

## **GODLY SORROW**

### **(2 Corinthians 7:9-11)**

adopted from Finally Free by Heath Lambert

You have sinned! Perhaps it is a sin that you have been enslaved to for a long time. You have been caught in your sin! Others know about your sin. Of course God knows about your sin.

Ask yourself, “Am I sorry for my sin?” If the answer is yes, the Bible says there are two types of sorrow; worldly sorrow and godly sorrow. Please read the words of the apostle Paul from 2 Corinthians 7:9-11

*(v9) I now rejoice, not that you were made sorrowful, but that you were made sorrowful to the point of repentance; for you were made sorrowful according to the will of God, so that you might not suffer loss in anything through us. (10) For the sorrow that is according to the will of God produces a repentance without regret, leading to salvation, but the sorrow of the world produces death. (11) For behold what earnestness this very thing, this godly sorrow, has produced in you: what vindication of yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what avenging of wrong! In everything you demonstrated yourselves to be innocent in the matter.*

Verse 10 says godly sorrow produces a repentance without regret that leads to salvation. “Without regret” means you do not regret leaving your sin.

Verse 10 also says worldly sorrow produces death.

What type of sorrow are you currently experiencing? It is our prayer that you experience godly sorrow which leads to salvation. Verse 11 above sets forth six (6) elements of true godly sorrow. Study these elements below and ask if they are present in your heart currently.

I. **Godly sorrow is earnest (“For behold what earnestness this very thing....”).** Godly sorrow fervently seeks to fight against sin in a battle that lasts. Biblical sorrow extends beyond a momentary twinge of conviction and results in a willingness to do battle for the long term. Worldly sorrow is fleeting and fades once the pain of what you lost fades away or you replace it with something else.

- As you think about your sin do you see an earnestness to fight the battle of temptation or does your sorrow dissipate as your circumstances return to normal?

**II. Godly sorrow leads to an eagerness to clear yourself (...what vindication of yourselves...).**

Godly sorrow results in you desiring to be freed from your sin. This is shown by a willingness to be accountable to other people, and by a willingness to radically “amputate” your access to the sin. Worldly sorrow leaves quickly and is replaced by a renewed interest to pursue the sin.

- Are you willing to share your sin and your struggle and to be accountable to 1 or 2 Christian brothers or sisters who will seek to hold you accountable for your behavior?
- What are you willing to sacrifice/forfeit in order to be free from your sin? Is there anything you are not willing to give up in order to be free from your sin?

**III. Godly sorrow leads to indignation (...what indignation...).**

Godly sorrow hates the sin itself. Godly sorrow feels the horror of disobedience and weeps over the reality of a heart that chose transgression over faithfulness. Godly sorrow is stung by the awareness that all sin breaks God’s heart. Worldly sorrow produces hatred too, but it is a hatred directed at other things such as hating the consequences of sin (shame over a lost job, the disgust you experience from your spouse, embarrassment over being disciplined by a school or church). Worldly sorrow is sad because people know about your sin. Godly sorrow is sad because God knows about your sin.

- Do you hate your sin? What thoughts come to your mind when you think about your hatred of your sin?
- What will you do today and this week that will help you hate your sin because God hates it rather than because of the inconvenience the consequences bring?

**IV. Godly sorrow leads to alarm (...what fear.....).**

Some translations translate “fear” as “alarm”. Godly sorrow does produce alarm which is a healthy form of fear. Godly fear is not afraid that people will find out but is fearful because God always knew! It is an awareness that a holy, perfect and pure God can’t stand to look on the selfishness and impurity of my sin. Godly sorrow recognizes God’s intolerance for sin yet it is mingled with an awareness of mercy--that God didn’t give us the just punishment we deserved. Worldly sorrow is fearful people will find out about your sin.

- How would you complete this statement: “Because of my sin, I am afraid that \_\_\_\_\_.”
- If you put a fear of a person to complete the above sentence, what will you choose to think upon to help you fear God more than man? What parts of Christ’s life and death are especially

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meaningful to you concerning your sin that would help you see the love of Christ as more important than the love of man?

V. **Godly sorrow leads to longing and concern for restoration (...what longing, what zeal...).** Godly sorrow produces a deep concern to restore the relationships that were broken by your sin. Godly sorrow has a zeal to do whatever is necessary to restore broken relationships. Worldly sorrow wants to just “let bygones be bygones”. Worldly sorrow produces a running away from people and leads you to grow comfortable with broken relationships.

- What relationships were fractured by your sin?
- What do you need to do to make right what you have made wrong (restitution)?
- When will you do these?
- Is there anything (that is not sinful) you are unwilling to do to restore these relationships?
- Do you find yourself frustrated at people who are struggling to forgive you for your sin?

VI. **Godly sorrow leads to a desire for justice (...what avenging of wrong...).** Godly sorrow produces a willingness to accept the consequences of your sin. Worldly sorrow produces a sorrow for yourself that seeks to wiggle out of the consequences of your sin.

- Are there consequences of your sin you are seeking to avoid? What are they?
- How are you seeking to avoid these consequences?

[Continued on reverse]

As you look back over this worksheet, would you say you have a Godly sorrow over your sin that leads to repentance or worldly sorrow that only brings forth death?

Below, write a prayer to God expressing your sorrow over your sin and asking Him to help you show the fruit of repentance.

*Application Questions developed by:  
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