



Repentance – 2 Corinthians 7:9-11

Confession, which we discussed last week, fits hand in glove with repentance. Paul makes a seemingly startling assertion when he talks about rejoicing in the grief of another. He clarifies that this is due to his hope that this grieving would lead to repentance.

Under discussion is the grief that we experience when confronted with the reality

of our own sin. This is a grief of regret and personal disappointment. Time and time again we hope that we would do better only to struggle with the sin that remains a part of who we are. Confronted with our sin and in need of confession, we repent before God recognizing the transgression of God's laws that we have committed.

Paul's use of terms is instructive here. Some of the keywords in this passage include: earnestness, eagerness, and zeal. Generally, these are the kinds of words we use in a positive sense. So, what connection do they have with our grief that leads to repentance?

While our sin leads to this grief, once aware of our sin, we are called to act with earnestness, eagerness, and zeal as we repent and seek forgiveness from God. Thus we return to the idea of rejoicing in this grief. Paul knows the resulting enthusiastic response of the repentant sinner seeking to receive God's grace and love in the free gift of grace that is His undeserved forgiveness. There are fewer things that produce as much joy. If you have ever been around a new believer you can, even more, appreciate and understand the nature of that joy.

Thoughts for Reflection

As you reflect upon your life, what are you called to repent of, confess, and then seek and receive forgiveness in Christ?

9 As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into repenting. For you felt a godly grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.

10 For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. 11 For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves innocent in the matter.