

Bearing the Fruit of Repentance

Text: 2 Corinthians 7:9-11 | Matthew 17:15-20 | Matthew 3:8 | 2 Samuel 11&12 | Psalms 51

- People talk about living life with no regrets. Do you think that's a good thing?
 - It may be best to first consider what "regret" means. As well as some other related terms...
- A definition of terms:
 - Regret – I feel bad because something bad happened to me (I got caught and/or got in trouble)
 - Remorse – I feel bad because I hurt someone / did something wrong.
 - Sorrow – I feel bad because things are bad. May or may not have been my fault.
 - Contrition – I feel bad and have decided to make sure it doesn't happen again.
 - Repentance – I vow to replace evil with good. I will cease the bad activities and start doing good in their place.

1. What does the Bible mean by "Sorrow"? (2 Corinthians 7:9-11)

- Worldly sorrow:
 - Bereft of hope, leads to despair
 - Leads only to regret, not repentance
- Godly sorrow:
 - Spurs us on toward what is good
 - Filled with hope for the future
 - Like good medicine, hurts, but heals
 - Leads to repentance. Offers hope because it shows us a way out

2. Bearing the fruit of repentance (Matthew 17:15-20 | Matthew 3:8)

- Feelings are fleeting. Feelings evoke emotion, which ought to spur us on into action. The devil wants to convince us into inaction.
 - The name, "Devil" and/or "Satan" literally means "Slanderer" or "Accuser." He will do everything he can to shut you down. When we've done something wrong, a common tactic of his is to try to convince us we're unworthy to approach the throne of God.
 - It's because he knows it's the one place we need to be, and therefore, the one place he doesn't want us to go.
 - When we feel guilty about something, it's likely because we **are** guilty. But that's what Christ gave His life for! And that's why the **best** place for us to be is at His feet.
- "You'll know them by their fruit" (Matthew 17:15-20)

- It's not about what we think or how we feel. That's a good starting place, but what matters is what we do about it. "Wisdom is proved right by her actions" (Matthew 11:19)
- "Bear fruit in keeping with repentance" (Matthew 3:8)
- A sure sign of true repentance is the fruit it bears
- You'll know an apple tree by the apples hanging off it
- None of us can bear good fruit without having done a couple things:
 - Staying connected to the vine (John 15)
 - Ongoing repentance

3. **David's sin and sorrow** (2 Samuel 11&12)

- See the progression in David's story:
 - Temptation
 - Consideration
 - Plotting
 - Wrongdoing
 - Cover-up
 - More sin
- This is unfortunately, a pattern that we've all experienced. But look how David handles it when he finally realizes the error of his ways: He repents.
- Repentance is not merely feeling bad about what we've done. It's taking action on that emotion, and replacing evil with the righteousness of Christ.

4. **David's repentance** (Psalm 51)

- This is probably the most enduring and perfect picture of Godly repentance in Scripture.
- "Hesed" is used over 250 times in the Old Testament to describe God's unfailing love / steadfastness / lovingkindness
- *"This life has been given to you for repentance; do not waste it in vain pursuits."* – Isaac the Syrian, c.7th century, AD
 - Repentance is possible even when we may not have been the wrongdoer. Love expresses itself in acts of "turning toward" or "turning away."
 - Repentance is both. Turning toward God and away from sin.
- What is God calling out to us to repent of today?