

◆ What Does it Mean to Repent? ◆

Genuine repentance is a heartfelt turning away from sin and a sincere turning toward God. It involves both a deep sorrow for wrongdoing and a commitment to pursue righteousness. True repentance is not just feeling bad about wrongdoing; it is actually a real change in heart, mind, and actions.

True repentance begins with acknowledging sin and understanding how it separates us from God. “For all have sinned, and fall short of the glory of God.” (Romans 3:23) “If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us.” (1 John 1:8)

Genuine repentance involves sorrow that leads to transformation, not just regret for getting caught. “For godly sorrow works repentance unto salvation, a repentance which brings no regret: but the sorrow of the world works death.” (2 Corinthians 7:10) “The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit: A broken and a contrite heart, O God, you will not despise.” (Psalm 51:17)

Verbal acknowledgment of wrongdoing is essential. The Bible teaches us that confession demonstrates humility before God. “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9; James 5:16) “He that covers his transgressions shall not prosper; but whoso confesses and forsakes them shall obtain mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13)

Repentance is never complete without a deliberate effort to abandon sinful habits. “Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to Jehovah, and he will have mercy upon him.” (Isaiah 55:7) “Bring forth therefore fruit worthy of repentance.” (Luke 3:8)

Genuine repentance often requires making amends where possible. “If therefore you are offering your gift at the altar, and there remember that your brother

has anything against you, leave there your gift before the altar, and go your way; first be reconciled to your brother.” (Matthew 5:23-24) “Zacchaeus... said unto the Lord, ‘Behold, Lord, the half of my goods I give to the poor; and if I have wrongfully exacted anything of any man, I restore fourfold.’” (Luke 19:8)

Genuine repentance is not just about forsaking evil; it is about actively seeking God and living in obedience to His will. “Repent therefore, and turn again, that your sins may be blotted out.” (Acts 3:19) “Create in me a clean heart, O God; And renew a right spirit within me.” (Psalm 51:10)

When repentance is sincere, it produces lasting change. Look at these examples and read the Bible verses to get a better idea of what the Scriptures are saying.

- ◆ Greater love for God and others (Luke 10:27)
- ◆ A deeper desire for righteousness (Matthew 5:6)
- ◆ Renewed fellowship with God (1 John 1:7)

Repentance is not a one-time event but a continual posture of the heart. Christ calls His followers to a life of repentance. “I came not to call the righteous, but sinners to repentance.” (Luke 5:32) “Remember therefore from whence you are fallen, and repent and do the first works.” (Revelation 2:5)

Genuine repentance is the gateway to grace, forgiveness, and spiritual renewal. It restores our relationship with God and aligns our hearts with His will.

Suggested Reading

- ◆ *The Gospel of Jesus – God’s Plan for Salvation*
- ◆ *Living a Life of Holiness and Sanctification*