

Passions of the Heart - Part 1

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Date: 04 January 2026

Preacher: Pastor Andrew

[0 : 00] It's good to have all of you here this morning. We're going to go ahead and get started. I'll pray for us and then we'll begin the study.

Father, I pray that you would go before us this morning. Thank you for the instruction that you've given to us in your word. Thank you for the promises that we have in the scripture, the guidance, the instruction, but most importantly, thank you for the power that we can enjoy through the Holy Spirit.

And as we put your word to work in our lives, that we can experience the overcoming power of your spirit working through us to help accomplish the seemingly impossible.

Of course, it is impossible without your help, but with your help, it is possible. And so we pray that you would guide us and direct us this morning in this study and throughout the next six weeks as we look into passions of the heart.

I pray that you would be honored and glorified through our time together. In Jesus' name, amen. Well, I want to encourage you before we get started to, hopefully you all have one of these.

[1 : 16] And this is going to kind of be our tour guide, map as it were. And so as you think about the study and as we're working through this together, the goal is that we'll be doing this, hopefully interactively through this study guide and through some time of teaching and through some responses that we get.

And I imagine that, let me, this is grabbing me. I imagine that some of you are wondering what in the world have we gotten ourselves into.

And I want to say that, if you have a pen, it might be good to have a way to take some notes. Anyone need a pen? Okay. I'm going to give this to Stephen. And if you can be responsible for getting those out, that'd be great.

Some of you may be wondering, what in the world have we gotten ourselves into? What is this going to be like? I've got some kids who are high schoolers, who are teenagers, and I'm a little concerned about the content.

Maybe you've read the book, or you've heard about the book, and you're like, I'm not so sure my teens are ready for this subject matter. But going back several months now, the pastoral team and the leaders of the church, the deacons, have really felt like this is an essential matter.

[2 : 50] And not just because it addresses purity, sexual purity in that sense, but because it addresses kind of the foundations of living, the things that rule your heart, and that will set the course of activity for your life.

And we find throughout the course of the Scripture, Old and New Testament alike, that the affections that we have, the desires that you have, those ruling desires and passions of your heart, is what's going to lead you to certain habits and patterns that may either lead to disaster or ruin for you, or will lead to life for you.

And so this is the tipping point. This subject that we're talking about is really the essence of what God has called us to consider.

That we think about the first and second great commands. What is that first and greatest command? To do what? To love the Lord your God. With all your what? Heart, soul, mind, and strength.

If we want to worship God, and God has made us worshipers, and that's what we're going to kind of understand as we're working through this time together, if we're going to worship God truly, you have to worship God with your heart.

[4:14] You have to know what that kind of worship looks like. And so cultivating good heart patterns, cultivating good desires, good passions, are going to set the course for life for you.

Whether you're going to live in jeopardy of spirituality, ruin, potential ruin, of your spiritual life, shipwreck, as it were, or you're going to enjoy the safety and security and life that God has called us to.

And it starts with our heart. It starts with our passions. We think about the word passion. What are some other words that come to mind?

What do you think of when you think of the word passion? Desires. Okay, that's a good word. Desires. Fundamentally, what you want, what you desire.

Any other words that come to mind when you think of passion? What's that? Mastery. Now, that's an interesting word. Why did you think about mastery? Ah, fantastic.

[5:25] I love that. And that's not what I was thinking, but that hits the nail on the head. When you have a passion for something, you want to master it.

You want to do your best at it. You put all your effort into it. Phenomenal. What else do you think of when you think of passion? Intensity. Okay. There's an intensity.

There's a zeal. There's an interest, a desire of your heart to pursue something. Good. Any other words? Those are tremendous. Any other words that come to your mind? Love.

Okay. Love and desire. That what we are passionate about helps us understand what you love. And fundamentally, what we're going to look at in just a moment here is what you desire, how you feel, what your emotions are telling you really are like the little gauges on the panel of your car that I always ignore because they're always on.

But those light indicators on your car are like your emotions. Now, emotions aren't necessarily good or bad.

[6:41] Okay. That even what we would consider negative emotions, anger, frustration, discouragement, and despair, whatever you want to fill in.

Even those quote-unquote negative emotions can lead you and are meant to lead you to God. They're meant to lead you to worship.

Emotions can be good. But the problem is is when those emotions become controlling emotions, when they become the kinds of emotions that you might find yourself saying, well, I just can't control myself.

Ever heard yourself say that? I just can't control myself. And so, as we think about passions of the heart, the reason why we've chosen this study is because we recognize the significance of those passions in your life that are going to lead you to something.

They're going to set the course for the way you live, either for good or for bad. And we also understand that our culture, our culture, our culture wants to tune in to your emotions.

[7:52] They want to access your emotions and they want to drive them somewhere. They want to help you use those emotions in a way that are destructive and not life-giving.

One such example, a popular song that's written in the last couple of years, written by Teddy Swims. Anyone know who Teddy Swims is? I did not know who Teddy Swims was and I didn't even know what this song was by its title, but I am sure that every single one of you have heard this song.

It's called Lose Control. It was a song that was released in June of 2023 and the song reached number one on the Billboard Hot 100 chart in March of 2024.

And it holds the record for the longest charting song on the Billboard Hot 100 with 112 non-consecutive weeks.

112 weeks. That's over two years it was on this list, okay? That's how popular this song is. That's how much this song engaged culture, okay?

[9 : 04] And it was in the, on this, it was a top 10 song for 80 weeks. 80 weeks. Well, let me just, I'm just gonna read a couple of the, not the choruses, but the refrains, okay?

And there's, I'm gonna leave out certain parts, but here's kind of a sense of this song. It says this, something's got a hold on me lately. No, I don't know myself anymore.

Feels like the walls are closing in and the devil's knocking at my door. Whoa. Out of my mind, how many times did I tell you I'm no good at being alone?

Yeah, it's taken a toll on me, trying my best to keep from tearing the skin off my bones, don't you know? And then it says, I, something, I, what's that?

I lose control. Something's, I don't lose control. Okay? That's the whole tenor of this song. And so, you know, I trust it's obvious, okay?

[10 : 10] This is not a song we're encouraging you to listen to necessarily, but it's just a song that's popular and it explains, it really explains kind of the, the heart of our culture today.

And that is that this core idea is that the feelings don't just inform the way you live, your feelings drive, fundamentally drive the way you live.

Your feelings control you, at least from a cultural perspective. Your feelings will, will take you up, will capture you and pull you along.

And, and we've learned in culture that, that that's not just okay, that's just expected. That's what we expect to happen. And so, our, in our culture today, your feelings aren't just something that, that drive you, your feelings now become your identity.

And so, how you feel then becomes who you are. and that's, that's the message of our culture. How many times have you heard, heard it said, or maybe even have said yourself, I can't help myself.

[11 : 25] I had no choice in the matter. It just happened. I couldn't stop it. That's just how it is. Ever said that? Or, or this identity language that says, well, this is just who I am.

That's just my personality. I'm just being honest. Ever heard that? I'm just being honest. This is who I am. Or, or how about the permissive language that says, I deserve this.

After all, it's, it's what I've been through. So, I'm allowed to feel this way. I'm allowed to respond this way. Or, don't judge me. Or, it's not really that big of a deal.

Come on. Let it go. Give, give me some space. Or, or maybe this blame shifting language that says, it's actually your fault because you made me feel this way.

Or, if you hadn't said that or done that, I would never have reacted this way. Or, you're the reason I'm like this.

[12 : 30] Or, it's your fault that I'm upset. Or, it's the woman you made. Or, it's the serpent. that you put in the garden. It's the age old problem where we explain away our responses based upon the way we feel.

Or, this avoidance language. I just need some space. I can't talk about this right now. Just leave me alone. Or, justification in having the moral high ground that says, I'm only standing up for myself.

I, I don't feel safe. And so, because I don't feel safe, that I'm acting this way. I'm just protecting myself. I'm setting my boundaries. I have every right to do this.

Or, the kind of minimizing language that says, come on, you're overreacting. Or, it's not a big deal. Or, I was just joking. Come on. Give me a break.

I didn't mean it like that. All of this, these words that we use to explain away or justify the way our feelings have driven us to act.

[13:39] And so, we create this space for ourselves to act a certain way because of how we feel. And that everyone needs to kind of clear the boundaries, clear the space for us because we feel this way and the way we feel now has set this, this identity for us that gives us the room, the justification to do whatever we want, whatever we feel.

So, one of the biggest lies in our world is that our feelings are the truest things about ourselves. And that when our emotions like losing control are happening, it's just expected.

You should just expect it. Give me some room. Give me a break. This is how it goes. Don't you understand? And even going back to the 1800s, this has kind of been the way that our culture has begun to feel.

Those of you who have taken like literature, English literature, will know the name Ralph Waldo Emerson. And he wrote *Self-Reliance*.

And the governing line of that entire poem is this, Trust thyself, never imitate. Trust yourself. Your emotions, your convictions, your identity, it's all that matters.

[15:09] Trust yourself. Don't imitate. Allow your life to be ruled by your emotions, how you feel, what you think, what you believe.

And if we're honest with ourselves, we've all been influenced to think that way. We've all been conditioned to believe that how we feel, what our passions are, give us now the room to do whatever we want to do.

And that's why this is so important. That's why when we look at the passions of the heart, we can understand it doesn't just relate to sexual purity. And there's going to be a lot of times where we're going to try to address that just generally but very carefully in this mixed audience.

But I want you to understand that this is transcendent. That what you believe and what you feel are essential to how you live.

And especially how you worship. Because what you feel is an indication not only of what you believe but what you value.

[16:15] What you think is important. And so those indicator lights when I'm angry, when I'm frustrated, even when I'm happy, when I'm excited about something, what am I excited about and how does that point and direct my heart to see what am I really worshipping?

What do I really value? What do I really want in my life? And so right at the outset what I'd like to do I want to just encourage go ahead and open up your little your guides.

Okay. And I want you to take a little personal self-inventory. Okay. And I say personal because I just want to encourage you to keep this private.

Just between you and the Lord and as you're answering these questions I want you to be honest. Honest with yourself before the Lord as you kind of gauge and examine your emotions and how much your emotions drive the way you act.

Okay. So we're going to spend the next five, ten minutes I want you to take out a pen if you don't have one we can get you one and do this self-inventory just to help drive home the point of how emotions have kind of driven the way that we act.

[17:32] So take your time and go ahead and do that right now. If you need one of those workbooks we can get you one just raise up your hand and we'll make sure you get one. I want you to one of those one of those two of those one of those all right just another minute or two when you're done you can just go ahead and look up at me. and look at me.

all right we almost done? A few more seconds. Okay.

What did you learn? What did you learn about yourself? What did you learn about yourself? Maybe this is an easier question. of the little pieces in this inventory which which of those questions grabbed your attention the most?

[22:17] one? Any of those? Okay. Okay. Okay. My identity is found by my emotions. Yeah. Yeah. Yeah, right. So, you know, you're working through this initially like I don't find my identity in my in my desires but then you're like well then you come to anger and you come to fear and you come to anxiety and you come to pressure and you're like ah, well then maybe I'm actually a little bit more driven by my emotions than I think I am. Right? That's true. Good. I appreciate that. And by the way this was this was pretty pretty convicting for me too. When we think about emotions or we think about passions we generally tend to think about those passions that lead us to sexual problems.

Okay. But we we understand that feelings and emotions and passions are much broader than that. Right? Any other of the of the questions that kind of grabbed your attention?

Anyone else want to be honest? Good. How about this one? This is this is one that that resonated in my heart.

[23:48] Work pressures increase my anger or irritability. Now my wife can attest to that and hopefully you don't see that very much but she does. Okay. When when pressure and doesn't necessarily have to be work pressure when family pressure work pressure financial pressure health pressure whatever that pressure is when it comes pressing down then the then the real me tends to to show up.

This what is it about me that is so small in faith I I I I I see my flaws so much clearer when the pressure mounts and the pressure cooker is is doing its work and I see the true me and it's not necessarily a pretty me and I imagine the same is true in your own life as well.

You get to see the real you when things are hard when the pressure intensifies and you recognize that that whatever your escape mechanism is whether that's to check out and do nothing whether that's to tap into leisure or to tap into friendships or to or to work harder or to strive more whatever that whatever that that release or escape mechanism is that happens as you as the pressure cooker is pressing in it's cooking hard so what does this say about our heart and that's kind of this next section and I want to I'll just kind of walk through this with you briefly and I we have a little section here where you can you can take some notes what do you learn about the heart okay so as we're working through this just kind of interacting with one another over this this would be your place to kind of take some notes for yourself this personal self inventory that now kind of leads into okay so how does

God instruct me as I'm becoming very aware of my feelings and my emotions now how do I examine myself or how do I allow the word of God to examine my life and provide the road map for me on how I should live how I should respond and what's normal in the course of a spiritual life okay so we find some passages and there's more than we can access in our time together but some key passages that help to kind of set the course for understanding the heart that the issue of the heart goes all the way back to Genesis and we see this in Genesis chapter 6 it says the Lord saw the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every intention of the thought of his heart was only evil continually what do we learn about this what does this what does this say about our normal human condition the condition of our heart what is it generally what's that it's only evil continually okay and how deep is the problem how does how does

[27:12] Moses through I think of course the Lord is the one speaking through Moses writing this down what is how does he describe the depth of the problem here it's all inclusive okay that every thought of all the time is only evil there's no spark of goodness at all in their heart evil is rooted in the heart that's a great way to summarize that David that's our condition that's your heart that's my heart our heart is only evil continually given the permission of God to the unrestrained passions of our heart always lead us to reject God in every way every intention of your heart is only evil continually unless it's brought into alignment with God and is accessing his power okay that's the bad news okay but there's some good news and we're gonna get there eventually here

Proverbs 16:9 says the heart of man plans his way but the Lord establishes his steps now why is that important how does that help us to understand how things should work normally in the course of our heart condition and especially when our heart desires to do the things of the Lord what do we learn about the heart here in this verse what do you see okay that's good our heart is our planning center and by the way that is good okay it is good when your heart desires things it is good when your heart plans things the strategy though the key is to allow God to govern the actual outworkings of your plans so you hold those plans those desires with an open hand and you let God guide and direct the steps that you take and by the way you allow

God to fundamentally change those desires so that they're in line alignment with his desires desires can be good they're not always bad and so we need to allow God to govern our desires Romans chapter 10 verses 9 to 10 says because if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead you will be saved for with the heart one believes and is justified and with the mouth one confesses and is saved why is that important what is our heart doing there why is this a good expression of the heart why is this encouraging!

for us especially in light of Genesis chapter 6 okay because through through godly desires God shapes our heart to want the right things and to enjoy him okay God wants to take our heart he wants to shape it and move it in the right direction and and it really begins with believing our heart that confesses and believes and trusts and and then now our affections are stirred and begin to move in the direction of God and so real worship can begin to take place in Matthew chapter 22:36 to 40 it says teacher which is the great commandment and he said to them you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and all your mind this is the great and first commandment and a second is like it you shall love your neighbor as yourself on these two commands!

depend all the law and the prophets! I mean I'm going to put this way and this may I'll try to qualify this I want to say emotions in and of themselves are neutral okay even anger and frustration and discontentment can be somewhat neutral as long as those emotions are driving you in the right direction okay that God isn't God isn't alarmed when all of a sudden we're frustrated about something it's just what do we do with that frustration what do we do with that fear what do we do with that anxiety what do we do with those feelings of despair do they drive us to God or do they drive us away from God that is really what's important so feelings in and of themselves are neutral until they take flight in moving us in a certain direction and if your negative emotions move you to

[32:40] God then that's exactly what emotions are meant to do and then God begins to take those emotions he begins to move those emotions around and to help us to become secure in him even when we feel like in our emotional turmoil we're just like I don't know what to do and God takes those emotions he begins to change them and help us to trust him and worship him as he desires so what does our heart require what do we need fundamentally what do our hearts need and that's this next section what does God do and here's the beautiful truth for us Ezekiel 36 22 25 to 27 it says therefore say to the house of Israel thus says the Lord God it is not for your sake O house of Israel that I'm about to act but for the sake of my holy name okay now let's just pause there for a moment what did

God just say what did you hear summarize this for me what's there that's good it is not about!

you it's about me I am! doing this for you what I'm about to do I'm going to do for my glory I'm going to do for my renown I'm going to do to set my name above the heavens where it belongs and for you to revere me the way that I deserve I'm going to do something it's going to blow you away but I'm not doing this because I want you to feel!

necessarily I'm doing this because I want you to look at me and worship me the way I deserve so what is he going to do let's look at this verse 25 is that 25 put my glasses on 25 I will sprinkle clean water on you and you shall be clean from all your uncleanness and from all your idols I will cleanse you and I will give you a new heart hallelujah a new heart and a new spirit I will put within you and I will remove the heart of stone from your flesh and give you a heart of flesh and I will put my spirit within you and cause you to walk in my statutes and careful to obey my rules what's the good news about that verse what's the good news regeneration okay that's a fancy word for make us new okay why else is that good news well really personalize this okay make this super personal why is it good news for you what's that

God's the one doing the action why is that good news for you David it's not about you it's about God why else is this good news for you you need it that's right the longer we live the more we understand how broken we are how desperate we are and how much we need the Lord and how much of a mess we make of things and it's good news because God takes the mess maker heart and he not just cleans it up a little bit he makes it brand new what an incredible encouragement what a blessing that is for us he makes it new and so David this is the spirit of David the psalmist based upon the promise that's given now David he's able to pray this create in me a clean heart oh

[36:58] God renew a right spirit within me for you will not delight in sacrifices or I would give it you will not be pleased with burnt offerings the sacrifices of God are a broken spirit and a contrite heart oh God you will not despise did you catch that not only do we need to pray that God will create within us a clean heart but David comes to understand that if true worship is ever going to happen and maybe I ought to put it this way fundamentally you were made to be a worshipper and so you will not perform the purpose for which you're made unless you worship with a clean heart and that's what David is coming to the sacrifices of God they're not bulls and goats and rams and all of this these blood sacrifices it's not the performance that you bring to the table no it's a broken heart and it's a broken heart by the way that

God gives you it's a new heart that God wants to bless you with and so as we come with that broken and contrite heart then we can begin to worship God in a way that he's pleased with so I want to take just a couple moments right now and I want you just between yourself and the Lord right in this moment ask God to do that for you okay just going to take a couple moments just you and the Lord God do this for me I need a!

heart out Father, thank you that you not only delight in clean hearts, but that you give them.

You give them of your own accord. And so Lord, I pray for each of us, all of us in this room this morning, that you would help us not only to understand the significance of a clean heart, but that you would help us to press in and to desire and crave that renewed heart that comes day by day through your mercy and grace.

In Jesus' name, amen. There's a problem though, okay? We know we need to have a clean heart. We know that our hearts are often out of bounds, but there's an issue, okay?

[40 : 37] And here's the issue. Proverbs 26, is it 26 or 28? Sorry. 28, 26. Someone read that.

Jack, read that out loud for me. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, that whoever walks wisely will be the Lord. Okay. David, read that again. Do you have that?

Yep. Sure. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be the Lord. Elliot, read that for me. He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, but whoever walks wisely will be the Lord.

Alex, can you read that? He who trusts in his own heart is a fool, whoever walks wisely will be the Lord. How does deliverance come?

Not from the heart. Well, it doesn't come in trusting the heart, right? You trust in your heart, you're asking for trouble.

[41 : 40] And the language is really severe. I mean, who wants to be called a fool? You're an idiot. That's the modern nomenclature.

What are you thinking about? How stupid could you be? Don't trust your heart. It's foolish. It's ignorant.

It's dumb. It's stupid. Don't be foolish. And why? Well, because in Jeremiah 17, 9 and 10, it says the heart is deceitful.

The heart wants to trick you. And let me tell you, all of us are fooled by our heart. Okay? We're so fooled by our heart.

We give ourselves a pass far too often because we see things about our heart we want to be true, but are not true. And so we're deceived. Okay? We're lied to.

[42 : 43] And our heart is desperately wicked. Who can know it? I, the Lord, search the heart. I test the mind. Even to give every man according to his ways, according to the fruit of his doings.

So that's the danger here, right? You trust your untrustworthy heart. God is the one who judges that heart and God is the one who will bring to pass the things that our heart leads us to do.

And so those actions will be judged once our heart leads us in a certain direction. And God is the judge of our heart. And God will not let us get away with the things our heart wants to do.

Proverbs 16, 25. There is a way that seems right to a man, but the end of that way is death. Okay. So, let's just pause for a moment.

And what do we learn in here? What do we learn about our heart? What do we need to, as we're navigating this and we understand the significance of it being the control center of our lives and directs the things that we do, what do we need to understand about our heart and then how that will then help to align and regulate the decisions that we make?

[44 : 10] What do you think? Okay. Don't lean on your own understanding. And to keep going, in all your ways, acknowledge him. He will make your path straight.

That's the answer, right? The answer is not to trust in your own ways. Not to trust in your own path, but to find a way to understand the path that God has set for us and that we're going to let his path direct our steps.

He will make it straight. Good. What else you learn? That's good.

That's good. That's good. Man, you just crushed me right now. I can't follow my heart. I just, wow. Disney, poof.

That's true. That's good. Thank you. What else? Okay. If it moves you toward God in activity, that's what it is. Okay.

[45 : 22] It moves you away because a lot of times, you know good and evil. But you really have to, if this is moving me away from God, that should be a red flag.

Okay, good. So, that's a great summary, Jack. If it moves me away from God, then it's fundamentally having the wrong effect on my heart.

Right? My heart is out of sync. Now, here's where the real danger comes into play. The real danger is what we see in the Pharisees. Right?

They were really close to God. They really loved God. They really obeyed God. They really followed God. They were really zealous and passionate for the things of God.

And I put that in air quotes because we know the reality, right? How deceptive the heart can be. They thought they were checking those boxes.

[46 : 23] They thought they were doing the right things. They thought they were worshiping God till the day is long. They thought they were doing exactly what God wanted.

But they were wrong. They were wrong. Because they didn't understand the heart of God. Right? And it was their own heart and passions and idols and cravings that were driving, really, fueling those inward desires.

Okay. So, what do we do? Okay. If we can't trust our heart, then what are we left with? Now it's just like, oh, I guess it's all hopeless.

I guess we can't do anything. I guess we need to abandon all this effort and just forget about it. No. That's not the answer. And just for the next few moments, I want to just take us to 2 Corinthians 7, verses 9 to 11.

Okay? And we're going to see that there is a way that we need to actively calibrate our hearts. We need to actively pursue realignment of our hearts to God.

[47 : 39] And how does that happen? Well, it happens through repentance. Okay? It happens through having this personal, humble self-evaluation that is honest with God and broken.

This contrite spirit and broken heart that the psalmist talks about. That's the kind of heart the Lord will not despise. So, what does that look like? Well, I think it can be really summarized well here.

And I think this is important for us to kind of take away. We'll build on this as we continue to work through this content. But it's important for us to understand the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow.

Okay? When you get caught, my guess is that 999 of us out of 1,000 are going to feel bad about it.

Okay? But is that driven by godly sorrow? Or is that driven by worldly sorrow? Let me just read this verse. We'll break it apart. We'll talk about it for just a few minutes.

[48 : 51] And then we'll be done. Okay? 2 Corinthians 7, verses 9 to 11 says this. As it is, this is Paul speaking. He's writing to the church of Corinth.

And I'm sorry, let me just give you a tad bit of background. Okay? If you go all the way back to Paul's first letter to Corinth, which I think is actually his second letter. We don't have his first letter, but that's not a matter.

1 Corinthians 5, Paul talks about this brother in the church who was caught in sexual immorality.

Remember? Okay? And the church thought they were being tolerant. They thought they were being gracious by putting up with it. And the apostle Paul says, what is your problem?

Not even the Gentiles, not even the world thinks or acts this way. You've got to discipline this guy. You've got to help him understand the significance of his sin.

[49 : 48] You've got to boot him out of the church. And now some time has elapsed. Some time has elapsed. And this church of Corinth is still set on discipline, in severity, in harshness, when it's clear that this man has been broken over his sin, has asked for forgiveness, and wants to be now part of the church again.

And now Paul has to address this church. And not only their initial actions towards this man, which were right and good, but now their own condition of their heart that they need to understand the significance of bringing him into the fold and recognizing the significance of their own sorrowing over sin.

Okay? So all of that is a context for 2 Corinthians 7, 9 to 11. It says, As it is, I rejoice, not just because you were grieved, meaning, you were grieved over this man's sin.

That was right. That was good. And when I came after you, I came with some really strong words, and you understood and recognized the significance of what was happening, and you acted in an appropriate way towards disciplining this guy.

And your own hearts were grieved as well, because you recognized that you were also culpable in some way. I'm not holding him accountable. Okay? He moves on. But because you were grieved into repenting, for you felt a godly grief so that you suffered no loss through us.

[51 : 21] For godly grief produces repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death. 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 this matter. Okay? Let me just begin briefly with a discussion of the difference between worldly sorrow and godly sorrow.

Okay? What is worldly sorrow? Did I put this in your... Okay, good. Worldly sorrow is regret. It's self-centered grief.

You feel bad, but you feel bad because you got caught. Okay? You feel bad because you're worried about consequences. You feel bad because there's a level of shame that has happened.

Okay? It's not driven by by a feeling of guilt, personal guilt and understanding of your sin so much as I...

[52 : 35] Because you would have kept doing it without any problem until you got caught because you didn't care about the sin itself. You just cared about the consequences.

You understand? Okay? So, it focuses on I got caught. This is ruining my life. Look what's happened to me now. People think less of me now.

Okay? That's that's worldly sorrow. Can you resonate with that? Have you seen that? Have you experienced that? You understand what we're talking about here? Okay.

So then, how does that compare with godly sorrow? Well, godly sorrow is God-centered grief. It grieves the sin itself because it has offended a holy God.

You come to terms with understanding, oh lord, now I begin to understand the significance of how this has brought reproach to your name.

[53 : 31] God, I don't care what happens to me. I don't care what the consequences are. But what I care about is how this has dishonored you and I want whatever it takes in my life for my life to honor you.

And so, you can bring whatever punishment, you can bring whatever consequences, whatever it takes, Lord, I want my life to please you. That's the difference.

Okay? So, examples of godly sorrow here. I hate the sin because God hates the sin. It's what we see in King David when Nathan confronts him about Bathsheba.

Right? And all of a sudden when there's this point of revelation in his heart, he's like, oh my goodness, what have I done? Oh Lord, please forgive me. Right?

This expression of his heart. I want to be clean again. I want my love to be reordered around God. Not my emotions, not my passions that are pushing me towards other things, but I want my passions to lead me to him.

[54:42] Right? So, this passage, 2 Corinthians 7, verses 9-11, and especially in verse 11, now give us seven characteristics of what godly sorrow looks like.

What does true repentance look like? How can I know in my heart and how can I know with the people around me whether or not what they're doing in asking for forgiveness is self-serving or God-serving?

Okay? And here's some characteristics, some qualities the Apostle Paul points to. There are seven of them, kind of, one right after the other. Okay? And we're just going to touch on them briefly.

Okay? You see that in verse 11. What earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, what eagerness, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment, at every point you proved yourselves to be innocent as a matter.

There are seven of them. I just want to touch on briefly. Okay? First is the pursuit of purity. The pursuit of purity that's kind of captured in this word earnestness.

[55:51] Earnestness. That once you're caught, or maybe I should say, once you come to terms with your sin and how that sin has disrupted fellowship with God and has brought shame or dishonor to God through your sin, now there's this intensity, this earnestness.

He also describes as eagerness, this strong desire, Lord, I want to be pure. I want to be clean.

I want not to dishonor you in this way again. this intensity, this earnestness, this eagerness, this zeal and desire in your heart.

Oh, God, help me that this is not a pattern in my life, that this is something that I never have to repent about again.

That's your heart. While you know that it's likely that there's going to be sin again, maybe even in that area again and again and again, that your heart says, no, I want to be free of this.

[57:06] I want to be unburdened by this. I want to please you. Oh, God, the intense earnestness of my heart is for purity, this pursuit of purity.

Next is the presence of repentance. The presence of repentance. And he speaks about this anger, okay, this indignation.

And indignation is another word for anger. And so, this is just describing how a person feels once they come to terms with their sin.

Like, you can even remember in the example of David, right? Remember, David confronts, or Nathan confronts David about his sin. Remember, what illustration or what story does Nathan tell David?

Remember? Okay, a man with a sheep. Okay. Okay, good.

[58:25] He takes that sheep, he claims it for his own, and even though he's got all of these sheep, he takes the one from the poor little farmer down the road who doesn't have any sheep.

He just has this, that one, right? And how does David feel when he hears that example? Anger, right? And he's like, I'm going to rephrase this because I don't remember the exact phraseology, but may it be an even more, I'm going to kill that guy, right?

Because this is unacceptable in Israel. And then Nathan says, what? You are the man. You're the man. And not only was there a sense of reality that sunk in, but that kind of anger that David felt about that sin is how we should feel about that sin in our own lives.

God, I hate this sin. I hate what it's doing to me. I hate what it's doing to the people around me. I hate kind of the consequences and the implications of how this has disrupted ministry and family and community and perhaps have robbed you of opportunities to serve.

It's maybe tarnished your reputation and taken away some of those opportunities that you have to speak into the lives of others. God, I hate that my sin has done this.

[60:00] Oh God, please forgive me. Here's the beauty though. The beauty is that God can redeem the years the locusts have eaten, right?

We have a redeeming, restoring kind of God. But it should lead us to anger. God, I hate my sin. I'm broken over it.

I don't want this to be true of me. I hate this. Next is the presence of holy fear. He says, what fear? What fear?

And I think this is reverence for God but I think it's more than just reverence for God. I think it's like that feeling that you have when you've been caught.

Like, you know, for the adults in the room, you're driving down the road, you're going a little faster than you should and you see those flashing lights, okay?

[61:04] You're like, oh, that sinking feeling you get, right? Kind of that, oh no, I feel terrible. That kind of fear down in the, you know, down here in the parts of your, right?

And then, you know, for those of you who are teenagers or kids and you're doing something you know you're not supposed to do, you get caught, right? And, oh, that fear down here in this part, right?

You feel it, you know it, like, oh, that's the kind of fear we're talking about. So that, I don't ever want to do this again because I hate, I hate that feeling of fear.

I want to live in the present reality of the fear of God. That, that, that, that holy fear of God helps to preserve me and carry me and, and, and point my life in the right direction.

This is number four, a passion to restore broken relationships. This longing that he refers to here in verse 11. This longing to, to make something right, okay?

[62:15] This, this longing to, to, to, to restore what was, what was broken. That, that I'm not okay with just leaving things alone.

I'm not okay with just allowing the mess to remain. But, but as much as I'm able to, I want to restore back what's been taken. I want to fix what's been broken.

I want to restore that relationship. I want to do what it takes to, to make sure they recognize that, that I'm not okay with what's, with what's happened. And as much as I'm able to, to restore that broken relationship.

This heart for zeal. You know, we've talked about zeal a lot already. And, and we see this zeal kind of working its way through a lot of the elements of, of, of this, of this passage.

But, but here, zeal and just helping to refer to passionate desire for justice. That's really what this, this Greek word means. Not just punishment here, but, but, or self punishment that he's referring to.

[63 : 27] But, but so, so much more, actually I'm moving, sorry, that's, I said zeal, I'm on, I'm on a six, pursuit of justice and punishment. The punishment doesn't mean self punishment, but a, a willingness to make things right.

To take whatever steps that are necessary to fix the damage. You accept the consequences. You're willing to come clean. And, you know, I think a lot of times when we feel like we've gotten away with something and maybe we have gotten away with something, the, one of the, one of the riskiest things that we can consider when we're, when we come to terms with our sin is now coming clean.

Because we feel like even though God has convicted us about that sin, if we can keep it private, then we can mitigate the consequences. Does that make sense?

Right? God may have convicted me about this that as I've been praying, oh Lord, please reveal to me the areas that I've sinned against you. And he does.

And you're like, oh boy, ho, ho, ho. I haven't had to pay for that yet. I haven't had to, I haven't had to resolve the potential collateral damage of that yet.

[64 : 55] Because they don't know about that yet. And so, we are tempted then again to go underground and to complicate the, the fertile soil that God is trying to produce sin us because we're afraid of then what God might allow to happen once that sin comes out into the light.

Does that make sense? That's not what a repentant heart does. A repentant heart says, okay God, I trust you that since you have led me to understand what my sin is, that you're also going to allow me to recognize that the consequences that you bring into my world have some redeeming quality to them.

And I trust you to do what's right, even when I'm terrified of what's coming. Make sense? That's a big one.

Yes. That's good. That's good.

That's good. Amen. Thank you, John.

[66 : 22] Moms and dads, this is kind of what John said, and I agree wholeheartedly. You set the course for this in your kids' lives. Because there's a lot of times when Johnny comes home and says, oh, daddy, I was riding my bike.

And this is a personal story. I was riding my bike and I ran into so-and-so. Like, you're riding down the street on your bicycle and you hit a car? Now, he didn't respond that way, but he's like, how did this happen?

Well, you go inspect and the little scratch is hardly visible. You're like, I'll just buff this out, no problem. But parents, you say, you know what?

We've got business to do. You need to tell Mrs. Straley what happened. We need to own up to this. Parents, you set the course for true repentance in your children's heart when you help them know and embrace the consequences.

Thank you, John. That is, I'm glad we didn't miss that. Wow. Okay, finally, a clear conscience and renewed joy. And here's what, here's what Paul says, kind of moving back to verse 10.

[67 : 35] For godly grief produces a repentance without regret. Oh, man, there is nothing better than a clear conscience. And that's, that's the final benefit that we get to enjoy when we're walking this path.

This is not only a realigned, recalibrated heart in passions that are kind of reset to, to want God and to walk after God, but we come to a place like, I am finally free.

I'm free of this. It doesn't have a hold on me anymore. And that's, that's the benefit. So, in just a couple minutes, I want to give you a shot here, okay?

Here's a final little piece for you, okay? This closing personal commitment, right? So, look at this, fill in the blanks, okay, for me. Lord, when I feel blank, what is that emotion that comes to your mind?

When I feel this way, I usually move towards this. When I feel this, when I feel anxious, when I feel fearful, when I feel happy, when I feel frustrated, then it moves me towards this.

[68 : 54] But Lord, this week, I want to commit to do this instead, so I can live in purity and grow in worship of you. Just take a couple seconds, fill in those blanks, and then I'll pray for us.

Father, we thank you that you have given us hearts that can move in the right direction. And so, Father, we pray for your help.

We pray that your Holy Spirit will guide our lives, that will make us new. And God, in every part of life, whether it's in academics, or it's in work, whether it's in private, or in public, Lord, wherever we are and whatever we feel, Lord, I pray that we would bring those feelings to you, and that it would lead us to your greater worship.

We pray these things in Jesus' name. Amen. All right. Thanks for coming, and we hope to pick this up again next week.