

BACK TO GOD
"Regret"
September 18, 2016

Finding your way back to God is a life-changing moment,
for sure; but it's also a life-growing process.

*"God, if you are real, make yourself real to me.
Awaken in me the possibility that with you I could start over again."*

*"Some of these people have missed the most important thing in life-- they don't know God.
May God's mercy be upon you. Sincerely, Paul"* 1 Timothy 6:21
(TLB)

***"When he came to his senses**, he said, 'How many of my father's hired servants have food to
spare, and here I am starving to death! **I will set out and go back to my father** and say to
him: **Father, I have sinned against heaven and against you...**'"* Luke 15:17-18
(NIV)

*You cannot heal what you do not acknowledge, and what you do not consciously acknowledge
will remain in control of you from within, festering and destroying you and those around you.*
-Richard Rohr

Metanoia (Greek): μετάνοια

"Changing one's mind"

Teshuvah (Hebrew): תשובה

"To return"

Steps to True Repentance:

- Conviction.
- Confession.

*"...they must repent of their sins and turn to God and do the things that would show they
had repented."* Acts 26:20 (GNT)

- Action.

*"Repent, then, and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped out, that times of refreshing
may come from the Lord."* Acts 3:19 (NIV)

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Leadership Tip!

If you want to build stronger relationships in your life group. Consider attending the 201 GROW, 301 SERVE and 401 GO classes Coastal offers together as a group. Doing this will help you see hidden similarities that members of your group have.

FINDING YOUR WAY BACK TO GOD – *Awakening to Regret***STARTER QUESTION:**

Tell us about a time when you played a video game and were doing so badly that you just pressed the reset button? When do you wish you could do that in everyday life?

What were some things you got out of the sermon this week?

MAIN IDEA:

Our attempts to find love, purpose, and the meaning in life, without God leading us can often leave us without direction and often with feelings of “regret”.

Sometimes the path “seems right”, but really isn’t. How many times have we journeyed down the “wrong path” and then asked ourselves if only I could start over. Well thank God that He is not just a God of “second chances”, but a God of the third and fourth chances.

1 John 1:9

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

Jesus clearly illustrates God the Father’s unlimited grace and unfailing love as we continue to study the parable of the prodigal son.

KEY SCRIPTURE:**Luke 15:17-20 (MSG)**

“That brought him to his senses. He said, ‘All those farmhands working for my father sit down to three meals a day, and here I am starving to death. I’m going back to my father. I’ll say to him, Father, I’ve sinned against God, I’ve sinned before you; I don’t deserve to be called your son. Take me on as a hired hand.’ He got right up and went home to his father.”

When did the younger son first indicate that he had “regrets” about leaving home?

The two parts of this prodigal story that we will focus in on today are when the younger son came to his senses (awakened to regret) and when he went home to his father (repented).

Describe a time when you made a bad decision? It could be a big one or a little one ...

When did you recognize that you had made the wrong choice?

How do you define repentance?

Godly sorrow always leads to true repentance from a heartfelt conviction of sinning against a Holy God. Worldly sorrow leads to spiritual death.

2 Corinthians 7:8-10 (NLT)

“I am not sorry that I sent that severe letter to you, though I was sorry at first, for I know it was painful to you for a little while. ⁹ Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to repent and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. ¹⁰ For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There’s no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.”

Most of us have experienced “peaks” and “valleys” in our walk with Christ. The important thing is to avoid getting stuck in the “**sorry-cycle**” – pursuing God-given longings outside of a relationship with God, which leads to regrettable decisions and actions. Many people get stuck in the “sorry-cycle” for months, sometimes for years. Others never escape it.

How would you describe the difference between “Godly sorrow” and “worldly sorrow”?

Have you ever been stuck in the “sorry-cycle”? What did you do to break free from it? (follow up: what was the hardest part?)

When confronted by Nathan, the prophet, David showed true Godly sorrow and repentance about having committed adultery with Bathsheba.

Read Psalm 51

Key Verse from Psalms 51:

Psalms 51:4 (NLT)

“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.”

FINAL THOUGHTS:

How do you relate to the regret in this parable?

Has this parable revealed ways for you to overcome regret?

The journey of faith can sometimes prove to be quite challenging. Even King David and the apostle Paul struggled.

Our attempts to pursue Christ are futile without being led by the Holy Spirit.

A verse in Proverbs pretty much sums up what happens when we don't pursue God.

Proverbs 16:25 (ESV)

“There is a way that seems right to a man, but its end is the way to death.”

But there is good news for us. Just as the prodigal son's father ran to his son and prepared a celebration feast for him, our heavenly Father continues to pursue us with unrelenting love and has prepared a place for us in Heaven.

How can our group pray for you?

CLOSE IN PRAYER

Additional Scripture: Psalms 23:6, Romans 7:4, Galatians 5:13-18