

Now I Rejoice, Not That Ye Were Made Sorry

by John Calvin

Godly sorrow, which is a hatred of sin itself, is the cause of repentance to salvation, and is essential for submitting ourselves to God's government.

Scripture: Psalm 111:10, Proverbs 1:7, Ecclesiastes 12:13, 2 Corinthians 7:9

Topics: "Repentance", "Righteousness"

Description

John Calvin preaches about the importance of godly sorrow leading to true repentance, emphasizing that repentance begins with a genuine dread and hatred of sin, not just fear of punishment, but a deep understanding that sin is offensive to God. He explains that God uses various means, including chastisements and threats, to awaken us from spiritual sluggishness and rebellion, highlighting the necessity of a reverent fear of God as the foundation of repentance and righteousness.

Transcript

Now I rejoice, not that ye were made sorry, but that ye sorrowed to repentance: for ye were made sorry after a godly manner, that ye might receive damage by us in nothing. For godly sorrow worketh repentance to salvation not to be repented of: but the sorrow of the world worketh death. --II Corinthians 7:9, 10

Since conversion commences with a dread and hatred of sin, therefore the apostle makes godly sorrow the cause of repentance. He calls it godly sorrow when we not only dread punishment, but hate and abhor sin itself; from a knowledge that it is displeasing to God. Nor ought this to be thought strange; for, unless we felt sharp compunction, our carnal sluggishness could never be corrected, and even these distresses of mind would not be sufficient to arouse it from its stupidity and indolence, if God, by the infliction of his chastisements, did not make a deeper impression.

Besides this, there is a rebellious obstinacy, which requires violent blows, as it were, to overcome it. The severity, therefore, which God uses in his threatenings, is extorted from him by the depravity of our minds; since it would be in vain for him to address kind and alluring invitations to those who are asleep.

The fear of God is called the beginning of repentance also for another reason; because though a man's life were perfect in every virtue, if it be not devoted to the worship of God, it may indeed be commended by the world, but in heaven it will be only an abomination; since the principal branch of righteousness consists in rendering to God the honor due to him, of which he is impiously defrauded, when it is not our end and

aim to submit ourselves to his government. --Institutes, III, iii, vii

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