

# REPENTANCE

## A New Direction

Peter replied, “All of you must turn away from your sins and be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ. Then your sins will be forgiven. You will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.” **ACTS 2:38**

# WORDS from the WORD

## REPENTANCE

*turning your back on sin  
and turning to God*

## REGRET

*feeling bad because of something  
you did or didn't do*



A coin has two sides: the head and the tail. Having new life in Jesus also shows two things—faith and repentance. They are closely connected to each other. You can't have faith without repentance.

Repentance is turning away from sin and faith is turning to God. Because we follow Jesus, we make the decision to repent and move in faith daily.

# REPENTANCE, SORROW, & CHANGE

Turning away from sin begins when we are really sorry for our sins. There are two types of sorrow: godly sorrow and worldly sorrow.

## 2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV)

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.

### GODLY SORROW

does not give excuses

says “I’m sorry because I disobeyed God by lying”

admits and takes responsibility for his or her actions

results in a changed life

### WORLDLY SORROW

only gives excuses

says “I’m sorry my mom found out that I was lying, but it really wasn’t my fault”

blames other people or circumstances

results in spiritual death which means being separated from God forever

## Psalm 32:5 (CEV)

So I confessed my sins and told them all to you. I said, “I’ll tell the Lord each one of my sins.” Then you forgave me and took away my guilt.

This “godly sorrow” acknowledges that our sin is first and foremost against God. Godly sorrow is having a broken heart when we realize we have sinned against a holy God. It produces true repentance and a changed life.

On the other hand, “worldly sorrow” only produces excuses. We say things like, “I didn’t know it was wrong,” “everybody’s doing it,” “he hit me first,” or “it’s her fault.”



Godly sorrow means we know that what we did is wrong, so we would not do it again. That is why it causes lives to change. Worldly sorrow means we do not accept that what we did is wrong even if it is really wrong. But we will be more careful the next time we do it, so that we will not get caught. That is why it does not change our lives. It only results in spiritual death.

## Matthew 3:8

“Live in a way that shows you have turned away from your sins.”

# REPENTANCE & FORGIVENESS

## Luke 15:11- 24 (ICB)

Then Jesus said, “A man had two sons. The younger son said to his father, ‘Give me my share of the property.’ So the father divided the property between his two sons. Then the younger son gathered up all that was his and left.”

“He traveled far away to another country. There he wasted his money in foolish living. He spent everything that he had. Soon after that, the land became very dry, and there was no rain. There was not enough food to eat anywhere in the country. The son was hungry and needed money. So he got a job with one of the citizens there.”



“The man sent the son into the fields to feed pigs. The son was so hungry that he was willing to eat the food the pigs were eating. But no one gave him anything.”

“The son realized that he had been very foolish. He thought, ‘All of my father’s servants have plenty of food. But I am here, almost dying with hunger. I will leave and return to my father. I’ll say to him: Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son. But let me be like one of your servants.’ So the son left and went to his father. While the son was still a long way off, his father saw him coming. He felt sorry for his son. So the father ran to him, and hugged and kissed him. The son said, ‘Father, I have sinned against God and against you. I am not good enough to be called your son.’”

“But the father said to his servants, ‘Hurry! Bring the best clothes and put them on him. Also, put a ring on his finger and sandals on his feet. And get our fat calf and kill it. Then we can have a feast and celebrate! My son was dead, but now he is alive again! He was lost, but now he is found!’ So they began to celebrate.”



The parable of the prodigal son is a beautiful picture of true repentance. The son claimed his inheritance while his father was still alive, but then spent everything. So he had to get a job feeding pigs. When the son realized his hopeless condition, he turned his back on his foolishness, walked away from his former life of sin and rebellion, and decided to return to his father. His father forgave him for what he did and welcomed him back. In the same way, our Heavenly Father is faithful to forgive us when we turn to Him and repent of our sins.

### **Acts 3:19 (CEV)**

“So turn to God! Give up your sins, and you will be forgiven.”

Some people think that God makes a list of everything that we do wrong. They think that God forgives our sin, but still keeps a record of them. But that is not what happens. When God forgives us, He also erases our record of sins. Imagine a sheet of paper full of all the wrong things we did suddenly becoming clean. Everything is erased. It looks as if we had never even sinned.

### 1 John 1:9 (ICB)

But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins. We can trust God. He does what is right. He will make us clean from all the wrongs we have done.

# WHAT DOES GOD DO TO SIN?

Here are some images the Bible paints to show us how God forgives us and what He does to our sin:

God threw our sins to the bottom of the sea. He doesn't want us to look at them again (Micah 7:19).

We don't have to carry our heavy sins. God already carried them on His back (Isaiah 38:17).

God chooses to erase our sins. He removes them from our record (Isaiah 43:25).

God removed our sins away from us, as far as the east is from the west. Our sins can never come near us again (Psalm 103:12).

God chooses to cover our sins so that He would not see them. He knows we sinned, but He is not making us pay for them (Romans 4:7,8).

God cancelled our sins by taking them to the cross (Colossians 2:14).

God forgives our sins and makes us clean (1 John 1:9).

# NO REGRET

Turning away from sin means we stop trusting in the good things we do and start trusting in Jesus alone. Before, we were going in the wrong direction. In Christ, we are now going in the right direction. Before, we were running away from God; now we are walking with Him.

This is called repentance, and this is where a new life starts. It means living without regrets.

## 2 Corinthians 7:10 (NIV)

Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret . . .

### Remember

Repentance is turning away from sin and turning to God.

## PERSONAL APPLICATION

- Are there things you think, say, or do that don't show obedience to God?
- Are there sins that you have turned away from, yet you still feel bad about?