

## RESTITUTION

**TEXT: Exodus 22:1-16.**

A follow up of repentance is restitution but we are in a time where many no longer believe in the repentance of sin and as such the idea of restitution has become foreign to the church. In our days, many find themselves in church through things that has little or nothing to do with eternity thus making the church to look like a club. You do not need to repent when you have to join a club.

Some people came to church because they were told that their businesses will prosper if they came to church as there are wealthy people in the church. That means they will be interacting with the rich and wealthy. Others may have come to acquire one selfish thing or the other or it may as well be so that they will be delivered from their enemies. For these reasons and some others, people do not see the need for repentance. The club nature of the present day church has rendered repentance unnecessary. When the church is the resemblance of a club or a political gathering, the need for repentance will be completely erased and therefore restitution will never be discussed. With eternity in mind, when a man looks back at his lapses, and judges them as sin, he will see the need for repentance. In association with repentance he will find the need to retribute. When our reasons for going to church are earthly and mundane, we will not see the need to repent and if we do not see the need to repent we will definitely not see the need to retribute.

But why restitution? An apology that is devoid of the conscience is not an apology but a resemblance of a display of foolery of the offended. **Joel 2:13** *So rend your heart, and not your garments; return to the Lord your God, for He is gracious and merciful, slow to anger, and of great kindness; And He relents from doing harm.*

An apology is costly as it should force the person apologizing to come lower to that to whom the apology is been rendered and it should reflect a deep sense of remorse. When you apologize just because you want people to hear it but not because you mean it, it creates a deeper hurt for the person to whom the apology was rendered.

DISCUSSION:

- a. **What is restitution:** Restitution is defined as reimbursement for a loss or injury, or restoring to a former condition or returning something to the former owner

(dictionary.com). On the legal side, it means making amend for what you have done wrong.

**Give some examples of restitution in the Bible:** I Kings 20:34, II Kings 8:6, Luke 19:8-9

- b. **Is restitution still relevant under the New Testament?** Luke 19:8-9. Matthew 15:17-20.
- c. **Is there a difference between forgiveness and restitution?**

**Restitution** means restoration or making something good and in most cases it is physical although the command in the bible has a spiritual connotation. Lev 24:18, I Sam 12:3. Lev 6:5 and II Sam 12:5-6, Exodus 22:6.

**Forgiveness** on the other hand, as physical as it might sound, is a decision which is also very spiritual. Mark 11:25-26.

## **RESTITUTION PART II**

**Texts:** II Sam 12:1-5, Luke 19:8, Exodus 22:1

Some things cannot be restored but you can forgive every hurt.

**Can I have more differences and similarities?**

- d. **What is the difference between repentance and restitution?** Luke 19:8-9. You may or may not do any physical thing to indicate your repentance but for restitution you need to do something physical.
- e. **Is restitution still possible in our days?** If it is required by God, then it is still possible. It is a sign of true repentance.
- f. **Why do we think God instituted restitution?**
  1. It is spiritual, Psalm 51:12, Isaiah 57:18,
  2. Restitution follows repentance. Gen 20:7, Luke 19:8-9
  3. It serves as a deterrent Lev 24:21.
  4. It pacifies the offended Neh. 5:8-12.
  5. It is sacrificial. Most times because you do not only restore what you took but you give more. Luke 19: 8
  6. It convinces man that the person is truly repentant. Luke 19:9

7. It brings joy to the offender and closure to the ills committed I Kings 20:34
8. It leads to forgiveness. Lev 6:1-6, Ezekiel 33:15.

- g. If I refuse to retribute is it sin?** Do not substitute restitution for repentance. Restitution should follow repentance and not the other way round. It is not restitution if you have not repented. Luke 19:8-9 is a good example of repentance and restitution. Do not hide under the guise of God has forgiven you and then you refuse to make right what you should have made right especially when those things are still available to you. James 4:17.
- h. What should you retribute and what are the dangers of restitution?**

You should retribute all that you are able to retribute. However, every sin cannot be retributed and what some people may want to call restitution is actually confession as a result of deep contrition. Certain restitution has to be properly guided so as not to cause more harm to the offended. Restitution was not instituted by God to cause offense but to bring peace of mind between the offended and the offender.

**CONCLUSION:** Restitution does not only clear your heart, it also clears the heart of the people you have offended. Imagine how the people would have been able to received Zacchaeus after his salvation and he chooses to go and witness to him. When you refuse to retribute, you have your conscience to challenge you and you have the people to withstand you. It becomes an abrasive portion of your life as you live the life of a believer. The devil also finds it difficult to accuse you. This is because you can boldly say to him that you did them in ignorance and now that you are in the light you have repented and retributed. Your refusal to retribute in some cases is like using the devil's implement to serve God.