The Pathway to Repentance

LESSON FOUR: Restoration

**Introduction**

1. Humpty dumpty
	1. Took a great fall and all the king’s horse and all the king’s men could not put humpty back together again. Why the horses? What’s wrong with the men?
	2. Why an egg? Actually, when an egg is dropped it is quite a yucky mess…I can understand why humpty could not be put back together (stuffing the yoke back inside, putting the shell back together)
	3. But we would all acknowledge that God could fix poor humpty, putting back together all of the broken pieces
2. The process of repentance
	1. Putting our lives back together after we sin sometimes seems just as improbably as putting Humpty Dumpty back together.
	2. Yet through a process of confession, contrition, and now **correction** (restoration), God is able to restore all of us, no matter what our sin.
	3. We learned that a *broken heart and contrite heart God will not despise*, but rather He will heal those who are shattered into pieces.
	4. How does this work?
3. David models for us in his prayer the steps of putting your life back together after sin
	1. Recognize the spiritual collapse
	2. Change begins in the heart
	3. Then the appropriate behavior change will always follow.

**THESIS:** Restoration takes place by seeking forgiveness from the guilt so one can renew the inner man which will be reflected in a changed life.

**Lesson**

1. **The language of restoration in David’s prayer**
	1. First, **forgiveness**
2. Be gracious v1
3. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, v2
4. Cleanse me from my sin, v2b
5. Purify me with hyssop and I shall be clean, v6
6. Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow. v6b
7. Hide your face from my sins, v9
8. Blot out all my iniquities, v9b
	1. Second, **renewal**
9. You desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom. v6
10. create in me a clean [pure] heart, O God, v10
11. And renew a steadfast spirit within me v10b
12. Do not cast me away from your presence, v11
13. Do not take Your Holy Spirit from me v11b
14. Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, v12
15. And sustain me with a willing spirit, v12b
	1. Third: **changed** life
16. I will teach transgressors Your ways, v13
17. And sinners will be converted to You, v13b
18. My tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness, v14b
19. O Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise, v15
20. **Practical Steps of restoration:** *correcting the person*
21. **Take care of the guilt**, the condemnation of sin, by seeking God’s forgiveness
	1. Deal with all of your sin, each wrong action that led up to your sin, each repetitive sin, confess them all.
		1. Spiritual collapse is usually a result of a series of sins, not just one. List and confess them all.
		2. Private sin is dealt with privately, unless you need the prayers of others.
		3. Public sin should be confessed publicly - others know you have sinned, when you have a contrite heart your will want others to know you have repented.
	2. Go to others as necessary and seek their forgiveness as well.
		1. Leave your offering and go first be reconciled to your brother (Matthew 5:23,24)
		2. What if they won’t forgive? Then that is on them, you have done the right thing.
		3. Do I have to go to everybody? Yes. They know of your sin, wouldn’t you want them to know of your repentance. (Often it can be done collectively in a public confession)
		4. Make restitution if possible: offer to **make right** whatever wrongs you have done:
		**Luke 19:8**
		"Behold, Lord, half of my possessions I will give to the poor, and if I have defrauded anyone of anything, I will give back four times as much."
	3. **Accept** **God’s** **forgiveness**: realize that He delights in forgiveness and accept His promise of grace. No, you don’t deserve it, but you must accept it as truth so you will be able to recover.
22. **Connect back with God**:David prayed,  *“Do not cast me away from your presence, v11; Do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.”*
23. As said before, all sin is a result of a spiritual collapse, a breakdown in your relationship with God. Essential to restoration is reconnecting with God.
24. David is praying to God in this very Psalm. He is crying to God. It is hard to imagine that he was making this type of prayer while with Bathsheba, while plotting his cover up, or any time up until the exposure. This prayer comes after his exposure and brokenness of heart.
25. Engage in the **spiritual disciplines**: worship, prayer, reading, connecting with others, fasting, and giving.
26. **Deal with the “why” of the sin –** why did you do it? What desires were at work within you? David prayed,*“you desire truth in the innermost being, and in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom”*
27. **Overused words**: authentic, transparent, vulnerable. Yet here we use them to describe a person who is living in harmony with their core values; they are not faking it; they know their strengths and their weaknesses.

“THE AUTHENTICITY HOAX: HOW WE GET LOST FINDING OURSELVES” The following from Booklist sums up this entire book: “We live, Potter argues, in a world dominated by the prepackaged and the artificial, the fraudulent and the fake. Growing out of this increasingly bleak cultural landscape is a movement centered on the notion of authenticity: the honest, the natural, the real. That’s all fine and good, Potter says, except for one thing: we don’t have a clue what we mean by authenticity, and even if we did, we wouldn’t know how to find it.”[[1]](#footnote-1)

1. The covered and secret areas of your life: may be known to you; or you may not even be aware: **Where and when did you deny who you really are?**
2. You know ‘**what’** you did, but do you understand ‘**why’** you did it?
3. In affair recovery we talk of **Vulnerability + Opportunity = Affair**. What was your vulnerability which made you act on the opportunity?
	* 1. When one has the opportunity but is not vulnerable, they usually will not act. Example of Joseph: he had opportunity, but was not vulnerable, so he ran.
		2. When we are both vulnerable and the opportunity arises, we often act. Example of David: had opportunity, and acted because of some vulnerability.
		3. What is your weakness, that uncontrolled lust of the flesh that opened the door to your sin?
4. Until you figure out the underlying pathogen, you cannot make the necessary changes.
5. Were you dealing with personal issues? ….running from your past? …or simply just caught up in the lust of your flesh? Is anger playing itself out?
6. Are today’s actions the culmination of years of pornography? Is your drinking just a lack of self-control, or are you self-medicating some deeper problem?
7. What have you done to correct/eliminate that vulnerability?
8. One might push back, “This sound too much like psychobabble and not Christianity”. David said that he *knew* his sin. Do you know yours? **If not, find out**. Become an expert about how and why this sin occurred.

In this step you might do very well to visit a counselor. The consequences of sins inflicted upon you can leave scars which pop up in many unexpected ways.
(Example of trying to hold several volleyballs underwater; you may succeed for a while but they will come loose and pop up, over and over again).

After this step restoration is both near and eminent.

Consider the next step which comes after fully knowing the anatomy of your sin.

1. **Recreate the inner person**: David prayed, *“create in me a clean [pure] heart, O God; renew a steadfast spirit within me; sustain me with a willing spirit”*
2. Due to the spiritual collapse, several things may have occurred during one’s sin:
	* Rejoicing in evil rather than hating it
	* The ability to blush, feel shame is lost
	* Generally, one is not thinking well: (Stinkin’ thinkin)
	*“…with gentleness correcting those who are in opposition, if perhaps God may grant them repentance leading to the knowledge of the truth,*[***26***](http://biblehub.com/2_timothy/2-26.htm) *and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, having been held captive by him to do his will.* (**2 Timothy 2:25, 36**)
3. Sin erodes several things
	* Our health
	* The boundaries of right and wrong which we would normally not cross
	* The very will and desire to do what is right
	* The definition of what is right and wrong becomes blurred
	* Our faith
	**Job 14:18, 19**
	"But as a mountain erodes and crumbles and as a rock is moved from its place,19 As water wears away stones and torrents wash away the soil, so you destroy everyone's hope.”
4. Renewal starts with **prayer**: *Create in me a clean heart*. God will help create a pure and clean heart in the person who wants such a heart enough to cries for it.
5. The request to renew a **steadfast** spirit: This word *steadfast* is translated 37x as ‘prepared’. Success is not an accident; but the result of **hard work** repeated over a long, long time.
6. The request for a ***willing*** spirit: The ‘want to’, which has been broken, needs to be fixed. A person who once was ready to quit and had given in to their sin, now takes joy in living godly. They look at the deeds of their past with a healty shame (reinforcing the choice to not act upon them again).
7. **Change of behavior**: David prayed, “*I will teach transgressors Your ways,* 13*; And sinners will be converted to You,* 13b*; My tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness,* 14b*; O Lord, open my lips, that my mouth may declare Your praise”*
8. These are the *natural* fruits that arise out of repentance.
	* *I will* ***teach*** *transgressors your way* – having traveled down the pathway of repentance, the restored sinner is now exited to share their knowledge with others – helping them to overcome as well.
	* *My tongue will* ***joyfully******sing*** *of Your righteousness* – having once brought shame to God by sinful behavior, the restored person now brings glory to God by their behavior, their song, and their words. Their gloom has been replaced with genuine joy.
9. While natural, these new behaviors can be kick started by ‘practicing righteousness’
(righteousness is not merely something you *are*, but it is also something you *do* because of who you are). Do them because you know they are right – the enthusiasm and excitement will soon follow.

**Isaiah 56:1**
Thus says the LORD, "Preserve justice and **do** righteousness, for My salvation is about to come and My righteousness to be revealed.

**Psalm 106:3**How blessed are those who keep justice, who **practice** righteousness at all times!

**Summary**

No matter how broken, God can, and will heal us.

Skipping steps, going through them quickly, and not allowing the normal progression to take place only serves to short circuit the restoration process.

Let us pray like David, confessing our sin with a broken and contrite heart. Let us ask God to create in us a clean heart, and a willing spirit. And let us trust God that He is faithful to do it.

1. *The Authenticity Hoax: Why the “Real” Things We Seek Don’t Make Us Happy*; Andrew Potter [↑](#footnote-ref-1)