

# 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

## *Redeem Your Regrets*

### The Big Idea

In order to fully exit the Sorry Cycle and start over, we need to allow God to redeem our regrets, trusting him to make something good out of them.

### Flow of Study

**Icebreaker:** Share a favorite rescue story either from real life or fiction.

**Move 1:** In this week's sermon, we examined an encounter between Jesus and a Samaritan woman at a well (John 4:1-26). Jesus helped this woman recognize and release her hidden regrets. He then redeemed her regrets and helped her to live beyond them.

1. What stood out to you from this week's sermon?
2. Why is knowing Jesus the key to living beyond regret?

**Move 2:** Next let's consider how God redeemed Paul's regrets and what his story has to tell us about our own prospects for redemption.

#### **Read 1 Timothy 1:12-17 (NIV)**

12 I thank Christ Jesus our Lord, who has given me strength, that he considered me trustworthy, appointing me to his service. 13 Even though I was once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man, I was shown mercy because I acted in ignorance and unbelief. 14 The grace of our Lord was poured out on me abundantly, along with the faith and love that are in Christ Jesus.

15 Here is a trustworthy saying that deserves full acceptance: Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners—of whom I am the worst. 16 But for that very reason I was shown mercy so that in me, the worst of sinners, Christ Jesus might display his immense patience as an example for those who would believe in him and receive eternal life. 17 Now to the King eternal, immortal, invisible, the only God, be honor and glory for ever and ever. Amen.

3. What does Paul regret?
4. How did God redeem Paul's regrets?
5. How does this passage speak to someone who believes their regrets are too severe for God to redeem?
6. How might God's redemption of your own regrets lead to the redemption of others (verse 16)?
7. Paul refers to himself as "the worst sinner" in this passage twice (verses 15 & 16); however, his message is full of hope. How can we take the same perspective?

8. How does Paul's story bring glory to God (verse 17)? And how might God use our stories in a similar way?

**Move #3:** Let's look at another well-known passage that affirms that God is in the business of redeeming not only our regrets, but all of the the pain and problems in our lives.

### Read Romans 8:28-29 (NIV)

28 And we know that in all things God works for the good of those who love him, who have been called according to his purpose. 29 For those God foreknew he also predestined to be conformed to the image of his Son, that he might be the firstborn among many brothers and sisters.

9. A long view of our lives often helps us to see God's good work more clearly. How have you seen this your own experience?
10. Many of us may currently be waiting for God to redeem our regrets. What role does faith play as we claim this promise?
11. What we want and what is good for us are not always the same thing. How have you seen God work for good when you didn't receive what you wanted?
12. How is the promise that God is working for our good, even through our regrets, connected to his purpose for all of us (verse 29)?

### Next Steps:

1. Go to [pointchurch.com/regrets](http://pointchurch.com/regrets) and anonymously post a word or phrase that represents your regret.
2. Lay your regrets at the foot of the cross and ask God to redeem them for good.
3. Reflect and consider how you might use your regrettable experiences to bless someone else.

**Prayer:** End your study with a time of praying with and for each other. Take requests, but be sure to pray also about what you've discussed today.

## 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 1 Timothy 1

Verses 13–14 form an interesting contrast to Paul's testimony in Philippians 3:4–6, where he portrays himself as formerly being proud of his accomplishments. There he cited his persecution of the church as an evidence of zeal and described himself "as for legalistic righteousness, faultless." He did immediately follow those words with the demurral, "Whatever was to my profit I now consider loss for the sake of Christ" (v. 7), but that is mild compared to his strong self-condemnation here in 1 Timothy 1:13: "once a blasphemer and a persecutor and a violent man."

Blasphemy is the defamation of God's name, a horrendous act and attitude punishable by death in Old Testament times (Lev. 24:16). Its seriousness is also clear in 1 Timothy 1:20, where Paul says he has handed

two individuals “over to Satan to be taught not to blaspheme.” Here in verse 13 Paul links blasphemy with persecution and violence, as he did in his “testimony” to King Agrippa (Acts 26:9–11), telling how he not only imprisoned many of the Christians and agreed to their death (see Acts 8:1), but also tried to force them to blaspheme.

...

The purpose of Christ’s coming, “to save sinners,” has been welcomed by two millennia of human beings who, conscious of their guilt before God, have gratefully accepted the redeeming events of the incarnation and saving death of the Lord Jesus as accomplished for them as sinners. Moreover, in this passage two extremes are cited of those for whom Christ came. One is the group of sinners described in verses 9–10; the other is Paul himself, who, in spite of all his righteous deeds, calls himself “the worst” of sinners.

...

So it is that Paul does not merely stand on his credentials but shows that he himself is a sinner saved by God’s grace and has received this great trust humbly. The Lord Jesus once said that the person who has been forgiven much loves much (Luke 7:47). One way that Paul can assure the reader of God’s love is to show how much he personally has been forgiven.

The blessings of God’s grace are so extensive that we may tend to forget that we are saved not only for our own benefit but for the glory of God. This is made outstandingly clear in Ephesians 1:6, 12, 14; 2:6–10. Thus, Paul is conscious here in 1 Timothy 1:16 of the fact that he is to be a display of God’s mercy. (Walter L. Liefeld, *NIV Application Commentary: 1 & 2 Timothy, Titus*)

### **On Romans 8**

Still holding in tension the present sufferings (8:18, 22) with the future glory (8:18, 21, 30), Paul affirms that God causes all these present difficulties to produce good for those who love him (8:28). Some philosophers spoke of cooperating with fate or even maintaining happiness with it; Paul goes beyond this, not resigned to impersonal fate but trusting the benevolent design of God, even when it seems hidden from external human experience of the present. Those who love him are special to him (cf. 1 Cor 2:9; 8:3; Deut 7:9; Sir 1:10). These are “called according to his purpose” (Rom 8:28), and his purpose is to conform them to the image of his Son (8:29), thus bringing them to glory (8:30). The “good” that God seeks for those who love him, then, is above all their ultimate glory. (Craig S. Keener, *Romans: A New Covenant Commentary*)

Since Romans 8:28 is a familiar verse, we should slow down and examine the detail it contains. Paul does not claim that all things work together for good for everyone; he has a specific subset of people in mind. He first describes this group as those who love God, and then recharacterizes them as those who are called according to His purpose. This recharacterization specifies how we should understand “working together for good.” It is not our definition of what good looks like—rather, God’s purposes determine the good. He calls us with a specific purpose in mind, and we can have the utmost confidence that all these things we face—including our present suffering—are working together as part of a larger plan that God has ordained.

...Once again we are reminded that although God loves us and has a wonderful plan for our lives, this plan is more about Him and His bigger purpose than about our happiness. Whatever benefit we gain in being conformed to God’s image is ancillary to His greater purpose in seeing His Son properly honored. (Steven E. Runge, *High Definition Commentary: Romans*)