

# **LESSON 1**

## **RESTITUTION**

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**Text:** Gen. 20:1-18; 21; 32:9-33

### **MEMORY VERSE:**

*“This being so, I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men” (Acts 24:16).*

### **CENTRAL TRUTH:**

Without restitution, there can be no clear conscience towards God, and men.

### **INTRODUCTION**

Restitution is the act of restoring; restoring anything to its rightful owner. The act of giving an equivalent for loss or damage caused to someone else. God forgives us when we repent. Yet, He requires that we make amends to any person we have injured or wronged while committing the sin. Restitution makes a person pay back just debts, restore stolen or misappropriated articles, uncover his crimes, and confess his lies in order to fully enjoy the emotional satisfaction of cleansing and atonement of sins.

This is necessary because one may be justified by faith in Christ. However, before men, particularly before an injured person, unless we make restitution our testimony may not be acceptable. They may mock our sincerity and this is not helpful for the salvation of others around us who may learn about the story, particularly in half-truths.

### **DAILY BIBLE READING**

Monday: Gen. 20:1-18 - Abimelech and restitution

Tuesday: Exod. 22:1-8 - Restitution in the Law

Wednesday: I Sam. 12:1-5 - Testimony of a good conscience

Thursday: Rom. 2:1-15 - Restitution and true repentance

Friday: Acts 24:1-16 - Restitution and boldness

Saturday: Heb. 13:17-21 - Restitution and true Holiness

### **LESSON OUTLINE**

1. The Necessity of Restitution
2. Causes for Restitution
3. Methods and Examples of Restitution
4. Results of Restitution

## EXPLANATION

### 1. The Necessity Of Restitution

The necessity of restitution cannot be over-emphasized, and both testaments talk about the practice. However, restitution is necessary for all true believer's evidences salvation. It demonstrates obedience to God.

- a. God commanded restitution under the law: Gen. 20:1-18, Gen. 32:9-32; Exo.12:18,19,22;26-36;22:1-5; Lev. 5; Num. 5:6-8; Ezek. 33:14-16. It is not true that restitution was abolished with the law because the law was never abolished anyway, see Gal. 3:17. Jesus taught us that He came to fulfil and establish the laws (Matt. 5:17).
- b. Christ taught and commanded restitution: Matt. 5:23-24; 18:15-17; Luke 17:3-5; 19:8-10; Jn. 4:14-19. Every believer must earnestly contend for and whole-heartedly practice all what Jesus Christ taught.
- c. The Apostles taught it and the whole church of God lived by this teaching: Matt. 28:19, 20; 14:26; Acts 2:42; 16:4; Acts 23:1-5; 24:16; Philem. 7:21. If we want to experience the same tranquility, and joy in the Holy Spirit that the early Christians experienced we need to make our wrongs right.
- d. Restitution is a proof of our inward salvation and evidence of our genuine repentance: Luke 19:8-9; Acts 19:18-20; Matt. 3:8.
- e. It is the means for a conscience void of offence toward God and man: Acts 24:16; I Tim. 1: 8-19. It gives no room for Satan's accusation in our hearts!

We must not forget that many things that we do or are encouraged to do as Christians do not bring salvation in themselves, but they are products and evidence of genuine salvation.

### 2. Causes for Restitution - Exod. 22:1-13; Lev. 6:1-7

According to the scriptures, we must make restitution in the following or similar situations:

- Stolen Property - Exod. 22:1-4
- Spite words or conduct - Exod. 22:5
- Strange wife or husband – Ezra 10:1-13
- Carelessness - Exod. 22:5
- Loss of trust - Exod. 22:7-13
- Lying about property placed in one's care - Lev. 6:2, 5;
- Lying about property in a partnership agreement - Lev. 6:2, 4
- Property obtained through deceit or violence - Lev. 6:2, 4
- Lying about property lost by someone else that we find - Lev. 6:2, 3

- Fighting among brethren - Gen. 32:9-32: Matt 5:23, 24; 18:15-17 and lastly on anything the spirit of
- Not following God's inspired instructions - John 3:21.

This list is not exhaustive by any means. There are many things that are not mentioned here that the Spirit of God will expand for us in our understanding.

### **3. Methods and examples of restitution**

Under the law, the fifth part (20 percent fine) is required in addition to the principal (Num. 5:5-8). However, under the law of the Spirit of Life, one can plead the grace of salvation to do the restitution according to the leading of the Holy Spirit (Rom. 8:14). A replacement of the principal object is not negotiable, even where a monetary equivalent is not accepted or acceptable.

Examples from the scriptures about those who did restitution include:

- Abimelech - Gen.20
- Abraham on Hagar - Gen. 21
- Jacob - Gen. 32
- The backslidden Israelites - Ezra 10:1-19,44
- The tyrant Jews -Neh. 5:1 -13
- Zacchaeus - Luke 9:8,9
- The converted magicians - Acts 19:18-20
- Onesimus – Philem. 7-21

It takes humility to apologize and to do it in the right manner to another man in obedience to God instructions. We are not doing favors for an injured person. It is equally challenging to consider restoration for their loss as well. Further, we must exercise care when restitution will likely implicate other people. We must obtain counseling for God's wisdom and leadership through the pastors before going public with such testimony however pressed to the right thing one may be.

### **4. Results of Restitution**

Much like any other requirements of Christianity (such as repentance or water baptism), restitution is not a self-righteous act that merits us pardon. Yet, if it is done we shall enjoy the Lord's commendation like Zacchaeus - Luke 19:9. One will have a good testimony among fellow Christians - Matt. 5:16. There will be freedom in our hearts, and a clear conscience (Acts 23:1), and we shall experience uninhibited happiness.

### **REVIEW QUESTIONS**

1. What are the results of restitution?
2. Why is restitution necessary?
3. What are the steps one must take to perform restitution?
4. Are there biblical contradictions for performing restitution?

### **PRACTICAL DISCUSSION**

According to James 1: 22; how will you put this lesson into practice?

