

This study will examine the biblical basis for restitution. Restitution is mentioned in the Bible but rarely seems to be encouraged in Christian practice. While we are saved by faith in Christ alone, the Bible mentions specific actions or attitude that will flow from that faith. They are repentance, restoration and personal responsibility.

**RESTITUTION:** The act of returning what has wrongfully been taken or replacing what has been lost or damaged.

**RESTITUTION:** is an outward manifestation of an inward desire for repentance. It is a sign before God and man that the heart has changed.

1. **READ Luke 19:1-10**

- a. What action did Zacchaeus take that demonstrated his heart had changed?
- b. How much did he give back in restitution to those he has stolen taxes from?
- c. Why do you think he gave back more than he had taken?

2. Zacchaeus was practicing a principle described in the Old Testament in **Leviticus 6:1-7** read the passage and discuss the following questions. Use the verses to support you comments.

- a. What two parties are sinned against in these verses?
- b. What sins are mentioned?
- c. How would these sins be relevant today?
- d. What specific restitution was required in each case?
- e. How much extra was required to give back in restitution?
- f. How much extra did Zacchaeus give?
- g. What do you think this implies about Zacchaeus?

3. **READ Nehemiah 5:6-13**

- a. What were the reasons surrounding Nehemiah's displeasure?
- b. What does this passage have to do with restitution?
- c. What were the people instructed to do?
- d. What reasons could you give to support Nehemiah's position?
- e. What is the greater reason behind the specific action?
- f. How could these principles be applied today?

4. **READ 2 Corinthians 7:8-11**

- a. What response did Paul's letter create in the hearts of the Corinthian people?

- b. What did godly sorrow lead to?
- c. Explain the difference between godly sorrow and worldly sorrow (guilt).
- d. What are the characteristics of godly sorrow in found in verse 11?
- e. How would you relate an attitude that “desires a readiness to see justice done” with restitution?

**5. READ Luke 3:8**

- a. Explain what this verse means.
- b. In light of this verse could you speculate on why some people who seem to have accepted Christ, never show any sign of a change in their character?

FOR REFLECTION: Restitution for sin is a requirement when we sin against both a person and God. While we are required to make restitution to another person, are we also required to make restitution to God in some way?

**6. READ 2 Corinthians 5:21 and Ephesians 1:7**

- a. Who is it that has made restitution on our behalf before God?
- b. Explain in your own words how this was done.

**7. READ Luke 10:27**

- a. In what way could this verse sum up our responsibility to engage in restitution?
- b. What role does restitution play in loving your neighbour and loving God?

**8. In light of our study discuss the following statement:**

RESTITUTION ENSURES REPENTANCE IS GENUINE.

- a. Do you agree or disagree and why?
- b. What are some of the excuses or rationalizations you can think of that would prevent people from making restitution?
- c. How valid are they?
- d. Under what circumstances do you think it would be dangerous to make restitution?
- e. How could you make restitution to someone who is deceased?

**9. STEP 9: Made direct amends to such people wherever possible, except when to do so would injure them or others.**

- a. What are some examples where restitution would injure someone or do greater damage to the relationship?

**10. READ 1 Samuel 16:7**

- a. How could this verse be a comfort to people when making restitution could cause further relationship damage?

## **FOR THIS WEEK:**

Whom is God speaking to you about and what is an appropriate action for you to take? Do you need to seek council or pray or ask for help?

## **HOME STUDY:**

Here is a potential list of people that you could have harmed. Beside each that applies state the nature of the wrong, the type of restitution required and if you are willing to make amends or why not. Here are two examples to get you started.

1. MY EMPLOYER
2. MY FATHER
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.
- 6.
- 7.

## **VERSES FOR EXTRA STUDY:**

Romans 12:17-18

Romans 13:7-10

Numbers 5:6-8