

# Beyond Regret

## Life Group Leaders Guide

### Objective

This guide contains the information and questions you will need to lead a life group study during our current sermon series. Our aim is to spark Spirit-led, Bible-centered conversations that anyone can participate in regardless of how biblically literate they may or may not be. **The win** that we want you to experience is when your group members **connect** more closely with each other and with God so that they are encouraged to move forward in living out their faith.

### Directions

The *Purpose* and *Move* sections are for the leader to read to the group to provide clarity. **Do not feel pressured to cover all the questions.** Decide which ones may work best for your group. You will see brief notes interspersed between groups of questions to help give the group context for their answers. The *Notes and Commentary* section (when included) is optional reading for the leader to get background information and better understanding of the passages before leading the discussion.

### Series Overview

We all have regrets from the past. Many of them come from our attempts to fulfill unmet longings. The problem is many of us get stuck in our regrets and seem unable to move forward. We want to help people recognize specific regrets, release them to God, and learn to see regrets as an opportunity to start over. Our hope is that we would all come to see that God is big enough to redeem even our worst regrets. He can use everything for a greater good. Nothing needs to keep us from the joy and purpose God has for our lives! We can start over and live a life beyond regret. During the series we will examine the biggest regret of one of the heroes of the Bible and learn how to recognize, release and redeem even our worst regrets!

### Beyond Regret Series Schedule

Week	Sermon Date	Topic
1	3/8	Recognize Regrets
2	3/15	Release Your Regrets
3	3/22	Redeem Your Regrets
4	3/29	Repeat

## The Point Church Life Group Curriculum

# Release Your Regrets

## The Big Idea

In order to be free from the Sorry Cycle and the burden that holding on to regret can have on us, we must move to the second step and release it.

## Flow of Study

**Icebreaker:** Would you rather have a rewind button, a pause button or a fast-forward button for life? Do you have a specific moment you would use it for?

**Move 1:** The first step to move beyond our regrets is to recognize them, which we discussed last week. In order to move forward and start over, we then have to let go. Let's look at how the risen Jesus helps Peter let go of one of his biggest regrets...

### John 21:15-19 (NIV)

15 When they had finished eating, Jesus said to Simon Peter, "Simon son of John, do you love me more than these?" "Yes, Lord," he said, "you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my lambs."

Again Jesus said, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" He answered, "Yes, Lord, you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Take care of my sheep."

The third time he said to him, "Simon son of John, do you love me?" Peter was hurt because Jesus asked him the third time, "Do you love me?" He said, "Lord, you know all things; you know that I love you." Jesus said, "Feed my sheep. Very truly I tell you, when you were younger you dressed yourself and went where you wanted; but when you are old you will stretch out your hands, and someone else will dress you and lead you where you do not want to go." Jesus said this to indicate the kind of death by which Peter would glorify God. Then he said to him, "Follow me!"

**NOTE:** The last time we read about Peter before this passage is when he denied knowing Jesus (John 18).

1. This section of Scripture is titled "Jesus Reinstates Peter." What comes to mind when you hear the word "reinstate"? How does this word relate to the idea of releasing our regrets?
2. Jesus asks Peter three times if he loves Him, corresponding to the three times he had denied knowing Jesus. Why is Jesus doing this?
3. At what point do you think Jesus forgave Peter? Do you think we have to do something to earn God's forgiveness?
4. How does God's immediate forgiveness help us to release our regret and start over? Is God's forgiveness all we need to move forward to live beyond regret?

**NOTE:** Peter chose to release his regret and live beyond it. Despite Peter's embarrassing sin, Jesus used Peter to help launch his movement around the world. He can use you, too!

**Move 2:** The question isn't whether we sin but what we do after we sin. The answer can lead to either life or death. Let's see how confession is part of releasing our regrets.

**Read Proverbs 18:13 (NIV)**

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.

5. What are some ways we try to conceal our sin? Why do you think we avoid confession?
6. What does it mean to confess? Who should we confess our sins and regrets to?
7. What is the difference between confessing and renouncing sin? Can we truly release our regrets and move beyond them without doing both? Why or why not?

**Move #3:** Exposing our failures allows the healing process to begin, and God's forgiveness allows us to move forward.

**Read 1 John 1:8-9 (NIV)**

8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. 9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

8. Why do Christians still need to confess and ask God for forgiveness for our sins after receiving salvation?
9. What is the difference in asking for forgiveness and confessing our sin?
10. It's often said that one of the hardest parts of moving beyond our regrets is forgiving ourselves. J.D. Greear says, "Don't feel your way into your beliefs; believe your way into your feelings." How can the truth of 1 John 1:9 help us to release our regret even when we may not feel forgiven?
11. How might some of the principles we've discussed today help us to also release regrets that weren't necessarily a sin we committed? (E.g., If only I hadn't chosen that guy as my business partner... If only I hadn't let the girl I love get away...)

**Next Steps:**

1. You don't have to stay in the Sorry Cycle of longing and regret. Release your regret and choose to start over now.
2. Go to [pointchurch.com/regrets](http://pointchurch.com/regrets) and anonymously post a word or phrase that represents your regret.

**Prayer:** Spend time in prayer confessing sins to one another and to God and walk forward in His forgiveness and mercy. Also pray for other needs.

## Notes and Commentary

*The following are pieces of commentary, facts, and links based on the passages of this study in order. Use them to help supplement your group time or for your personal preparation.*

### On John 21

John concentrates on the character of Peter, whose name threads through the entire chapter. Peter's threefold denial of Christ (18:15–18, 25–27) is matched by his threefold announcement of love. In addition, while the Beloved Disciple is the one who recognizes Jesus from the boat (21:7), Peter rushes to the shore in his zeal to see the Lord and is later invited to haul in the great catch of fish. This is Peter's restoration. Jesus sees in this fallen disciple genuine potential for good and now not only demonstrates marked personal interest in him but predicts that Peter will follow Jesus even in a death that will "glorify God" (21:19).

...[W]hen Jesus asks Peter, "Do you love me more than these," we are forced to examine the context to unravel the meaning of "these." Is Jesus asking, "Do you love me more than you love these boats and fish?" Or, "do you love me more than you love these men with whom you are working?" These two options are relevant since Peter has rejoined his fishing career and now with his friends around him, perhaps Jesus is calling him to make a choice. Does he love his career or is he willing to be Christ's disciple with a thoroughgoing call to ministry? ...In the Synoptics he said that he alone would continue to be faithful even if the others fell away (Matt. 26:33; Mark 14:29). John describes for us Peter's zeal to follow Jesus despite warnings of death. "Lord, why can't I follow you now? I will lay down my life for you" (13:37; cf. 15:12–13). And, of course, the deepest irony of this story is that once Peter utters this pledge, he denies Christ three times. But in the present setting, Jesus is the One who knows all things (1:42; 2:25; 16:30), and he understands that despite this terrible falling, Peter is still a man of faith and commitment. Jesus may then be asking, "Do you [indeed] love me more than these other men love me?" Jesus is asking Peter to examine the strength of his earlier pledges.

...

On the one hand, he could have spent the balance of his life working for the kingdom and promoting faith in Jesus. He could have become one of the most zealous apostles, intolerant of those who might compromise, inflexible with any who didn't take discipleship with utmost seriousness. All of this energy would look excellent on the surface, but it would have been mere compensation—perhaps even overcompensation—for the failings of his earlier life. ...On the other hand, Peter could have become a man filled with despair. Seeing his own weakness so directly, knowing that Jesus had seen it and now even his fellow apostles knew about it, how could he still enjoy anyone's respect? ...Self-criticism, depression, and a spiritual pessimism (disguised as a "theology of the cross") would have characterized his work....

Jesus wanted none of this. His first plan was a gift of such good humor I can just imagine him smiling as he contemplated his friends hauling in a net full of fish.... When Peter learned that it was Jesus who had done this—the fishing-miracle-worker Jesus—it is no accident that he ran to the shore. He ran to the only one who could heal his memories, who could rewrite the terrible pictures and sounds of his recent past—the courtyard, the charcoal fire, the young woman. The miracle demonstrated that despite Peter's failings, Jesus was still on his side, cooking a good meal for friends, having fun filling nets with fish. Then the invitation to affirm his love three times drowned out the echoes of his betrayal that haunted him. The last time Peter stood over a *charcoal* fire, he denied Jesus (18:18). Now Jesus makes him stand over another *charcoal* fire (21:9) and with it, review old memories and remove them. (Gary M. Burge, *NIV Application Commentary: John*)