True Repentance Involves Remorse for Sin and Forsaking It

For godly sorrow produces repentance leading to salvation, not to be regretted; but the sorrow of the world produces death. 2 Corinthians 7:10, NKJV.

The love of God will never lead to the belittling of sin; it will never cover or excuse an unconfessed wrong. Achan learned too late that God's law, like its Author, is unchanging. It has to do with all our acts and thoughts and feelings. It follows us, and reaches every secret spring of action. By indulgence in sin, men and women are led to lightly regard the law of God. Many conceal their transgressions from other people, and flatter themselves that God will not be strict to mark iniquity. But His law is the great standard of right, and with it every act of life must be compared in that day when God shall bring every work into judgment, with every secret thing, whether it be good or evil. Purity of heart will lead to purity of life. All excuses for sin are vain. Who can plead for sinners when God testifies against them?--The Signs of the Times, April 21, 1881.

There are many professed Christians whose confessions of sin are similar to that of Achan. They will, in a general way, acknowledge their unworthiness, but they refuse to confess the sins whose guilt rests upon their conscience, and which have brought the frown of God upon His people....

Genuine repentance springs from a sense of the offensive character of sin. These general confessions are not the fruit of true humiliation of soul before God. They leave sinners with a self-complacent spirit to go on as before, until the conscience becomes hardened, and warnings that once aroused them produce hardly a feeling of danger, and after a time their sinful course appears right. All too late their sins will find them out, in that day when they shall not be purged with sacrifice nor offering forever. There is a vast difference between admitting facts after they are proved, and confessing sins known only to ourselves and God.--The Signs of the Times, May 5, 1881.

Achan, the guilty party, did not feel the burden. He took it very coolly. We find nothing in the account to signify that he felt distressed. There is no evidence that he felt remorse, or reasoned from cause to effect, saying. "It is my sin that has brought the displeasure of the Lord upon the people." ... He had no idea of making his wrong right by confession of sin and humiliation of soul.--The Seventh-day Adventist Bible Commentary, Ellen G. White Comments, vol. 2, p. 997.
The confession of Achan, although too late to be available in bringing to him any saving virtue, yet vindicated the character of God in His manner of dealing with him, and closed the door to the temptation that so continually beset the children of Israel, to charge upon the servants of God the work that God Himself had ordered to be done.—Ibid.