
Subject: GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION

Posted by [Mel_SDR](#) on Sat, 11 May 2019 07:40:09 GMT

[View Forum Message](#) <> [Reply to Message](#)

GODLY SORROW WORKETH REPENTANCE TO SALVATION

(The sorrow of the world worketh death)

GODLY SORROW

2 Corinthians 7:9-16

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. (12) Wherefore, though I wrote unto you, I did it not for his cause that had done the wrong, nor for his cause that suffered wrong, but that our care for you in the sight of God might appear unto you. (13) Therefore we were comforted in your comfort: yea, and exceedingly the more joyed we for the joy of Titus, because his spirit was refreshed by you all. (14) For if I have boasted any thing to him of you, I am not ashamed; but as we spake all things to you in truth, even so our boasting, which I made before Titus, is found a truth. (15) And his inward affection is more abundant toward you, whilst he remembereth the obedience of you all, how with fear and trembling ye received him. (16) I rejoice therefore that I have confidence in you in all things.

LOWLINESS AND GODLY SORROW

In Christ's Sermon on the Mount, light and truth are given, and principles laid down, which apply to every condition of life, and to every duty that God requires at our hands. Christ had come to magnify and make honorable the law that he himself had proclaimed from Mount Sinai to his chosen people during their wilderness wandering. He laid aside the glory which he had with the Father before the world was, and clothed himself with humanity, that he might minister to the sons of men.

In all his lessons Christ sought to impress upon the minds and hearts of his hearers the principles which underlie his great standard of righteousness. He taught them that if they would keep God's commandments, love for God and for their fellow-men must be manifested in their daily life. He sought to instill into their hearts the love he felt for humanity. Thus he sowed the seeds of truth, the fruits of which will produce a rich harvest of holiness and beauty of character. The holy influence of love will not only be far-reaching while time shall last, but its results will be felt and appreciated throughout eternity. It will sanctify the actions, and have a purifying influence wherever it exists.

Seated upon the mount, surrounded by his disciples and a large and promiscuous gathering

Jesus "opened his mouth, and taught them, saying, Blessed are the poor in spirit; for theirs is the kingdom of heaven." These are not murmurers and complainers, but those who are content with their condition and surroundings in life. They do not cherish the feeling that they deserve a better position than that which Providence has assigned them, but manifest a spirit of gratitude for every favor bestowed upon them. Every proud thought and exalted feeling is banished from the soul.

Just here we might distinguish between genuine and false sanctification. Sanctification does not consist in merely professing and teaching the word of God, but in living in conformity to his will. Those who claim to be sinless, and make their boast of sanctification, are self-confident, and do not realize their peril. They anchor their souls upon the supposition that having once experienced the sanctifying power of God, they are in no danger of falling. While claiming to be rich and increased in goods, and in need of nothing, they know not that they are miserable, and poor, and blind, and naked.

But those who are truly sanctified have a sense of their own weakness. Feeling their need, they will go for light and grace and strength to Jesus, in whom all fulness dwells, and who alone can supply their wants. Conscious of their own imperfections, they seek to become more like Christ, and to live in accordance with the principles of his holy law. This continual sense of inefficiency will lead to such entire dependence upon God, that his Spirit will be exemplified in them. The treasures of heaven will be opened to supply the wants of every hungering, thirsting soul. All of this character have the assurance of one day beholding the glory of that kingdom which as yet the imagination can only faintly grasp.

Those who have felt the sanctifying and transforming power of God, must not fall into the dangerous error of thinking that they are sinless, that they have reached the highest state of perfection, and are beyond the reach of temptation. The standard the Christian is to keep before him is the purity and loveliness of Christ's character. Day by day he may be putting on new beauties, and reflecting to the world more and still more of the divine image.

'Know ye not that the unrighteous shall not inherit the kingdom of God? Be not deceived: neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor abusers of themselves with mankind, nor thieves, nor covetous, nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor extortioners, shall inherit the kingdom of God. And such were some of you; but ye are washed, but ye are sanctified, but ye are justified in the name of the Lord Jesus, and by the Spirit of our God.'" And the apostle Paul, writing to the church at Colosse, says, "And you, that were sometime alienated and enemies in your mind by wicked works, yet now hath he reconciled in the body of his flesh through death, to present you holy and unblameable and unreprouvable in his sight."

It is a matter of rejoicing that some have subjected their will to the will of God, have cast off the works of darkness, and have consented to walk in the light as Christ is in the light. But even to these the testing of God will continue until probation ceases. He wants to determine whether we will endure hardness as good soldiers of Jesus Christ.

We are opposed by a subtle foe. The world, with its customs, its attractions, and corruptions, is to be resisted. The power of Satan will be exercised toward every soul, to overcome and destroy him. The way of safety, for the strong as well as for the weak, is to seek daily for heavenly wisdom, to take hold of divine strength. By this means we may obtain grace to enable us to manifest a Christlike spirit under every difficulty and trial.

"Blessed are they that mourn; for they shall be comforted." By these words Christ would not lead us to think that mourning in itself has any power to remove the guilt of sin. He gives no sanction to bigotry, to pretense, or to voluntary humility. Mourning is not to be manifested in melancholy looks, or expressed by crying and lamentation; nor does he desire that we shall deprive ourselves of social intercourse. While our hearts may be filled with sorrow as we see wickedness defiling the souls of men, we are to cherish a spirit of cheerfulness in keeping with the precious privilege granted us of being sons and daughters of God. We can not hope to draw souls to Christ while we surround ourselves with an atmosphere of gloom.

There was nothing unsocial in the life and character of Christ. He did not seclude himself from the world; but at the same time he did not conform to its habits and customs. He was cheerful, yet sober. He sympathized with those who were in sorrow, and rejoiced with those who had cause for rejoicing. Wherever he went, his presence diffused light and blessing.

Much of the sorrow that is felt among men today is sorrow that their evil deeds have been brought to light, and that, as a consequence, they themselves have been placed in unpleasant circumstances. But this is not that godly sorrow which works repentance.

Judas did not carry out in his life the faith he professed. He cultivated a spirit of selfishness, which grew into covetousness and dishonesty, and led him to sell his Master for thirty pieces of silver. He did not realize what he was doing until it was too late to undo the fearful work. He mourned for the result of sin, but had no real sense of its grievous character. Pharaoh, too, repented when he saw the result of his hardness of heart, in the plagues that were visited upon his people. But his repentance was not sincere; for when at his request the plagues were removed, his heart was not humble; his proud spirit and determined will were not placed in submission to God.

David sinned grievously against God; but he "sorrowed after a godly sort." He prayed that the Lord would remove the cause of his displeasure: "For thy name's sake, O Lord, pardon my iniquity; for it is great." And Peter's sorrow for his apostasy was sincere. He brought to God a broken and contrite heart; and this God has promised that he will not despise. His repentance was accepted of heaven, and Jesus intrusted to him not only the care of the sheep of his flock, but also of the tender lambs, the young converts to the faith.

The apostle Paul describes true sorrow when he says: "Godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of; but the sorrow of the world worketh death. 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!"

This is genuine repentance. It will lead to a transformation in the life. It is the absence of this true sorrow that makes many of the conversions of this time superficial. Reformations are not made in the life. But when sin is viewed in the light of God, and its true character realized, it will be put away from the heart and life.

We who were dead in trespasses and sins, God has quickened and renewed by his own power. He has elevated and ennobled us, not because we were worthy, but because goodness

and mercy are the attributes of his character, because of the great love wherewith he hath loved us.

This love, which is without a parallel, brought the Son of God from the courts of heaven, to suffer and die that we might live through him. The horror of darkness that enshrouded the Saviour in Gethsemane, and forced from his pores great drops of blood, was experienced by him on account of our sins. Here, indeed, we have reason to mourn, that our sins have caused such inexpressible agony to God's dear Son.

True sorrow for sin brings the penitent soul near to the bleeding side of Jesus. There he may effectually plead for pardon, and obtain grace to conquer; there his darkened understanding may be enlightened, and the stony heart transformed to a heart of flesh. There the rebellious sinner is subdued, and his will brought into conformity to the will of God.

SOURCES:

KING JAMES (BRG) BIBLE (1769)

PERIODICALS

ST The Signs of the Times

February 4, 1897 - Lowliness and Godly Sorrow.