

## Mid-Week Devotion



### Godly Sorrow

**Read 2 Corinthians 7:5-10** “For the sorrow that is of *the will* of God...”

In Paul’s first letter to the Corinthians, he came down on them pretty hard, which caused the church at Corinth to experience sorrow. In his second letter, he tells them that he now takes great joy in knowing that his words had caused them great sorrow because they moved them to repentance in accordance to the will of God. Sorrow in our lives can come in various forms like a broken heart, caused by a hurtful word or broken promise. No one likes experiencing sorrow like this, however, according to the Apostle Paul, if our sorrow produces repentance without regret, then it was in accordance with the will of God.

Experiencing sorrow at the hands of our heavenly Father is a lot like the sorrow you might have experienced as a young child. A childhood friend of mine named Tommy once told me this story.

Tommy never liked going shopping with his mother; she always made him stay right beside her as she went up and down the aisles in the store. “Don’t touch that” seemed to be all he ever heard or “No, you can’t have that today.” So when Tommy’s father asked him if he wanted to go shopping with him he thought it was going to be just like shopping with his mother. However, thinking it was a chance to be alone with his Dad, Tommy replied, “Alright.” Everything went great until they got into the checkout aisle. As Tommy’s father was busy putting the items on the conveyer so the girl could scan them, Tommy stood eye level with the rack full of gum, candy, and chocolate bars. Mom never let me get any of these he thought to himself, I’ll bet Dad won’t either. It just isn’t fair, he thought, I can’t remember the last time I had a Snickers bar; they’re the best. The temptation was just too much. So after a quick glance to see that no one was looking, Tommy reached up and put the Snickers bar in his pocket. Will that be all, the young girl asked Tommy’s father? That’s everything except the Snickers bar in my son’s pocket, he replied. Busted, thought Tommy, I’m really going to get it now! As they left the store and climbed into the truck, Tommy braced himself for what was without a doubt going to be the worst punishment he ever received. But to his surprise, his dad didn’t say a word until they pulled into the driveway, then he looked at Tommy and said, “I’m very disappointed in you, son.” I remember thinking, is that it, no punishment. Just then, his dad’s words hit their mark. Those words would resonate in Tommy’s heart for some time. The sorrow he experienced for what he had done was unbearable. To disappoint daddy was indeed the worst punishment he ever received. All he could do for days was to think of how he could get his father to love him again. It wasn’t until Tommy was older that he came to understand that it was because of love that his father said what he did. Tommy would never forget those words; he also never stole again.

Evidently, there are two categories of sorrow, Godly sorrow and worldly sorrow. Each one leads us to a different place, scripture tells us. If our sorrow is as Tommy’s, and produces repentance without regret, then scripture tells us it leads to salvation. However, if our sorrow is like that of the world, in that it produces only regret for being caught, then God says, it leads to death. So if you are having to deal with sorrow in your life, it is my hope that it is Godly sorrow and not worldly sorrow. How can you tell? In the arms of the Savior, you will find many things like hope, peace, and love. But one thing you will never find is regret.

Blessings, Pastor Ed