

Title: Seven Gifts of Repentance

Text: 2 Cor 7: 9-11

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2 Corinthians 7: 9: Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. 10: For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 11: For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves, yea, what indignation, yea, what fear, yea, what vehement desire, yea, what zeal, yea, what revenge! In all things ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.

The apostle Paul was forced to rebuke the saints at Corinth strongly. Was it godly for Paul to rebuke a saint who Christ made complete by his one offering? Indeed, it was. He says, “ye were made sorry after a godly manner.”

The true church of God does not conform to the legalists methods of constantly seeking fault in one another so that we might discipline and glory in what we constrained others to do. The Holy Spirit condemns such practices in Galatians.

Yet, because every believer is a sinner still, we make mistakes from time to time. Therefore, from time to time, we may need a rebuking word to wake us up to the fact that our behavior is unbecoming to the doctrine of Christ.

Usually, this work is accomplished through the clear preaching of the gospel.

Illustration: Shaper the ax the less force necessary. The clearer the gospel is preached the less personal rebuke.

But as we see with the Corinthians, occasionally, we may need a personal rebuke. But when loving rebuke leads to true repentance then the sorrow the rebuke caused is not doing us damage. It is good for us.

It would have done them damage not to have been rebuked because they would have continued in their sin and greater troubles would have come. As Paul says, “Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of.”

The thing we will focus on in this passage is what Paul’s truthful rebuke led them unto. His truthful rebuke made them sorrow. Paul called it a “godly sorrow.” It is because they were not simply filled with sorrow by his rebuke, but his rebuke made them sorrow so as to wake them up to repentant from their sins then to salvation, to God their Savior.

Proposition: The golden chain which the truth works effectually in the new heart from the first hour and throughout the life of the believer is: rebuke, to sorrow, to repentance, to salvation. That is repentance not to be repented of.

The sorrow of the world stops short of this. Worldly sorrow never brings the sinner to repentance from sin or to faith in Christ our Salvation. Therefore, “the sorrow of the world worketh death.”

So let’s focus on the descriptions given here of true godly repentance which was brought on by Paul’s rebuke, which God made effectual in their hearts by the Holy Spirit.

I. FIRST, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, TRUE GODLY SORROW WORKS THIS FIRST GIFT OF REPENTANCE: “CAREFULNESS”—1 Cor 7: 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you,

While dead in our sins we are totally unaware how awful our sins are before God.

Isaiah 44:20: He feedeth on ashes: a deceived heart hath turned him aside, that he cannot deliver his soul, nor say, Is there not a lie in my right hand?

Likewise, as believers, we sometimes fall into a stupor, where we fail to see how unbecoming our behavior is to the doctrine of Christ. In the first hour and every hour after that, when the gospel rebukes us God wakes us up. God causes us to sorrow over our sins. God does so in the light of Christ.

Zechariah 12:10: And I will pour upon the house of David, and upon the inhabitants of Jerusalem, the spirit of grace and of supplications: and they shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.

A mere sorrow for sin is not repentance. Men can be sorry for sin, convicted of guilt, afraid of temporary consequences or afraid of hell. We really only know our sin when we see what Christ had to bear at Calvary to put it away, to satisfy justice, to establish us in perfect righteousness. God spared not his own Son. He said, “They shall look upon me whom they have pierced, and they shall mourn for him, as one mourneth for his only son, and shall be in bitterness for him, as one that is in bitterness for his firstborn.”

This true godly sorrow works “carefulness in us”, meaning, God turns from our sins: speedily, diligently, and earnestly.

Isaiah 30: 21: And thine ears shall hear a word behind thee, saying, This is the way, walk ye in it, when ye turn to the right hand, and when ye turn to the left. 22: Ye shall defile also the covering of thy graven images of silver, and the ornament of thy molten images of gold: thou shalt cast them away as a menstruous cloth; thou shalt say unto it, Get thee hence.

This is the first thing God does when he begins to grant repentance and faith. This is so in the first hour and throughout the life of repentance. The truth rebukes us, wakes us up, brings us to sorrow with carefulness: to speedily, diligently, earnestly want to be free from our sin. But it does not stop there.

II. SECONDLY, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE GIFTS THIS SECOND GIFT OF REPENTANCE, HE MAKES US WANT TO “CLEAR OURSELVES”—2 Cor 7: 11 For behold this selfsame thing, that ye sorrowed after a godly sort, what carefulness it wrought in you, yea, what clearing of yourselves,

The Greek word for “clearing” is where we get our word “apology.” But it is much more than what we usually mean by an apology.

The Corinthian brethren did not deny their offenses or attempt to lessen or defend it or to justify themselves for their sin. The haughty, arrogant, self-righteous man hears the gospel declare all men dead in trespasses and in sins or when personally rebuked for a particular offense. He defends self, defends his rights, defends his will and his works. Doing so he calls God a liar, Calls God’s word untrue and defends his sin! The only right we have as sinners is a right to hell. But no one has a right to sin against God.

Illustration: Sorry you're offended! That is no acknowledgement of wrong doing and that is no apology—that is blaming the one offended.

Instead, the Corinthian believers acknowledged the sinfulness of their sin, first and foremost as against God. So they sought to be cleared before God. We have a good example of this seeking to be “clear ourselves” with God in David.

Psalm 51: 1: «To the chief Musician, A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him, after he had gone in to Bathsheba.» Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. 2: Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. 3: For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. 4: Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.

When God brings us to see our sin is against God and God only that is when we will seek to be cleared before God. It is to seek God's mercy!--“God be merciful to me a sinner!” It is to seek God's cleansing!--“Wash me thoroughly.” It is to confess our sin against God--“against thee and thee only have I sinned. To clear ourselves is to clear God--“that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest.” Only those in whom God is working can take sides with God against ourselves.

Micah 6:8: He hath shewed thee, O man, what is good; and what doth the LORD require of thee, but to do justly, and to love mercy, and to walk humbly with thy God?

Illustration: Happy Sorrow—hiding from parents was misery, but to confess brought forth happy tears. It more so, with God!

Also, God makes us seek to be “clear” with our brethren. They acknowledged their sin to be against their brethren. We have an example in Zacchaeus:

Luke 19: 8: And Zacchaeus stood, and said unto the Lord; Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have taken any thing from any man by false accusation, I restore him fourfold. 9: And Jesus said unto him, This day is salvation come to this house, forsomuch as he also is a son of Abraham.

God also makes the sinner lowly and meek before his brethren—asking their forgiveness as well. He makes a man a restorer for his sins, not for salvation but because salvation has come to his house, because God has made him a true child of Abraham, a true believer.

Illustration: “When a man is saved by grace even his cat and dog is better off!”

App. First, God brings us to “carefulness”—to speedily, earnestly, diligently want to be done with sin. Second, God brings us to “clear ourselves”—to confess our sins and beg mercy from God and to be humbled before our brethren. But it does not stop there.

III. THIRDLY, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE FILLS US WITH THIS THIRD GIFT OF REPENTANCE: “INDIGNATION”—2 Cor 7: 11:...yea, what indignation,

God-given repentance is a radical change of mind that only God can produce. While dead in sins we called bitter sweet and sweet bitter. But when God grants true repentance there will be righteous anger against sin and everything contrary to God.

Ps 119:128...I esteem all thy precepts concerning all things to be right; and I hate every false way.

Believer, don't you just love God's holy law! Were it not for God's law I would not know what a sinner I am. When the commandment came, sin revived, and my old self-righteous man died!

First, we hate sin in ourselves—

Romans 7: 15: For that which I do I allow not: for what I would, that do I not; but what I hate, that do I...24 O wretched man that I am! who shall deliver me from the body of this death? 25: I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord.

In the new man, God creates a right indignation against every false way—we can no longer stand to hear lies spoken against God our Father.

Ephesians 4: 26: Be ye angry, and sin not: let not the sun go down upon your wrath: 27: Neither give place to the devil.

Illustration: Arguing doctrine with no love in my heart. This is why men who claim to love grace can side with free-will works religionists.

1 John 2: 21: I have not written unto you because ye know not the truth, but because ye know it, and that no lie is of the truth. 22: Who is a liar but he that denieth that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist, that denieth the Father and the Son.

2 John 1: 10: If there come any unto you, and bring not this doctrine, receive him not into your house, neither bid him God speed: 11: For he that biddeth him God speed is partaker of his evil deeds.

IV. FOURTHLY, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE FILLS US WITH TRUE FEAR—2 Cor 7: 11: yea, what fear,...

This is not a fear of hell and condemnation. That is what we were filled with before God granted us repentance. Believers no longer fear hell.

Roman 8: 1: There is therefore now no condemnation to them which are in Christ Jesus, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit. 2: For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death. 3: For what the law could not do, in that it was weak through the flesh, God sending his own Son in the likeness of sinful flesh, and for sin, condemned sin in the flesh: 4 That the righteousness of the law might be fulfilled in us, who walk not after the flesh, but after the Spirit.

This fear is reverence for God which comes from his abundant forgiveness of our sins

Psalm 130: 3: If thou, LORD, shouldest mark iniquities, O Lord, who shall stand? 4: But there is forgiveness with thee, that thou mayest be feared.

This is reverence for Christ and the gospel of Christ; reverence for his ministers and his people. God's grace—free forgiveness sin Christ--teaches us to fear offending him—to desire to please God: to serve him acceptably with reverence and godly fear. Forgiveness engages us to reverence him for his goodness's sake.

App. When God grants repentance he creates within us: carefulness (depart from sin), clearing of ourselves (seeking mercy, forgiveness, taking sides with God), indignation (against all sin and falsehood), fear (reverence for God, his gospel, his church)

V. FIFTHLY, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE GIVES US THIS FIFTH GIFT OF REPENTANCE: “DESIRE”—2 Cor 7: 11: yea, what vehement desire, [earnest desire],

God gives a new heart to his child. In the new heart, there is a new earnest desire for the preaching of the gospel. There is only a real desire for the truth when we have been saved by the Truth!

1 Corinthians 1: 23: But we preach Christ crucified, unto the Jews a stumblingblock, and unto the Greeks foolishness; 24: But unto them which are called, both Jews and Greeks, Christ the power of God, and the wisdom of God.

Also there is an earnest desire for God’s continual abiding presence to keep us separated unto him.

Exodus 33: 15: And [Moses] said unto him, If thy presence go not with me, carry us not up hence. 16 For wherein shall it be known here that I and thy people have found grace in thy sight? is it not in that thou goest with us? so shall we be separated, I and thy people, from all the people that are upon the face of the earth.

There is an earnest desire to walk in a new way, a way honoring to God. There are three excellent reasons given in Titus for believers to behave in a manner honoring to God, this is what the fear of God makes us earnestly desire and strive for.

1) **Titus 2:7: In all things shewing thyself a pattern of good works: in doctrine shewing uncorruptness, gravity, sincerity.** Christ uses his faithful saints to set a pattern for new believers in the faith.

2) **Titus 2: 8: Sound speech, that cannot be condemned; that he that is of the contrary part may be ashamed, having no evil thing to say of you.** We do not want our behavior to give our enemies cause to speak evil. We want them to be ashamed to speak evil of our God

3) Here is our number 1 motive—**Titus 2: 10...that they may adorn the doctrine of God our Saviour in all things. 11: For the grace of God that bringeth salvation hath appeared to all men, 12: Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world; 13: Looking for that blessed hope, and the glorious appearing of the great God and our Saviour Jesus Christ; 14: Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.**

VI. SIXTHLY, WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE FILLS US WITH A HEART FOR GOD TO HAVE ALL THE GLORY—2 Cor 7: 11: yea, what zeal,

I almost put this with the last point—but then I looked it up. It means “jealousy”—as a bride for her husband.

God said in the first commandment, ye shall have no other gods because “I the LORD thy God am a jealous God.” (Ex 20: 5) When he saves us from our sins, he puts his everlasting covenant in our hearts, he makes us jealous for him and his glory.

Example: Hosea and Gomer—Ho 3: 3 And I said unto her, Thou shalt abide for me many days; thou shalt not play the harlot, and thou shalt not be for another man: so will I also be for thee.

Song of Solomon 6:3 I am my beloved's, and my beloved is mine...

We want him to have the glory:

- For his electing grace
- For his particular, redeeming grace
- For his effectual regenerating grace
- For his sovereign preserving grace
- For his resurrecting grace
- For his glorifying grace

1 Corinthians 1: 31: That, according as it is written, He that glorieth, let him glory in the Lord.

V. SEVENTLY—HOW APPROPRIATE THERE ARE SEVEN THINGS—THE NUMBER OF PERFECTION—HOW APPROPRIATE THIS IS THE SEVENTH-- WHEN GOD REBUKES IN TRUTH, HE GIVES THIS SEVENTH GIFT OF REPENTANCE: REVENGE—IT IS A HEART TO LOVE HIS RIGHTEOUSNESS—2 Cor 7: 11: yea, what revenge!

The Corinthians did that which was just and right because God had given them a heart to love righteousness.

When God grants repentance he makes us behold the glory of God's righteousness in Christ in satisfying his own justice on our behalf.

Romans 3: 20: Therefore by the deeds of the law there shall no flesh be justified in his sight: for by the law is the knowledge of sin. 21: But now the righteousness of God without the law is manifested, being witnessed by the law and the prophets; 22: Even the righteousness of God which is by faith of Jesus Christ unto all and upon all them that believe: for there is no difference: 23: For all have sinned, and come short of the glory of God; 24: Being justified freely by his grace through the redemption that is in Christ Jesus: 25: Whom God hath set forth to be a propitiation through faith in his blood, to declare his righteousness for the remission of sins that are past, through the forbearance of God; 26: To declare, I say, at this time his righteousness: that he might be just, and the justifier of him which believeth in Jesus.

When justice becomes our friend it demands our release. When God reveals the gospel in our hearts then we love righteousness, then we seek righteousness. We judge ourselves and condemn our own selves that we be not judged of God.

This is the good news when God personally bring us to repentance unto faith in Christ our Salvation when God has given us repentance by giving us these seven gifts, **2 Corinthians 7: 11: In all...ye have approved yourselves to be clear in this matter.**

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. 10: If we say that we have not sinned, we make him a liar, and his word is not in us. 1: My little children, these things write I unto you, that ye sin not. And if any man sin, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous: 2: And he is the propitiation for our sins: and not for ours only, but also for the sins of the whole world.

Amen!

