

STEP 9 — MAKING THINGS RIGHT

LUKE 19:1-10

Jesus entered Jericho and was passing through. A man was there by the name of Zacchaeus; he was a chief tax collector and was wealthy. He wanted to see who Jesus was, but because he was short he could not see over the crowd. So he ran ahead and climbed a sycamore-fig tree to see him, since Jesus was coming that way.

When Jesus reached the spot, he looked up and said to him, “Zacchaeus, come down immediately. I must stay at your house today.” So he came down at once and welcomed him gladly.

All the people saw this and began to mutter, “He has gone to be the guest of a sinner.”

But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”

Jesus said to him, “Today salvation has come to this house, because this man, too, is a son of Abraham. For the Son of Man came to seek and to save the lost.”

THINKING IT THROUGH

STEP 9 OF RE:GENERATION: AMENDS—*We make direct amends whenever possible, submitting to God, his Word and biblical counsel.*

Zacchaeus’ encounter with Jesus gives us one of Scripture’s clearest pictures of the heart of Step 9. Before Zacchaeus makes amends, he experiences the transforming presence of Jesus. Jesus calls him by name and even invites himself to Zacchaeus’ house. This upsets the religious leaders because Zacchaeus is considered a traitor, and tax collectors were notoriously corrupt.

Zacchaeus has clearly decided to follow Jesus (see Step 7), and as a follower of Jesus, he chooses to make amends. His amends are a response to the grace of God shown by Jesus. Jesus accepts him where he is, but loves him too much to leave him there. He calls him to a new life..

Zacchaeus can now see a new path—a new way of living. Repentance follows grace. Zacchaeus is ready to give up his brokenness and the misery it brings. He is ready to do whatever Jesus requires. Repentance requires restitution—making amends.

When Zacchaeus stands and says he will repay those he has wronged, he is following Jesus and his teaching in Matthew 5: stop everything—even worship—and first seek reconciliation with a brother or sister. Jesus makes it clear that a restored relationship matters deeply to God. Zacchaeus lives this out by taking ownership, making specific restitution, and pursuing peace where he had previously caused harm.

Paul echoes this, urging believers to “live at peace with everyone” if possible. Making amends doesn’t

guarantee reconciliation, but it does call us to do our part faithfully, humbly, and honestly. Zacchaeus couldn’t control whether people trusted him again, but he could take responsibility for his actions and seek to repair what he had damaged.

“If you are presenting a sacrifice at the altar in the Temple and you suddenly remember that someone has something against you, leave your sacrifice there at the altar. Go and be reconciled to that person. Then come and offer your sacrifice to God.”

—Matthew 5:23,24

Never pay back evil with more evil. Do things in such a way that everyone can see you are honorable. Do all that you can to live in peace with everyone.

—Romans 12:17,18

QUESTIONS TO CONSIDER

Note: Some 12-Step programs use language that says, essentially, *make direct amends whenever possible, except when to do so would cause injury or harm*. Discuss amend-making with a trusted friend, seeking God's wisdom and guidance.

1. Who comes to mind immediately when you think about someone you've harmed and not yet approached? Why do you think that person surfaced first?
2. What fear or hesitation is keeping you from making that amend? What might Jesus be inviting you to trust Him with in that fear?
3. If you were to make things right, what specific harm would you need to take ownership of? (Not excuses, not explanations—just ownership.)
4. What would a practical, concrete step of restitution look like in your situation? (Is it a conversation? Returning something? Paying something back? Acknowledging words?)
5. How might making amends bring freedom—not just to the other person, but to you?
6. Is there an amend you've been avoiding because you don't know how the other person will respond? Are you willing to do your part anyway, even without control over the outcome?
7. What is one amend you could realistically take a step toward this week? Who could you ask for wise, biblical counsel as you prepare?

CLOSING PRAYER

Jesus,
Thank You for meeting us with grace, just as You met Zacchaeus. Give us the courage to make things right where we've caused hurt. Show us the steps we need to take, and give us Your peace as we take them. Lead us toward healing, toward honesty, and toward restored relationships. We trust You to walk with us.
Amen.

RE:GENERATION: <https://www.regenerationrecovery.org/>

We plan to launch Re:Generation this Fall at Sherwood Oaks Bloomington. Interested in participating or helping lead? Contact Allen Burris aburris@socc.org

12 STEPS OF RE:GENERATION

STEP 1, ADMIT — We admit we are powerless over our addictions, brokenness and sinful patterns—that in our own power our lives are unmanageable.

STEP 2, BELIEVE — We come to believe that God is the one whose power can fully restore us.

STEP 3, TRUST — We decide to trust God with our lives and wills by accepting His grace through Jesus Christ.

STEP 4, INVENTORY — We make a searching and fearless moral inventory of ourselves.

STEP 5, CONFESS — We confess to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our sins.

STEP 6, REPENT — We become entirely ready to turn away from our patterns of sin and turn to God.

STEP 7, FOLLOW — We humbly ask God's Spirit to change our hearts and minds in order to follow Christ fully.

STEP 8, FORGIVE — We forgive those who have harmed us and become willing to make amends to those we have harmed.

STEP 9, AMENDS — We make direct amends whenever possible, submitting to God, his Word and biblical counsel.

STEP 10, CONTINUE — We continue to examine our lives and when we sin promptly confess and turn to walk with Christ.

STEP 11, INTIMACY — We seek to deepen our relationship with God daily and depend on his power to do his will.

STEP 12, REGENERATE — Because of our new lives in Christ, we carry God's message of reconciliation to others and practice these biblical principles in every aspect of our lives.