had committed adultery with Bathsheba. Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin. For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there. Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.
Psalm 51:1-12 (NLT)

8. What feelings does reading David's prayer evoke in you? Have you ever talked to God expressing what is going on in your heart?
9. What words and phrases stand out to you most in Psalm 51? Explain.
10. In what ways do you see David recognizing and releasing his regrets in this song?
11. Can you relate to David? How has God helped you release a regret and come out on the other side closer to Him?
12. What are some things that keep you from being honest with God?
13. *With your Bible or Bible App, read Romans 12:18-21.*

If it is possible, as far as it depends on you, live at peace with everyone. Do not take revenge, my friends, but leave room for God's wrath, for it is written: "It is mine to avenge; I will repay," says the Lord. On the contrary: "If your enemy is hungry, feed him; if he is thirsty, give him something to drink. In doing this, you will heap burning coals on his head." Do not be overcome by evil, but overcome evil with good.

Romans 12:18-21 (NIV)

14. Chris said, "We can't control how the other person responds, but we can do all that we can do to live at peace with everyone. In a conflict, even if your friend is 98% wrong and you only contributed 2% of the wrong, take 100% responsibility of your 2%." Think of the last conflict you had with someone. What part did you play in the conflict? Did you take 100% responsibility for your part? Talk about it with the group.
15. If living at peace with everyone begins with you, what might you need to do to encounter the peace of God in your heart?
16. Do you find comfort in Romans 12:19-20? Do you believe that God will avenge the wrong done to you? How does the thought of meeting your enemy's needs feel to you?
17. Romans 12:21 says that we should overcome evil with good. Do you believe this is possible? What evidence do you have of this in your past? How does this work?
18. The process of letting go of our regrets is usually tied to forgiveness. Is it harder for you to receive forgiveness from others, extend it to others, or forgive yourself? How would you go about letting go of a regret that may be the result of a life circumstance?
19. Lewis Smedes wrote that when we forgive, "You set a prisoner free, but you discover that the real prisoner was yourself." In what ways can forgiving someone else set you free from regret?
20. God wants you to be free. God gave us his Son, Jesus, so all of us might experience forgiveness and freedom. What do you need to let go of to truly be free?

MOVING FORWARD

We all have regrets. Too often like a dog with a giant stick we hold onto them and they keep us from moving forward. Holding onto **Grudges** keeps us **stuck**. Grudge-holding is living in the past. Forgiving is moving forward. We release our regrets when we choose to forgive. It's time to release them. It's time to let go.

WEEKLY READING

This week, spend some time reading and reflecting on *Psalm 51, 1 John 1:9, Romans 12:18-21, Ephesians 4:32, Matthew 5:23-24.*