



REGRETS

Stuff We Don't Talk About
(But Probably Should) – Part 2
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Regret is a heavy burden. It gets us mired down in things that are beyond our control. It fixates us on the past. It paralyzes us in the present and it leaves us unmotivated for the future. We end up stuck in a place we never wanted to be with no one to blame but ourselves. It doesn't have to be that way. Discover the freedom that comes from releasing regrets.

REGRET: "...sorrow aroused by circumstances beyond one's control or power to repair: an expression of distressing emotion." – Merriam-Webster's Dictionary

There are two main regrets: The things people DID that they wish they hadn't and the things people wish they had done but DIDN'T.



1. WHAT ARE THE THINGS WE REGRET?

In psychology, they call "What if thinking" counterfactual thinking.

- Foundation regrets
- Boldness regrets
- Connection regrets
- Moral regrets
- The World Regret Survey

"The clouds of cruelty in our past tend to linger the longest. Carried shame has this power to bend people, to bend whole communities, out of shape." – Daniel Pink

You can own them without being owned by them.

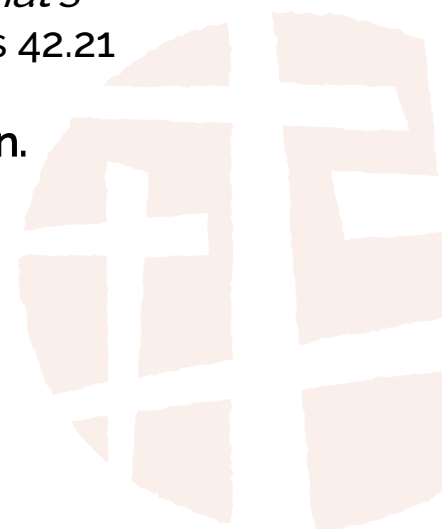
2. WHAT DO YOU DO WITH YOUR REGRETS?

- We bury them.

They said to one another, "Surely we are being punished because of our brother. We saw how distressed he was...but we would not listen; that's why this distress has come upon us." Genesis 42.21

Buried regrets have a high rate of resurrection.

- We blame others.



(Aaron) took what was handed him and made it into an idol... Exodus 32.4

"Do not be angry, my lord," Aaron answered. "You know how prone these people are to evil..."
Exodus 32.22

Blame and responsibility cannot coexist.

We beat ourselves up.

3. WHAT SHOULD YOU DO WITH YOUR REGRETS?

Re-examine your failure.

When they (the disciples) had landed, they saw that a charcoal fire was burning, with a fish placed on it, and some bread... When they had finished breakfast Jesus said to Simon Peter, "...do you love me more than these others?" "Yes, Lord," he replied, "you know that I am your friend." ...Then he said for the second time... Then he said for the third time...
John 21.9 (Phillips)

The problem is not examination but rumination.

Accept God's forgiveness.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. 1 John 1.9



Sin doesn't rob you OF your relationship to God. Sin robs you IN your relationship to God.

The Process of Guilt

1. Violation of a standard
2. Feeling of guilt
3. A need for one of three things
 - a. punishment
 - b. forgiveness
 - c. repayment
4. Freedom from guilt

"...the perpetual penance of regret." - A.W. Tozer

Let regrets be your instructor, not your interrogator.

"What is the use of regret unless we can rise by it to a better future? ...Weave victories out of defeats. Learn success from failure, wisdom from blundering." - C.H. Spurgeon

"You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending."
- C.S. Lewis

Begin living as a forgiven person.

98% of evangelicals agreed that God gives second chances.

19% of Americans believe God gives 2nd chances when a person depends only on God.



18% of Americans believe God gives 2nd chances when a person makes restitution.

15% of Americans believe God gives 2nd chances when a person does enough good.

11% of Americans believe God gives 2nd chances when a person promises not to repeat the mistake.

When we were overwhelmed by sins, you forgave our transgressions. Psalm 65.3

...whenever our hearts condemn us... God is greater than our hearts. 1 John 3.20

There is no longer any room for doubt, and we can tell others that salvation is ours, for there is no question that he will do what he says. Hebrews 10.23 (Living Bible)

I will never again remember their sins and lawless deeds. Hebrews 10.17 (NLT)

My dear children, I write this to you so that you will not sin. But if anybody does sin, we have one who speaks to the Father in our defense--Jesus Christ, the Righteous One. 1 John 2.1



DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

1. According to The World Regret Survey, there are four types of regrets;

- Foundation regrets – saving money, studying in school, the sort of things that prepare for the future.
- Boldness regrets – not speaking up, not taking the initiative, not attempting to do something.
- Connection regrets – relationships that got away, went south, weren't treated with value
- Moral regrets - are failures in kindness, breaches of integrity, lapses in loyalty.

As you feel comfortable, share with the group what sort of regrets you have had in one or several of the areas above. Why did that regret affect you so much? What do you wish you had done or hadn't done? What's your biggest learning that came from that experience?

2. In the first half of the message, Pastor Keith shared several ineffective but common ways of dealing with regret.

- We bury them
- We blame others
- We beat ourselves up



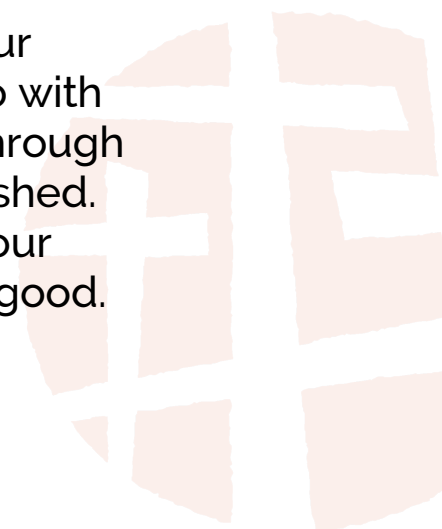
Of the three primary and ineffectual ways of dealing with regret, has there been a time or times when you tried to bury a regret, blame others for it or even beat yourself up? If so, how did that work for you? Why do you think you responded in that way? What advice would you give to others prone to burying resentment? Blaming others? Or beating themselves up?

3. Pastor Keith explained the process of grief and it looks like this...

The Process of Guilt

1. Violation of a standard
2. Feeling of guilt
3. A need for one of three things:
 - a. punishment
 - b. forgiveness
 - c. repayment
4. Freedom from guilt

He explained if we don't feel forgiven, then our problem comes in step three so we default to with punishment or repayment. So, we either go through life setting up scenarios in which we are punished. Give some examples of this. Or, repaying for our mistakes by trying to make up for it by being good. Give examples of this. In what ways have you struggled with feeling forgiven?



4. Think of the example of Alfred Nobel and how he decided (in light of his regrets to be a different person). He allowed his regrets to be his instructor not his interrogator. In a similar vein, C.S. Lewis said, "You can't go back and change the beginning, but you can start where you are and change the ending." Can you think of others who went through this process? Who were they and what in their life changed? For yourself, have you ever seen a regret turn into something instructional and redemptive in your own life? Describe that experience.

5. The problem so many have is believing and living as a forgiven person. Pastor Keith wrapped up this message giving some examples and scriptures that assure us of our status as forgiven people. As a group, go back through the Scripture in the last point of the message. Discuss them and talk about which was your favorite and why. More importantly, discuss how your life is different or could be different moving forward by living like the promises of God are actually true. In other words, how does a forgiven person actually live?

