

Gathering

RESTITUTION

Have you ever asked to be restituted for harm done to you? Many civil cases in court are of people seeking restitution for damages incurred in any given situation. Some accept an apology when they are offended or taken advantage of. God accepts Jesus' sacrifice on our behalf.

Restitution is defined as “*the return of something lost or stolen so that the original situation is restored*”¹. All of us have harmed and affected others, whether consciously or not. But the mistakes of our past do not have to determine the future.

Zacchaeus opened his house and his heart to Jesus. As a result, he repented of his past behavior and started again, restoring the harm he had caused. Luke 19:8 says: “*But Zacchaeus stood up and said to the Lord, “Look, Lord! Here and now, I give half of my possessions to the poor, and if I have cheated anybody out of anything, I will pay back four times the amount.”*”

Zacchaeus' story demonstrates the transformation Jesus brings. The kind of repentance that not only renews the person but also seeks to reconcile relationships with those who have been harmed, with God's help.

With salvation through faith in Christ comes a change of heart. We look at life, people, and things differently because we realize what Jesus has done for us. As a response for the love received, we seek to live by grace. A change of heart leads to a changed life; one that seeks to reconcile with those hurt in the past.

After reading scripture, consider these questions.

- Why did Zacchaeus retribute those he had hurt from his community?
- What is the relationship between repentance and restitution?
- When you think of your personal encounter with Jesus, what change of life came with your change of heart?
- Do we retribute others the same way we expect to be restituted?

Complete your monthly report and turn it in to the Corps Officer.

¹ Manser, M. H. (2009). *Dictionary of Bible Themes: The Accessible and Comprehensive Tool for Topical Studies*. London: Martin Manser.

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As Christians, we understand the need to repent and gladly accept the new life Christ offers. But restitution is something not everyone does. You can restitute others for the damage you have caused.

If we want people to give us restitution, we must restitute, including restoring broken relationships. It shows our change of heart and our changed life. Explore what the following passages say about this.

READ LEVITICUS 6:2-5

Do you believe that the actions described still relevant today?

READ MATTHEW 3:8 AND ACTS 26:20

Does your way of life demonstrate you are bearing fruit of repentance?

READ MATTHEW 7:12

What can you start doing for others as you would like them do to you?



Written by Captain Lizbet Rosado, PRVI Division



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