

Oracles of God

If anyone speaks, let him speak as the oracles of God - 1 Peter 4:11

Restitution

In the context of this article the Greek word **APODIDOMI** means: "to give back." In Luke 19:8 (the words of Zacchaeus) the word is translated "**I restore**" (See also Luke 4:20 & 9:42).

Liddell and Scott's Greek English Lexicon (Abridged Edition, Page 85) states that this word means: "to give back, restore: **especially to give back what is due.**"

Zacchaeus surrendered himself to the teachings of the Lord Jesus Christ. He recognized his obligation to put right any wrong he had done to his fellow man (Proverbs 6:30-31; Ezekiel 33:14-17).

His godly sorrow produced a repentant heart (a changed mind) and his repentant heart produced an earnest and diligent desire to clear himself of any former dishonesty (2 Cor. 7:9 -11; Luke 19:8).

The Lord was pleased and said to Zacchaeus, "**Today salvation has come to this house, because he also is a son of Abraham**" (Luke 19:9; John 8:39; Galatians 3:7; James 2:20-24).

The golden rule of Christianity states clearly and forcefully that we must love and treat others in the same way that we want others to love and treat us (Matthew 22:39; 7:12; Romans 13:8-10; Psalm 15):

"You shall love your neighbor as yourself."

"Whatever you want men to do to you, do also to them, for this is the Law and the Prophets."

We all want people to be honest and genuine with us – so we likewise must be honest and genuine with others. We all want others to restore that which has been wrongfully taken from us – so we likewise must restore that which we have wrongfully taken from others.



T. W. Brents (The Gospel Plan of Salvation Page 191) aptly states:

The determination to reform must be such that will lead the party to a *reparation* of injuries done to others, as far as may be in his power to make restitution.

A Work of the South Cambridge Church of Christ

Schedule of Services

Sunday School ... 11:00 AM
Worship.... 12:00 AM

Bible Study Wednesday.... 7:30 PM

Location

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In vain may any one tell me that he repents slandering me while he refused to correct his false statements concerning me, or that he repents of stealing my horse while he continues to ride him without my consent.

Zacchaeus proved beyond any doubt that his repentance was sincere because it caused him to bear fruits worthy of the change that had taken place in his mind. He knew he had to make proper restitution. He was a doer of the word and not a hearer only. He now had a mind that was determined to do right (James 2:21-24; Acts 10:35). Jesus said:

Therefore whoever hears these sayings of Mine and does them, I will liken him to a wise man who built his house on the rock (Matt 7:24).

Guy N. Woods (Questions and Answers Volume 2 Page 228) writes:

“Restitution” is an act of justice wherein we restore to another that which we have unjustly deprived him of. (Cf. Exodus 22:1; Luke 19:8; Leviticus 6:9). If the deprivation consists of things, these, or their value, must be restored, where possible; where such cannot be done, reasonable satisfaction must be made.

Where the loss we have caused is intangible, and restitution cannot be made in kind, we must make every effort possible to remove the effects of our wrong.

John the baptizer made it perfectly clear to the Jewish nation that genuine fruits of repentance must be produced before any of them could even begin to claim Abraham as their father (Luke 3:8-14; Romans 2:28-29).

Jesus said these words to the unbelieving Pharisees, **“If you were Abrahams children, you would do the works of Abraham”** (John 8:39; Galatians 3:7-9; James 2:20-23).

John gave these powerful examples regarding what he meant by preaching that they must bear genuine fruits of repentance in their lives (Luke 3:11-14).

To the people he said:

He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him do likewise.

To the tax collectors he said:

Collect no more than what is appointed.

To the soldiers he said:

Do not intimidate anyone or accuse falsely, and be content with your wages.

In the story of Zacchaeus, the Lord gives us a powerful example regarding the importance and necessity of restitution.

After Zacchaeus had made it known that he would **restore** fourfold anything that he had taken by false accusation, the Lord presented him as being a true and genuine son of Abraham.

If a man repents, he will not only cease his sinful activity, he will also make right or restore the things which are amiss.

This is true religion. This is what it means to be a son of Abraham (James 2:21).

“Therefore do not be unwise, but understand what the will of the Lord is” (Ephesians 5:17).