

(continued from front...)

While he was in the armed forces in Korea, he had spent two weeks of R&R in Japan. During that leave, walking the streets of Tokyo, feeling empty, lonely, and terribly homesick, he fell into temptation and went three or four times to a prostitute.

He had never been able to forgive himself. He had sought God's forgiveness, and with his head, believed he had it. But the guilt still plagued him, and he hated himself. Every time he looked in the mirror, he couldn't stand what he was seeing. He had never shared this with anyone, and the burden was becoming intolerable.

When he returned home to marry his fiancée, who had faithfully waited for him all those years, his emotional conflicts increased because he still could not accept complete forgiveness. He couldn't forgive himself for what he had done to himself and to her; so he couldn't accept her freely offered affection and love. He felt he had no right to be happy.

As A.W. Tozer put it, the young minister was living in 'the perpetual penance of regret'

How beautiful it was to see him receive full, free forgiveness from God, then from his wife, and perhaps best of all, from himself."

Discussion Questions

- 1) What is something in your past that you believed to be beyond hope and recovery but God faithfully rescued you from it?
- 2) What is something that you currently consider to be "over" that God may still have plans for?
- 3) What does it say about us when we choose to live in a way that suggests something is beyond repair or beyond saving?



SERMON NOTES: WEEK FIVE



HOPE & HELP FOR HARD TIMES

FINDING PEACE AND JOY IN YOUR PAIN, PROBLEMS AND PRESSURE

Peace and Joy When You've Made Mistakes

In his book, *Healing for Damaged Emotions*, David Seamands writes about a young minister who once came to see him. He was having a lot of problems getting along with other people, especially his wife and family. Seamands recalls: "I had already talked privately with his wife; she was a fine person--attractive, warm, affectionate, loving--and totally supported his ministry. But he was continually criticizing her, scapegoating her. Everything she did was wrong. He was sarcastic and demanding, and withdrew from her advances, rejecting her love and affection. Slowly but surely it began to dawn on him: he was destroying their marriage.

Then he realized that in his weekend pastorate he was hurting people through sermons which were excessively harsh and judgemental...

Finally, in his desperation, he came to see me. At the beginning of our interview, he met trouble like a real man: he blamed it on his wife! But after a while, when he became honest, the painful root of the matter came to light.

(continued on back...)

Peace and Joy When You've Made Mistakes

November 29/30, 2008

Joy is _____ in forgiveness.

Psalm 32:1-2 - Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the Lord has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty!

_____ sin results in weariness.

Psalm 32:3-4 - When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat.

God is _____ and _____ to restore peace and joy to you.

Psalm 32:5 - Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, "I will confess my rebellion to the Lord." And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.

David learned deeply the guilt, shame, and pain of sin when _____ with his own injustices. *2 Samuel 12:1-15*

Restoring Your Peace and Joy After Failing

1. _____ for God's forgiveness based on His unfailing love.

Psalm 51:1-2 - Have mercy on me, O God, because of your unfailing love. Because of your great compassion, blot out the stain of my sins. Wash me clean from my guilt. Purify me from my sin.

2. _____ fully what you did or failed to do without excuses, denial or justification.

Psalm 51:3-6 - For I recognize my rebellion; it haunts me day and night. Against you, and you alone, have I sinned; I have done what is evil in your sight. You will be proved right in what you say, and your judgment against me is just. For I was born a sinner—yes, from the moment my mother conceived me. But you desire honesty from the womb, teaching me wisdom even there.

3. _____ the consequences of your failure and do all you can do to make amends. *2 Samuel 12:15b-23*

4. _____ for a fresh work of His grace and the deep restoration of your relationship with God.

Psalm 51:7-12 - Purify me from my sins, and I will be clean; wash me, and I will be whiter than snow. Oh, give me back my joy again; you have broken me—now let me rejoice. Don't keep looking at my sins. Remove the stain of my guilt. Create in me a clean heart, O God. Renew a loyal spirit within me. Do not banish me from your presence, and don't take your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and make me willing to obey you.

5. _____ shame and condemnation by telling others what God has done for you.

Psalm 51:13-17 - Then I will teach your ways to rebels, and they will return to you. Forgive me for shedding blood, O God who saves; then I will joyfully sing of your forgiveness. Unseal my lips, O Lord, that my mouth may praise you. You do not desire a sacrifice, or I would offer one. You do not want a burnt offering. The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God.

God will _____ reject a broken and repentant heart.

Psalm 17:17 - The sacrifice you desire is a broken spirit. You will not reject a broken and repentant heart, O God

God is faithful to forgive _____.

1 John 1:9 - But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

Notes:
