

# Woulda-Coulda-Shoulda

*Dealing with Regret*

December 31, 2006

Did you make any decisions in 2006 that you regret?

## 1. Your regret can be good!

I am no longer sorry that I sent that letter to you, though I was sorry for a time, for I know that it was painful to you for a little while. Now I am glad I sent it, not because it hurt you, but because the pain caused you to have remorse and change your ways. It was the kind of sorrow God wants his people to have, so you were not harmed by us in any way. *2 Corinthians chapter 7, verses 8-9*

- ✓ Looking back is a necessary part of being a Christ follower.
- ✓ How often do I take inventory of my spiritual life?
- ✓ What do you do with your regret?

## 2. Your regret can be a useful tool in God's hand.

For God can use sorrow in our lives to help us turn away from sin and seek salvation. We will never regret that kind of sorrow. But sorrow without repentance is the kind that results in death. *2 Corinthians chapter 7, verse 10*

- ✓ "Worldly sorrow" – is regret with just emotion but no action.
- ✓ "Godly sorrow" – is regret with action in the direction that God asks you to go.

## 3. Repentance points me in the right direction.

See what this godly sorrow has produced in you: what earnestness, what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what alarm, what longing, what concern, what readiness to see justice done. At every point you have proved yourselves to be innocent in this matter. *2 Corinthians chapter 7, verse 11*

- ✓ Regret can be *crippling*.
- ✓ Repentance is freedom producing.
- ✓ Repentance brings peace with God and others.
- ✓ Only repentance can bring commitment.

*Earnestness: an intense and serious state*

*Eager: enthusiastic desire*

*Indignation: a righteous anger at sin*

- ✓ Only repentance can give you this renewed commitment.
- ✓ Are you willing to apply this kind of energy to the issues God wants you to confront in 2007?

#### **4. Look back but don't hang back.**

No, dear brothers and sisters, I am still not all I should be, but I am focusing all my energies on this one thing: Forgetting the past and looking forward to what lies ahead, I strain to reach the end of the race and receive the prize for which God, through Christ Jesus, is calling us up to heaven.

*Philippians chapter 3, verses 13-14*

- ✓ We are not all that we should be!
- ✓ What is God making us?

“For God knew his people in advance, and he chose them to become like his Son, “

*Romans chapter 8, verse 29*

- What spiritually life changing goals will you set for 2007.
- You only have so much energy for 2007.
- What priorities must change in order to meet those goals?

#### **5. I can move forward because...**

Therefore, if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; the old has gone, the new has come! All this is from God, who reconciled us to himself through Christ and gave us the ministry of reconciliation:

*2 Corinthians chapter 5, verses 17-18 (NIV)*

God has reconciled your past, present and your future... have you?

- You have potential!
- You matter!
- You're valued!
- You're worth it!

Hope for a better new year is found in Christ who can and will change you if you let him.

*Next Week: Who is invited to the table? **Communion***