

August 27, 2026

More Than “I’m Sorry”

August Series: Christ-Centered Relationships

Week Focus: Making Peace

Scripture – 2 Corinthians 7:10 - *“Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.”*

Devotional Reflection

Saying “**I’m sorry**” can be an important step toward repairing a relationship, but those words alone do not always produce change. Sometimes we apologize because we genuinely recognize the hurt we caused; other times, we simply want the tension to disappear. We may be sorry that someone is upset or that there are consequences without becoming willing to address the behavior that created the problem. Paul makes an important distinction in 2 Corinthians 7:10: **godly sorrow leads to repentance**. Genuine sorrow does not merely feel something—it moves us toward something different.

Repentance goes deeper than regret. Regret says, “**I wish that had not happened.**” Repentance asks, “**What needs to change so I do not continue producing the same hurt?**” If our words caused damage, repentance may require changing how we speak; if dishonesty damaged trust, it requires truthfulness and consistency. When the same behavior repeatedly creates the same wound, another apology without meaningful change can eventually become difficult to trust. **An apology acknowledges the damage; repentance begins changing the behavior that caused it.**

Jesus calls us to the kind of humility that takes responsibility without excuses. A sincere apology does not hide behind “**I’m sorry you felt that way**” or attach a “**but**” that shifts responsibility back onto the person who was hurt. It becomes willing to say, “**I was wrong. I hurt you. I should not have handled it that way. Will you forgive me?**” But even sincere words should be accompanied by a willingness to grow. Repentance does not mean we will never stumble again, nor does it require another person to immediately trust us again. It means we stop defending what God is asking us to change and allow His grace to begin transforming it.

As followers of Christ, our changed behavior should eventually support the words we have spoken. If trust has been damaged, rebuilding it may require patience, consistency, accountability, and time. We cannot demand that someone recognize our growth according to our timetable, and we should not become discouraged when one apology does not immediately repair everything that has been broken. Our responsibility is to remain faithful to the work God is doing within us. **Sometimes the strongest apology is not another sentence—it is a life that begins demonstrating, “By God’s grace, I am changing.”**

Today, consider whether God has shown you something this week that requires more than an apology. Perhaps the next faithful step is not simply another conversation but a changed pattern. Ask the Holy Spirit to show you where your actions need to begin agreeing with your words, and then surrender that area to His transforming work. Do not focus on proving to someone else that you have changed; focus on faithfully becoming who Christ is calling you to be. **Making peace is more than saying the right thing—it is allowing God to change what needs to become different.**

Focus for Today

Godly sorrow does not stop at regret; it leads us toward repentance and change.

Practice

Think about something you have apologized for—or something God may be asking you to acknowledge now.

Ask yourself:

“If my apology is sincere, what change should begin accompanying it?”

Identify **one specific behavior** you can begin changing today.

Don't focus on proving to someone that you've changed.

Focus on becoming faithful to what God is changing in you.

Prayer

Father, thank You for grace that does more than forgive me—it transforms me. Show me where I have settled for regret without allowing repentance to produce change. Give me humility to apologize without excuses and courage to change whatever does not reflect Christ. Where my actions have damaged trust, help me become consistent, patient, and faithful rather than demanding immediate restoration. Let my life demonstrate the work You are doing within me. In Jesus' name, Amen.

Reflection Question

Is there an area where I have repeatedly said “I’m sorry,” but God is now asking me to demonstrate repentance through meaningful change?