



Summer

SCHOOL

WEEK 2 - LEADER GUIDE

"Graduating from Regret" - Message by Brian Zibell

Start

To get things started, go around the circle and answer this question:

If you could go back in time and give yourself advice, to what point in time would you go and what would you say?

Share

Welcome back to our series entitled, "Summer School."

When you hear the words, "Summer School," you immediately begin to think of a place you would rather not be. There is so much to do in the summertime and school is definitely not on the list of things we want to do with our time. In fact, if there was a list of things we didn't want to do, school during the summer is right toward the top, along with things like getting audited by the IRS or reading the dictionary line by line.

There are seasons of life, however, where despite our best efforts, we feel like the rest of the world is on summer break and we are stuck in a classroom. For some, it's because they didn't learn what they needed to learn the first time. Others may find themselves in the classroom because they are actually more comfortable there or they're afraid to go out and apply what they have learned.

The topic of this week's message was regret and how easy it is for us to pinpoint missed opportunities and feel shame, and how that alone can keep us stuck, sometimes for a long time.

Think about something that you regret. Do you think that it has been holding you captive, or can you see how it could? If you are comfortable, share it with the group.

**What do you think you would need to do break free and put it behind you?
OR, if you feel like regret is something you have been freed from, would you share with the group what that process looked like?**

Grow

It's noteworthy how regret can have this power over us and limit our ability to move forward or get past it. So much so that it also becomes hard for us to see opportunities that God is placing in our path to overcome it, or to change a trajectory that takes us away from the potential of future regret.

In the message, we heard about a severely broken relationship between David and his son Absalom. This wasn't just a tiff. There were some serious wrongs committed and David had every right to be angry and hurt. We actually read that years went by without so much as a word between them. And then we see God work through an unlikely source, and King David realizes he needs to make a change.

Read:

2 Samuel 14:4-17

Share any thoughts you have about this passage.

Re-read verse 14b

Matthew Henry's Commentary on the Whole Bible has this to say:

She pleads God's mercy and his clemency towards poor guilty sinners: **"God does not take away the soul, or life, but devises means that his banished, his children that have offended him, be not forever expelled from him."** Here are two great instances of the mercy of God to sinners, properly urged as reasons for showing mercy: First, the patience he exercises towards them. His law is broken, yet he does not immediately take away the life of those that break it, does not strike sinners dead, as justly he might, in the act of sin, but bears with them, and waits to be gracious. God's vengeance had suffered Absalom to live; why then should not David's justice suffer him? Secondly, The provision he has made for their restoration to his favor, that though by sin they have banished themselves from him, yet they might not be expelled, or cast off, forever.

What is your reaction to this commentary talking about the mercy of God toward sinners (us)?

Looking at your own life and circumstances and trying to apply this story may feel a bit extreme. The problem is, we know that the root of all sin and brokenness is a heart issue. How that looks in each of our lives varies by degree and circumstance, but the core problem remains the same. With that in mind:

How can we apply this in a way that helps us move past things we have done (or haven't done), and now regret?

How does this idea that God is devising ways for us to be reconciled (to Himself and to others) apply to your life?

Does this change anything for you? Why or why not?

Move

This story of David and his two sons highlights an extreme example of what can happen if we let circumstances dictate our direction. Fortunately for us, it doesn't have to. We just read that God is actively working for us, orchestrating events and times so that we can heal, move forward, or reconcile.

When we look back at the things in our lives that we regret or maybe even look at our current situation with a relationship and see potential for regret, we can feel overwhelmed. Imagine the pit in David's stomach looking at the mess his family had become. We see the facts and we need help and the truth is, God can and will help us. But like most things, it isn't going to be a magical instant and everything is better. We have a part to play.

In his message, Brian shared two things that need to happen on our end if we are going to become a people freed from past regret, and people that won't live lives of regret in the future.

1. If you want to graduate from regret, you need to do the last thing God asked you to do.
2. If you want to live a life without regret, you need to own the real issue.

How do you see your obedience to God as able to affect things in your past?

How do you see "owning the real issue" as something that will both free you and help you be a person that doesn't live in regret?

Read

Romans 8:15

The Spirit you received does not make you slaves, so that you live in fear again; rather, the Spirit you received brought about your adoption to son-ship. And by him we cry, "Abba, Father."

Share any thoughts you might have about this passage and the role it plays in our lives in concert with this topic of regret.

Close with any last thoughts or comments.

Pray

As a group, spend some time praying for each other and the struggles that we all face. If you are in a co-ed group, consider breaking up into men and women's groups to talk more freely.

To Go

Romans 8:1-3

Therefore, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus, because through Christ Jesus the law of the Spirit who gives life has set you free from the law of sin and death.