

Confession: Godly Sorrow vs. Worldly Sorrow

Regret is not just a negative emotion; regret is a needed emotion.

According to Neal Roese, Ph.D. psychology professor at the University of Illinois, regret is a complex emotion that only the human mind is capable of. Fear and pain are simple emotions that even animals experience, but regret is an emotion only humans experience (AARP, pg. 60, Jan./Feb. '08).

Without regret, decision making and social skills are severely impaired. Regret shows us that something is not right. It's not as it should be. A change is needed. And what you do with regret is significant.

There was a night recorded in history when two men (both disciples of Jesus) experienced intense regret. Tears were shed: tears of betrayal, tears of denial. And what these two men did with their regret reveals to every one of us that what you do with regret is truly a matter of life and death!

Judas was one of the 12 disciples of Jesus. Every Gospel writer talks about him. Every time he's listed with the other disciples, he's always listed last. Purposefully? Probably. And every time he is listed the gospel writers tell what he did. He's the one who betrayed Jesus.

Peter is the other apostle that experiences regret because of his denial.

- ➔ List the ways regret might lead you to death versus the ways regret might lead you to repentance. What is the difference between condemnation and conviction?
- ➔ How is Satan behind worldly sorrow and God behind Godly sorrow?
- ➔ List the differences between Judas and Peter.

Sorrow waits for us after every bad decision. Paul wrote a couple of letters to a church in Corinth that was making bad decisions. Even though one of the letters was painful for him to write, he says he's glad he did because it caused them to repent. They changed their ways. They experienced godly sorrow which is different from worldly sorrow. Worldly sorrow may still say 'I'm sorry' but remains selfish and refuses to repent. Godly sorrow truly grieves the harm caused to others and to God. It repents.

- ➔ Is there a sin you're feeling sorry about but you're stuck in that sorrow?
  - ◆ Take a minute now to confess it to God and ask Him to change your worldly sorrow to godly sorrow.
  - ◆ Come up with an action plan to turn away from the sin and toward Jesus.

If you ever find yourself avoiding pain and sorrow, look back at these verses and see the benefits of experiencing them. God actually wants us to feel godly sorrow because He knows the benefits it brings! Godly sorrow leads us to action and produces so much in us that leads us closer to Him. Years later, when we look back at what we did, we remember we sinned, but the story doesn't end there. It becomes a story of how God our Father faithfully saved us, healed us, and restored us