
Restored from Ruins:
“Repentance Unto Life”
Nehemiah 9: 1-37

Thoughts to Shape and Spark Discussion:

“The certainty and completeness of God’s mercy [is] the magnet of confession . . . we run to his arms with our sin-sick hearts because we know there is grace sufficient, boundless, and free already there. We repent because we are forgiven, not to gain forgiveness . . . we are forgiven because he was forsaken, not because our contrition is adequate . . . we are cherished children of God despite our constant waywardness and the inevitable inadequacy of our confession.” - Bryan Chapell

“We often forget that the heinousness of sin lies not so much in the nature of the sin committed, as in the greatness of the Person sinned against.” - Diane Langberg

“My sin, not in part, but the whole, is nailed to the cross, and I bear it no more. Praise the Lord, praise the Lord, O my soul!” - Horatio Spafford

“What I envy most about you Christians is your forgiveness. I have nobody to forgive me.” - Margaret Laski

Themes and Questions to Guide Reflection and Response:

- What from the Scripture passage or the sermon made an impression upon you? Are there lingering questions to be answered or rabbit trails to be followed for you?
- Ask folks in your group to consider the quotations above. What does it spark in them?
- Does God’s kindness (Romans 2: 4) feel like the magnet drawing you into confession?
 - Chapell writes, “we repent because we are forgiven, not to gain forgiveness.” Is that your experience? Would you like it to be?
- Do you think of and live like repentance/confession of sin is a one-time transaction? Why should “all of life” be repentance?
 - Is that too gloomy? Where is the freedom and release and life of repentance for you?
- What do you make of Margaret Laski’s quotation above?
 - Do you think folks really long for forgiveness, especially those outside of the church?
 - How does Horatio Spafford’s lyric inform that forgiveness from a Christian’s perspective?
- What the patience and steadfastness and depth of God’s grace impresses you from this passage?
 - As you read the Bible, are you seeing your need of God’s grace more clearly (as in a mirror), and are you rejoicing in the supply of God’s grace more personally (magnifying glass on the cross)?