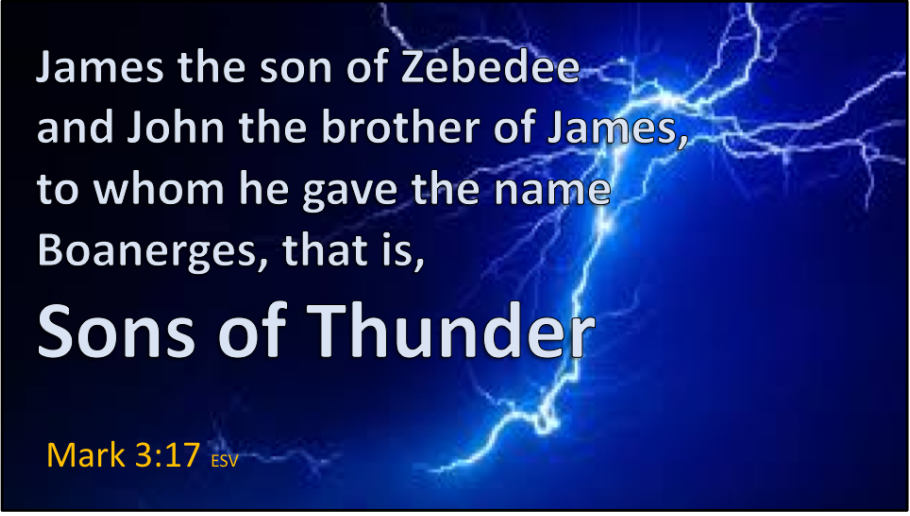




**(Set up beach tent, chair, hat)**



James the son of Zebedee  
and John the brother of James,  
to whom he gave the name  
Boanerges, that is,

## Sons of Thunder

Mark 3:17 ESV

**As I sat in this tent, under my big hat, I pondered what I could do to help people actually change.**

**-- What had changed John, a Boanerges, a Son of Thunder INTO an Apostle of Love?**

**-- From wanting to call down lightening to destroy people INTO being carried on a stretcher and repeatedly telling people, "Love one another"?**

**TR: What changed him from being full of tumult and strife to . .**

**.**



**. . . a person of peace?**

**-- As we talked about last week, a person of Shalom, that completeness, harmony, wholeness that goes way further than just the absence of conflict?**

**TR: My pondering during sabbatical and then this summer showed me that people don't live out Shalom because they . . .**



Have we experienced His  
peace and presence?

*We can't give what we  
haven't received.*

*We can't share what we  
haven't experienced.*

... have not experienced Shalom.

-- One of our key questions last week still should be ringing in our ears ... READ SLIDE

TR: John experienced the love of God, His peace and presence.

**1 John 4:7-9**

Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. <sup>8</sup>Anyone who does not love does not know God, because God is love. <sup>9</sup>In this **the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world,** so that we might live through him.

ESV

**This Apostle of Love wrote . . . READ SLIDE**

**-- Note that God's love was made manifest by sending His Son**

**-- Just as the familiar John 3:16 says, "God so loved the world that He sent . . ."**

**TR: This manifest love is more specifically described in the next two verses . . .**

1 John 4:10-11

In this is love, not that we have loved God but **that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation** for our sins.  
<sup>11</sup>Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.

ESV

### READ SLIDE

-- John experienced the love of God through Jesus, Who was sent to be the One to take our punishment and make atonement for us.

-- If God so loved us . . . so pursued us by sending His Son . . . our we not to love one another?

TR: As I pondered in the tent, especially one afternoon, pages in my journal filled up and when all that was later boiled down, I came to . . .

# Pursuing Peace

## *The Five Core Commitments*

**. . . the five core commitments.**

**-- The five uncommon, rare, often by-passed commitments that can change us from Boanerges to the Sent Ones of Love.**

**-- In the workbook I wrote during sabbatical there is a section of biblical study.**

**-- We will look at portions of some 23 out of 99 foundational Scripture passages.**

**TR: The first uncommon commitment is foundational . . . to . . .**



**P**URSUE PEACE

**READ SLIDE**

- NOT to just like the idea of peace
- NOT to think peace is wonderful if someone else gives it to us
- NOT to imagine that it is as easy as making a 1960's or 70's peace sign.

**TR: But, pursuing peace. Why would we do that?**



**Matthew 5:7-9**

**“Blessed are the merciful, for they shall receive mercy.**

**<sup>8</sup>Blessed are the pure in heart, for they shall see God.**

**<sup>9</sup>Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God.”**

ESV

**... because we have experienced peace with God we want to share His communicable attributes.**

**-- Those qualities of God that we can share as those made in His image.**

**-- READ SLIDE**

**-- To be called His sons, in a time when almost all sons followed their father's footsteps in work, is to be like Him.**

**TR: Why do we pursue peace?**

**Hebrews 12:12-14**

Therefore lift your drooping hands and strengthen your weak knees, <sup>13</sup>and make straight paths for your feet, so that what is lame may not be put out of joint but rather be healed. <sup>14</sup>**Strive for peace with everyone,** and for the holiness without which no one will see the Lord.

ESV

**Because we are commanded to do so.  
-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: Why pursue peace?**

**Romans 14:17-19**

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. <sup>18</sup>Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. <sup>19</sup>So then **let us pursue what makes for peace** and for mutual upbuilding.

ESV

**Because we are now citizens of God's Kingdom.  
-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: Why pursue peace?**

**Matthew 5:23-24**

So if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that **your brother has something against you**,<sup>24</sup> leave your gift there before the altar and go. **First be reconciled to your brother**, and then come and offer your gift.

ESV

**Because we are supposed to if we're in the wrong.  
-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: Why pursue peace?**

James 5:19-20

My brothers, if anyone among you wanders from the truth and someone brings him back, <sup>20</sup>let him know that whoever brings back a sinner from his wandering will save his soul from death and will cover a multitude of sins.

ESV

**Because we are supposed to when a brother or sister in Christ is wandering from the truth.**

**-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: Or if they are caught in the snare of a transgression.**

**Galatians 6:1**

Brothers, if anyone is caught in any transgression, you who are spiritual **should restore him in a spirit of gentleness**. Keep watch on yourself, lest you too be tempted.

ESV**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Have we made this commitment? Perhaps our answer to the following question can make things a bit clearer. Imagine that it was in a wedding vow-like structure . . .**

**P**UR Sue PEACE

*Do I believe that I am **mandated** by Jesus to be an initiator in pursuing peace, especially in my relationships with other believers?*

**READ SLIDE**

- NOT to just leave the conflict
- NOT to just give up and give in
- NOT to lower our expectations and aspirations
- NOT to be passive . . . are we?
- NOT to be unwilling to pursue or to be pursued . . . are we?
- READ SLIDE AGAIN

**TR:** The second commitment is even harder and therefore more rare.

## **E** SCALATE WITH OTHERS

16

**Will we commit to the second uncommon commitment of . . .  
READ SLIDE**

**-- Most of us want peace, and we may even care-front or at least confront to get it.**

**-- But if we escalate it is only in the volume, frequency, or hysterical-ness of the confrontation.**

**-- Then we tend to just say, "I did what I could." "I tried."**

**-- BUT we don't escalate with the help of others.**

**TR: If we have experienced God and His Shalom, we understand that He escalates conflict. He doesn't give up on His children.**



## Leviticus 26:14, 18, 21

**14**But **if you will not listen to me** and will not do all these commandments . . .

**18**And **if in spite of this** you will not listen to me, then I will discipline you again sevenfold for your sins . . .

**21**Then **if you walk contrary** to me and will not listen to me, I will continue striking you, sevenfold for your sins . . .

ESV

**Most of Leviticus 26 talks about this escalation. Jumping through the chapter we read . . .**

**-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: God continues to promise to escalate . . .**

## Leviticus 26:23, 27

<sup>23</sup>And if by this discipline **you are not turned to me** but walk contrary to me

...

<sup>27</sup>But **if in spite of this** you will not listen to me, but walk contrary to me . . .

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: God doesn't just give up on His children, and Jesus teaches us in a similar way in a chapter critical to seeking peace, Matthew 18.**

**Matthew 18:15-16**

"If your brother sins against you, go and tell him his fault, between you and him alone. If he listens to you, you have gained your brother. <sup>16</sup>**But if he does not listen**, take one or two others along with you, that every charge may be established by the evidence of two or three witnesses.

ESV

**READ SLIDE****TR: Verse 17**

**Matthew 18:17-18**

**If he refuses to listen** to them, tell it to the church. And **if he refuses to listen** even to the church, let him be to you as a Gentile and a tax collector. <sup>18</sup>Truly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth shall be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth shall be loosed in heaven.

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- Does this text show us a pattern of escalation? Yes.
- From least threat level to the greatest, from the most private to very public.
- It is God's command to us to escalate with help from others.

**TR: We need to be there to help each other, even as . . .**

**Philippians 4:2-3**

I entreat Euodia and I entreat Syntyche **to agree in the Lord.** <sup>3</sup>Yes, I ask you also, true companion, **help these women,** who have labored side by side with me in the gospel together with Clement and the rest of my fellow workers, whose names are in the book of life.

ESV

**... Paul asked the local church at Philippi to help these two women whose conflict was public knowledge.**

**-- The TRUE COMPANION, an unnamed individual, was specifically asked to help.**

**TR: We are to escalate conflict with others in the church, even to the point of ...**

## 1 Corinthians 6:4-6

So if you have such cases, why do you lay them before those who have no standing in the church? <sup>5</sup>I say this to your shame. **Can it be that there is no one among you wise enough to settle a dispute between the brothers,** <sup>6</sup>but brother goes to law against brother, and that before unbelievers?

ESV

... binding arbitration.

-- READ SLIDE

-- Cf. my informal survey . . . rejoicing at finally hearing of a semi-retired pastor who could give 4 examples, 3 that turned out great.

-- This commitment takes trust and SHALOM with God and from God to be able to trust that He has given some in the church the wisdom to mediate the conflict AND then . . .

-- . . . a SUBMISSION to the binding arbitration.

TR: To put this commitment into a wedding vow-like structure, we could ask . . .

## **E** SCALATE WITH OTHERS

*Do I believe that my pursuit of peace is so important that I will go through the pain of escalating it, even when it means asking others to help me?*

### **READ SLIDE**

-- If we are in conflict with another believer and our initial efforts at resolution haven't worked, have we escalated with the help of others.

-- NOT doing this only IF we judge that it will work. We do the right thing and leave the results to God.

-- NOT can I find someone to take my side.

TR: The third uncommon commitment of a true peacemaker is to . . .

## **A**QUIRE THE JUDGMENT OF CHARITY

### **READ SLIDE**

- Our goal is not just to do our duty and obey the rules.
- Our goal is love – remember, son of thunder to an apostle of love.
- [judgment of charity] = seeking the judgment of another person's motives in the court of God's love.

**TR: This commitment is rare because most of us think we are able to discern what another person's motives are.**



**1 Corinthians 4:3-4**

But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by any human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. **4For I am not aware of anything against myself, but I am not thereby acquitted.** It is the Lord who judges me.

ESV

**But, 1 Cor. 4 would tell us otherwise.  
-- READ SLIDE**

**TR: Verse 5**

**1 Corinthians 4:5**

**Therefore do not pronounce judgment before the time**, before the Lord comes, who will bring to light the things now hidden in darkness and will disclose the purposes of the heart. Then each one will receive his commendation from God.

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- We must admit that we are the judge of anyone's motives.
- If Paul could have a clear conscience and still not thereby be acquitted, then we can't even be an impartial judge of our own motives.
- We all tend to be generous with the judgment of charity towards ourselves, and a bit more stingy with others.
- We tend to have two sets of weights in our bag . . . one for selling and one for buying.

**TR: Though we are to make judgments about another person's methods (what we can see), we must not be judgmental.**

**Matthew 7:1-3**

“Judge not, that you be not judged. <sup>2</sup>For with the judgment you pronounce you will be judged, and **with the measure you use it will be measured to you.** <sup>3</sup>Why do you see the speck that is in your brother's eye, but do not notice the log that is in your own eye?”

ESV

**Jesus said . . . READ SLIDE**

**TR: Verse 4**

**Matthew 7:4-5**

“Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me take the speck out of your eye,' when there is the log in your own eye?  
⁵You hypocrite, **first** take the log out of your own eye, and **then** you will see clearly to take the speck out of your brother's eye.”

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

-- It is not that we should not help another take the speck out, but that we **FIRST** must take the log out.

**TR:** The statement about the measure we use was repeated by Jesus in His teaching in Luke.

## Luke 6:37-38

“Judge not, and you will not be judged; condemn not, and you will not be condemned; forgive, and you will be forgiven; <sup>38</sup>give, and it will be given to you. Good measure, pressed down, shaken together, running over, will be put into your lap. **For with the measure you use it will be measured back to you.**”

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- I want the measure used to pour mercy, forgiveness, and grace upon me to be huge . . .
- I can't expect bushels full but then give away thimbles full.
- I want to ask the Spirit to help me imagine the best possible motives for another person . . .
- . . . that is, to fight for the judgment of charity . . .
- . . . so that I will be more gentle in how I speak the truth and how I seek to correct their methods.

**TR: Jesus' half-brother, Joseph and Mary's son James, says . . .**

.

**James 4:11-12**

Do not speak evil against one another, brothers. The one who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks evil against the law and judges the law. But if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge. <sup>12</sup>There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. **But who are you to judge your neighbor?**

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

-- Who are we to judge another person by saying, "I know what they were really thinking."

-- Or, "I know what was really hidden between the lines they spoke."

**TR: We are to acquire the judgment of charity because . . .**

**James 2:12-13**

So speak and so act as those who are to be judged under the law of liberty. <sup>13</sup>For judgment is without mercy to one who has shown no mercy. **Mercy triumphs over judgment.**

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

-- If we have experienced the SHALOM of God then we know His judgment of us is under the law of liberty, freedom through and in Christ.

TR: A true biblical peacemaker makes a commitment to not just feeling loving but to act lovingly.

**1 Corinthians 13:4a**

Love . . .  
waits patiently,  
shows kindness,

*deBock*

**Here's my translation of a very practical definition of love for  
1 Corinthians 13 . . . READ SLIDE**

**TR: Love does not . . .**



**1 Corinthians 13:4b-5**

Love does not . . .  
boil with envy,  
brag,  
puff up its own importance,  
behave shamefully,  
seeks its own interests,  
get easily-angered,  
add up a record of wrongs.

deBock**READ SLIDE**

- If we are adding up a record of wrongs
- If we have a short-temper
- then we are not behaving with love.
- Adding up a record means we haven't pursued peace OR, if we started to, we haven't escalated with others.

**TR: Love . . .**

**1 Corinthians 13:6-7**

**Does not take pleasure in wrong-doing,  
but joyfully celebrates the truth.**

**(Love) always bears up,  
always believes,  
always hopes,  
always endures.**

*deBock*

**READ SLIDE**

-- It is this definition that keeps us from saying, "I love them but . . ."

-- . . . I need to take care of me and my interests first,

-- . . . I just don't want to be around them . . . I'm rude so that I'm not mean.

-- . . . we can't say, I love them but they make my anger boil

-- . . . I love them but let me tell you all the ways they have hurt me.

**TR: Probably based on Proverbs 10:12, Peter writes . . .**

**1 Peter 4:8**

Above all, keep loving one another earnestly, **since love covers a multitude of sins.**

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

-- to love earnestly or fervently . . . is not emotional intensity but “love that persists despite difficulties.” (Jobes)

TR: Imagine a wedding-like vow made out of the third question . . .

## **A**QUIRE THE JUDGMENT OF CHARITY

*Do I believe I am not just to work through the methods in the conflict, but all the way to **the heart of the matter**, seeking the restoration of the Judgment of Charity?*

**READ SLIDE (as a vow)**

-- It is NOT enough to give a harsh, "I forgive you"

-- OR a flippant "Sure, I forgive"

-- OR a condescending "I understand that someone like you wouldn't get this, but . . ."

-- If we take vow one and two, to pursue peace and to escalate with others, but not vow three . . . we will find that strife is like water that always just about to boil over.

**TR: The fourth uncommon commitment is to . . .**



**C**HOOSE TRUE  
FORGIVENESS

**READ SLIDE**

- NOT to forgive so I can feel better
- NOT to forgive but never really letting the person off the hook
- NOT to forgive but still keep our list of added up wrongs.

**TR: We choose true forgiveness because . . .**

Luke 7:47

“Therefore I tell you, her sins, which are many, are forgiven—for she loved much. But **he who is forgiven little, loves little.**”

ESV

... we've been forgiven much.

-- READ SLIDE

-- Do you see how they are all tied together . . . forgiveness helps us love . . . helps us deal with pain of escalating . . . so we can pursue peace.

TR: WE forgive because we know . . .

**Matthew 6:11-15**

Give us this day our daily bread,<sup>12</sup>and forgive us our debts, **as we also have forgiven our debtors.** <sup>13</sup>And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. <sup>14</sup>For if you forgive others their trespasses, your heavenly Father will also forgive you, <sup>15</sup>but **if you do not forgive others their trespasses, neither will your Father forgive your trespasses.**ESV

... that to not extend forgiveness means that we are not forgiven.

-- READ SLIDE

TR: We choose true forgiveness because Jesus calls us to more, as He did Peter.

**Matthew 18:21-22**

Then Peter came up and said to him, "Lord, how often will my brother sin against me, and I forgive him? As many as seven times?" <sup>22</sup>Jesus said to him, "I do not say to you seven times, but seventy-seven times.

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Later, again in the seminal passage of Matthew 18, we read a powerful parable that concludes . . .**



Matthew 18:32-33

“Then his master summoned him and said to him, ‘You wicked servant! I forgave you all that debt because you pleaded with me. <sup>33</sup>And **should not you have had mercy on your fellow servant, as I had mercy on you?’”**

ESV

41

READ SLIDE

TR: Verse 34

**Matthew 18:34-35**

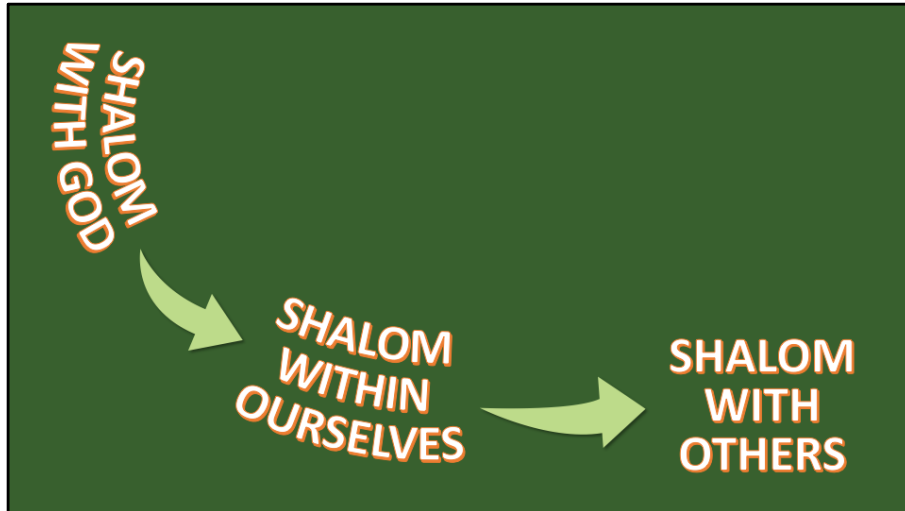
“And in anger his master delivered him to the jailers, until he should pay all his debt. <sup>35</sup>So also my heavenly Father will do to every one of you, **if you do not forgive your brother from your heart.**”

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

-- Tied to choosing true forgiveness is acquiring the judgment of charity . . . we are to forgive from our hearts.

TR: The flow of SHALOM goes something like this, like a stream running downhill . . .



### READ SLIDE

- If there is no shalom with others, something upstream has gone bad.
- OR at least, if we are not pursuing peace with others, with these uncommon commitments, then something has polluted our source.

TR: As we choose true forgiveness, we remember that we are to forgive each time a person says they repent.

## Luke 17:3-4

“Pay attention to yourselves! If your brother sins, rebuke him, and if he repents, forgive him, <sup>4</sup>and if he sins against you seven times in the day, and turns to you seven times, **saying, 'I repent,' you must forgive him.**”

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- This is not about them deserving it . . .
- OR about them getting things figured out, since this is seven times **IN A DAY.**

**TR: What this is a strong commitment, even a wedding-like vow, to . . .**

## **C**HOOOSE TRUE FORGIVENESS

*Do I believe that **biblical forgiveness is essential** to the restoration of the Judgment of Charity, which is needful in the pursuit of the peace of reconciliation?*

### **READ SLIDE**

- Sons of thunder who have been changed by God into apostles of love understand that they are not to keep the old shoes on the mantle.
- **REVIEW SHOES ON MANTLE** story

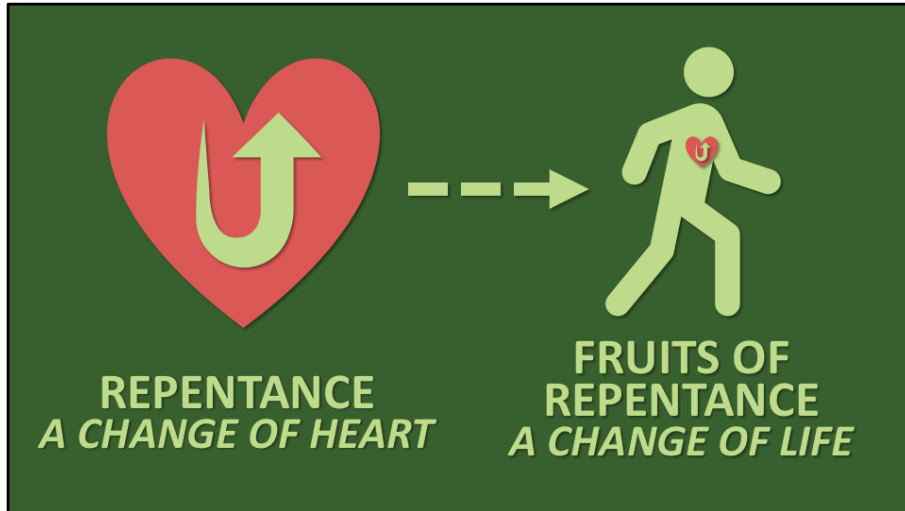
**TR:** The last, uncommon commitment, that God made clear to me under the tent this spring, is . . .

**E**XPECT ACCOUNTABILITY

46

**READ SLIDE**

**TR: Lasting Shalom comes to our marriages, church, work places, when we follow up the first four vows with this commitment.**



The reason is because the verbalization of a change of heart (“turns to you seven times, saying, “I repent”) . . .  
 -- . . . **MUST** become the fruits of repentance (a change of life).

- NOT forgiveness is condoning them doing it again
- NOT forgiveness means getting trampled over as a victim
- NOT being foolishly gullible,

**TR: To trust Christ we must repent and believe. But our change of heart, if real, will ALWAYS yield fruit.**

Luke 3:7-8a

(John the Baptizer) said therefore to the crowds that came out to be baptized by him, "You brood of vipers! Who warned you to flee from the wrath to come?  
<sup>8</sup>**Bear fruits in keeping with repentance."**

ESV

### READ SLIDE

- John the Baptizer didn't want people to just ride along with the "happening thing" . . .
- NOT the bandwagon of emotional chasing after the moving of God . . .
- BUT FRUITS.

TR: God isn't just looking for a remorse or regret, but a true change of heart that ALWAYS leads to a change of life.



**2 Corinthians 7:9-10**

As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but **because you were grieved into repenting**. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us. <sup>10</sup>For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

ESV

**READ SLIDE****TR: Verse 11**

**2 Corinthians 7:11**

**For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you,** but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.

ESV

**READ SLIDE**

- Paul didn't want to see worldly grief that produces nothing but death.
- He wanted a godly grief that leads to a repentance . . .
- . . . here this is talking about the change of life because it is talking about the produced fruit of earnestness.

**TR: Many of us struggle to be biblical peacemakers because we were forced to apologize for things that we were not sorry for. Having seen and participated in cheap apologies and thin forgiveness, we need to be strengthened by the Spirit to have strong reconciliation that . . .**

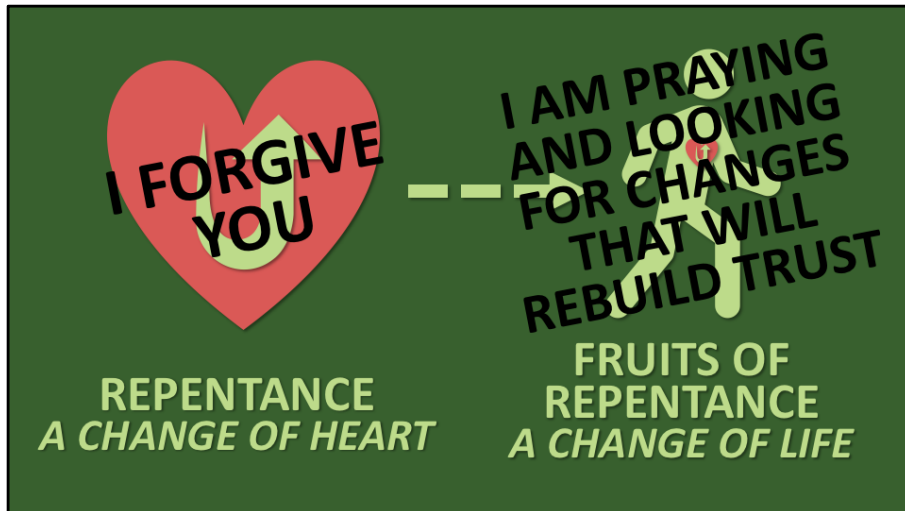
## **E**XPECT ACCOUNTABILITY

*Do I believe that people should be held accountable to manifest the fruits of repentance in the future, but that my forgiveness of their past sins is tied to their declaration of repentance?*

**READ SLIDE**

-- The last of the wedding-like vows . . . **READ SLIDE**

**TR: We don't have time to get into it too much, but this is like the SPECIFIC covenants that Nehemiah had the people make and then help them accountable to.**

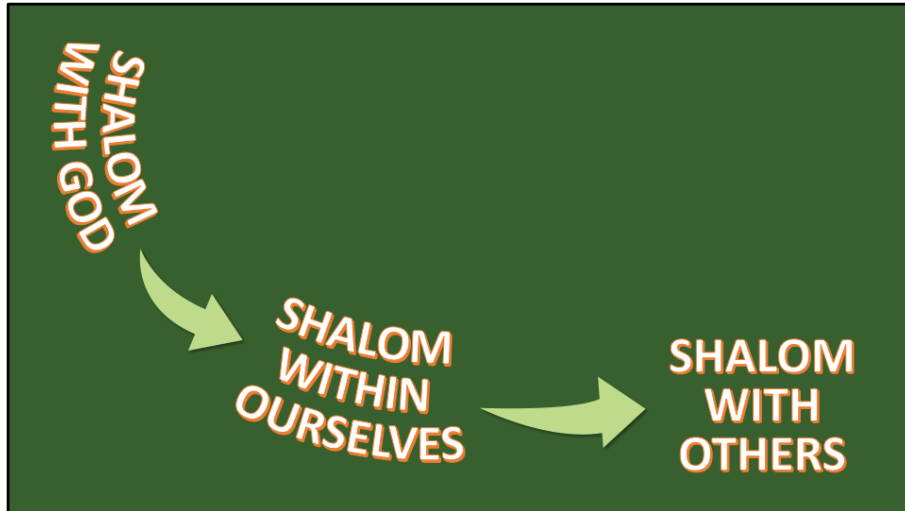


**We forgive based on a person saying they repent.**

**-- We rebuild trust, as we, with a renewed judgment of charity, pray for and look for the positive life changes.**

**-- These positive life changes will be seen only if we have the judgment of charity, because without it we will only see the other person's stumbles.**

**TR: What can change a Boanerges to a son or daughter of peace?**



**First, we must experience God's Shalom  
-- The revival I yearned for underneath this tent will only come  
because of God's Spirit's work AND . . .**

**TR: And then we must make the uncommon, rare,  
commitments to . . .**

**P** URSUE PEACE  
**E** SCALATE WITH OTHERS  
**A** CQUIRE THE JUDGMENT OF  
CHARITY  
**C** HOOSE TRUE FORGIVENESS  
**E** XPECT ACCOUNTABILITY

**READ SLIDE**

-- So revival will spur a pursuit of peace . . . and a pursuit of peace among God's people will release a revival.

-- We cannot schedule a revival but we can ask the Spirit's help to change us from people of thunder and tumult to people of peace.

-- Will you take the vows?

**I vow to pursue peace, being an initiator of peace, striving to be at peace with all, especially of the household of faith.**

**I promise when I get stuck in pursuing peace to swallow my pride and escalate with others' help.**

**I covenant to seek the Spirit's help to acquire and re-acquire again and again the Judgment of Charity towards others.**

**READ SLIDE (hands lifted before God, each section followed by, "Do we so vow?" Reply = "I do")**

**TR: Vow 4**

I commit myself to choose true forgiveness since God has fully paid my debt, I will offer to pay for my debtors. I pledge to seek true and lasting peace by expecting accountability for life change in myself and in others.

*I will be, by God's grace,  
a biblical peacemaker!*

**READ SLIDE (hands lifted before God, each section followed by, "Do we so vow?" Reply = "I do")**

**-- ALL REPEAT: READ SLIDE (Italics) --- three times.**