

TEN QUESTIONS TO DIAGNOSE YOUR SPIRITUAL HEALTH WEEK 8: DO YOU STILL GRIEVE OVER SIN?

It is true in most churches today that there is an inclination to make the believer to feel good about themselves. In these latter times, even in the church, increasing one's self esteem has taken the place of the pursuit of holiness.

Whitney, today challenges us with what God's Word would actually instructs what our countenance and mind set should be on an ongoing basis; "does sin in your life still cause you to grieve?"

I. WHAT DID JESUS SAY ABOUT IT?

- A. On His sermon on the Mount, He gives the very basics to true salvation conversion: [Mat 5:3 ¶](#) "Blessed are **the poor in spirit**, **for theirs is the kingdom of heaven.** [4](#) "Blessed are **those who mourn**, for **they shall be comforted.**
- B. Two definite articles are used in these verses to explain exactly "who will be in the kingdom of heaven" and "who will be comforted."
 1. "the poor in spirit"
 2. "those who mourn"
 3. What are they "poor in spirit" and "mourn[ing]" about?
 4. **THEIR SIN!**
- C. **If you have never experienced these two activities**, then according to Scripture, **you will never inherit the kingdom**, you will **never be comforted!**
- D. To come into the kingdom of God, we will **first see God's holiness** and therefore see just how far off our own life is.
 1. **That we are complete and hopeless sinners**, never able to cleanse ourselves or make ourselves presentable to God.
 2. **Sin's PRESENCE MUST GRIEVE OUR HEART OR WE WILL NEVER SEE THE NEED TO REPENT OF IT!**
- E. But to further examine what Jesus said about being broken and mourning over our sin, we must realize that "**being poor**" and "**mourning**" are **PRESENT TENSE VERBS**
 1. Meaning that these activities are not just requirements to come into the kingdom of God . . .
 2. Rather they are **ONGOING REALITIES in the life of those that ARE IN THE KINGDOM OF GOD!**
- F. Most Christians would call themselves "BELIEVERS" BECAUSE THEY CONTINUOUSLY BELIEVE
 1. Belief is **NOT just something you did the first day of your salvation**, it is an ongoing reality.
 2. **Repentance and Belief are two sides of the same coin**, you will never do one without the other.

3. **So if we are continually being believers, then we must understand that we are also to be continuous REPENTERS.** (Eastern Europe churches call themselves)
 4. **Jesus commands us to be continuously both a BELIEVER & a REPENTER!**
- G. So the question Whitney asks is **very diagnostic of our SPIRITUAL HEALTH**– Does sin still cause you to grieve, to be broken, to mourn?

II. GRIEVING SIN IS GROWING SPIRITUALLY

- A. Jonathan Edwards: *“I have had a vastly greater sense of my own wickedness, and the badness of my heart, since my conversion, than ever I had before. . . . When I look into my heart and take a view of my wickedness, it looks like an abyss infinitely deeper than hell.”*
- B. His statement definitely contradicts the thought that being a believer should make me feel better about myself personally!
1. BEING A BELIEVER SHOULD MAKE ME FEEL BETTER ABOUT MY FUTURE
 2. ABOUT WHO I AM IN CHRIST
 3. BUT PERSONALLY THERE CONTINUES TO BE SIN, THAT SHOULD GRIEVE ME!
- C. Recalling microbiology from college we used microscopes.
1. Had multiple objectives attached; each having a higher power of magnification. 4X, 10X, 40X, 100X
 2. Looking at the same slide, changing the magnification gives the appearance of more items.
 3. Things you don’t see on low power become overwhelmingly present under closer search.
- D. **This is how it works with our sin as we mature in Christ.**
1. Closer we get to Christ, the more we see our own sin!
 2. More we become like Christ, the more we HATE OUR SIN!
 3. More you see– more you hate it– and the more you are broken and mourn over it!
- E. **Have you ever been responsible for someone else’s pain or injuries?**
1. Slamming someone’s hand in a door?
 2. Missing a block in football, causing the quarterback to receive a concussion!
 3. Dropping something that breaks their foot?
- F. **YOUR SIN CAUSED THE BRUTAL DEATH OF CHRIST!**
1. Does that break your heart?
 2. If it does then the more you see your sin as you become more and more like Christ, the more it will cause you grieve its presence.
 3. And as we as believers continue to sin daily, AND ALL OF THOSE SINS WERE LAID ON HIM!
- G. PAUL, as he matured in his walk did not see himself as being better but becoming even a bigger sinner

1. **1Ti 1:15** The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, **of whom I am the foremost.**
2. Note “I am” is present tense.
3. This was not because he was a bigger sinner, but because Holy Spirit continually gave him deeper look at his life, because he continually to grow in how his sin was an affront to Jesus Christ who died for him.
4. As Whitney’s seminary professor pointed out: “The closer one comes to Christ, in one sense, the more miserable he becomes,” for that is when we become most aware of how un-Christ we are.
5. Such knowledge at times causes the believer to even hate themselves for it!

H. CONFLICT OVER SIN IS GOOD!

1. Fact that there is an IDENTIFIED STRUGGLE with sin and a Brokenness over it– is Good
2. **Unbelievers may be saddened** because of some failure or circumstance caused by their sin→ BUT THEY NEVER GRIEVE OVER THEIR SIN!
3. **UNBELIEVERS NEVER AGONIZE OVER THEIR UNHOLINESS!**
4. A.W. Pink: “*It is not the absense of sin but the grieving over I which distinguishes the child of God from the empty professors [of faith].*”
5. Whitney: “*Are you aware today of sins in your life that you weren’t cognizant of, say three years ago, even though you were committing those sins back then, as well?*”
6. If you are more aware sin–IT IS A GOOD THING!→ It is a Sign of Spiritual Growth
7. More the light of Christ shines in your heart, the more sin will come into focus.
8. Edwards: “The more a true saint loves God . . .the more he mourns for sin.”

III. CAN I GRIEVE SIN TOO MUCH?

- A. We can become so concerned over our sin that we forget about our forgiveness
- B. We can become so doom and gloom that we lose the joy of being a child of God.
- C. But in our world today it is unlikely that we would over do our mourning over sin.
- D. Balance is Required
 1. Must be aware of sin in our lives but also never lose sight of the freedom of forgiveness and grace that we have through Christ.
 2. **Ro 5:9** **Much more then, being now justified by his blood,** we shall be saved from wrath through him. **10** For if, when we were enemies, we were reconciled to God by the death of his Son, **much more, being reconciled,** we shall be saved by his life.

3. Edwards in *Religious Affections*: “One great difference between saints and hypocrites is this, that the joy and comfort of the former is attended with godly sorrow and mourning for sin.”
- E. True believers rejoice for their forgiveness, but continuously grieve over the sin of which they have been forgiven.
 1. They do NOT relish those old habits.
 2. They grieve the thoughts of it.
- F. True Christians ARE LIFELONG REPENTERS
 1. Trust in Christ and repenting for our sin against Him is an ongoing reality in the believer.
 2. Repentance is not a “one and done” event.
 3. What we were made sensitive to in the beginning of salvation should become even more prevalent as we mature.
 4. Growing in the joy of our salvation continuously makes more aware of its cost.
 5. Whitney: “Since, therefore, a Christian is always looking afresh to Christ, and often turning from sin, it follows that he would often grieve over the presence of this sin,”

IV. GODLY AND WORLDLY GRIEF

- A. Scripture explains there are two types of sorrow
- B. 2Co 7:8 For even if I made you grieve with my letter, I do not regret it— though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. 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.
- C. “**godly grief**” leads to:
 1. Repentance
 2. Earnestness in the faith
 3. Eagerness to clear out the sin
 4. Indignation over the sin
- D. “**worldly grief produces death**”
 1. May cause regret but not repentance
 2. This is the grief of the Unbeliever
- E. Believers can have BOTH TYPES
 1. What does worldly grief look like in a believer?
 2. Knowing that it is sin, but not changing the outcome
- F. Godly Grief is more than just Admitting Wrong
 1. Whitney: “Many professing Christians show no more grief for sin on their occasional or prefunctory confessions to God than a boy forced to say an obligatory, “I’m sorry” to his sister.”

2. Godly sorrow over sin actually involves mourning, grieving, sorrow.
3. Godly Sorrow **results in Repentance not just Recognition** of your sin
4. Many think just verbal confession is repentance
5. True Repentance changes Behavior
6. As Esau who saw he had made a mistake and desired to correct it but his heart was not broken [Heb 12:17](#) Afterwards, as you know, when he wanted to inherit this blessing, he was rejected. **He could bring about no change of mind**, though he sought the blessing with tears.
7. We can weep tears over wrong we have done, and even feel regret but this does not change our heart or our life.
8. True Godly sorrow involves true Godly mourning which will always bring forth true repentance.

G. Godly Sorrow is characterized by Humility

1. It is not just verbalizing how evil you are while in actuality you just desire for someone to say, “that really wasn’t all that bad; you’re really a good person”.
2. Godly grief drives out pride→ there is no good in me!
3. Adams sorrow diverted blame to Eve, Paul’s sorrow cause him to say, “. . .I am the [very least of all the saints, . . .](#)” Eph 3:8.

H. Worldly grief may include self-centered fear of God’s wrath

1. Fear that is only out of concern for self
2. Without any thought of how offended God may be.
3. Without any thought of how your sin affected Christ.
4. True sorrow over sin understands that it was against a holy God and that breaks our heart!

I. David, having committed utmost sins: [Ps 51:4](#) **Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.**

J. He desired to be restored to the joy he had with the fellowship with God he had before
 1. [Ps 51:12](#) **Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit.**

K. Godly Sorrow is driven by an absolute love for God, His Son and holiness

1. Driven by the Holy Spirit in us.
2. Desiring to be more like Christ
3. Desiring a holy heart, holy mind
4. And the lack of it causes us even to “. . .groan inwardly as we wait eagerly for our [adoption as sons, the redemption of our bodies.](#)” Rom 8:23

V. WHAT IF I AM NOT GRIEVING OVER SIN?

- A. JOHN OWEN : “*I do not understand how a man can be a true believer in whom sin is not the greatest burden, sorrow, and trouble.*”

WHITNEY’S 5 SOLUTIONS

A. **Make Sure You Understand the Gospel in the NY**

1. Make certain you have experienced the Gospel!
2. Can you relate it to self and others?
3. WRITE it out.
4. Special attention to why Jesus’s death was necessary and the relationship of repentance to faith.

B. **Ask God to Show You the Reality of Your Sin**

1. Not generally but specifics: how, when, where, why
2. Against whom?
3. We are not to sin retail and repent wholesale!

C. **Pray Slowly through Psalm 51**

1. Make it your own prayer, make it resolute from your own heart.
2. Remember these are God’s Words and put in the Bible for you.
3. [2Ti 3:16](#) **All scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness:**

D. **Meditate on Your Part in the Crucifixion of a Sinless Jesus Christ**

1. Are you never sorrowful for causing the death of Christ?
2. Think about how others are now in hell for the same sins that you have committed!
3. It is God’s law you have broken– wages of your sin is eternal death– can you be so lax about it?
4. Whitney: “*Realize that your every sin is double sin, since every sin is also a failure to keep the greatest of all commandments, namely, to love God with all your heart, soul, mind, and strength.*” Mark 12:28-30
5. Then remember that the life and death of Christ saves all who repent and believe.

E. **Preach the Gospel to Yourself Every Day**

1. Jerry Bridges: “. . . Continually face up to your own sinfulness and then flee to Jesus through faith in His blood and righteousness life. . . . When you set yourself to seriously pursue holiness, you will begin to realize what an awful sinner you are. . . an if you are not firmly rooted in the gospel and have not learned to preach it to yourself every day, you will soon become discouraged and will slack off in your pursuit of holiness.”
2. Two ways to evaluate your life– ie, how close are you to the image of Christ?
 - a. Can look at where you should be and sit discouraged about how far from it you are.
 - b. Or you can look at how far in God’s grace you have come and be hopeful
 - c. Growing believers will experience both!