



CONNECT

FIRST STEPS - LESSON 2: REPENTANCE



Objectives

- New believers to understand the true meaning of repentance.
- New believers to understand what to do after they have made a commitment to God.
- New believers to understand how they should relate to the Lord.

Introduction

Now that you have made a decision to accept Jesus, it means that Jesus has forgiven your sins and given you the ability to overcome evil desires. Knowing this is not enough; you need to have the intention to change. God will help you grow in maturity.

A repentant Christian should have the same attitude as those believers who heard Peter's message in **Acts 2:37-38**.

When the people heard this, they were cut to the heart and said to Peter and the other apostles, "Brothers, what shall we do?" Peter replied, "Repent and be baptised, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.

Acts 2:37-38

We need to have repentance: Which means turning from our old ways and walking in God's ways.

What Is True Repentance?

1. Being sorrowful of sins we have committed against God.

The English translation "sin" actually comes from the original language of the Bible which meant, "missing the mark". It means missing the standard of perfection established by God (**Romans 3:23**) and going our own way.

One sign of true repentance is feeling sorrowful of the sins we have committed. The right response to such sorrow is not to remain in self-pity but to repent.

Yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us.

2 Corinthians 7:9

2. Confessing our sins to the Lord and receiving His forgiveness.

True repentance means that we acknowledge to God that we have sinned against Him.

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

*Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity.
I said, "I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."
And you forgave the guilt of my sin.*

Psalms 32:5

3. Turning from our sinful ways and following God's ways

In true repentance, we turn our orientation away from our sinful ways to follow God's teaching. In Paul's defence before King Agrippa, he mentioned that he shared the gospel, and preached to them that they should repent, turn to God, and prove their repentance by their deeds.

First to those in Damascus, then to those in Jerusalem and in all Judea, and then to the Gentiles, I preached that they should repent and turn to God and demonstrate their repentance by their deeds.

Acts 26:20

Similarly, when the Pharisees and Sadducees approached John the Baptist for his baptism, he rebuked and advised them to:

Produce fruit in keeping with repentance.

Matthew 3:8

4. Hating sin and wickedness

Not only do we turn away from our sins, we also choose to no longer love them. In fact, we will grow to hate them. In **Hebrews 1:9**, it speaks of the nature of Jesus, who loves righteousness and hates wickedness.

You have loved righteousness and hated wickedness therefore God, your God, has set you above your companions by anointing you with the oil of joy.

Hebrews 1:9

As followers of Christ, we ought to follow the example of Christ: To hate sin and wickedness.

5. Willingness to make restitution

True repentance will bear fruits. If we have done any man a great injustice and can make it good, we should be willing to make restitution (to pay back what we have done wrong).

Zacchaeus experienced such a true repentance that he was willing to pay back those whom he had cheated.

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."

Luke 19:8

Repentance pleases God!

What Repentance Is Not?

1. It is not just becoming conscious of our individual's faults

Becoming conscious of our wrong doings must happen before we repent. However, this is not repentance. Not everyone who becomes conscious of sin will necessarily repent, as shown in **Matthew 27:3-5**.

When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver to the chief priests and the elders. "I have sinned," he said, "for I have betrayed innocent blood." "What is that to us?" they replied. "That's your responsibility." So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself.

Matthew 27:3-5

Judas realised that he had betrayed the Lord Jesus, but he never truly repented of his sin. True repentance will bring peace, joy and eternal life, not committing suicide or destruction.

Many people may feel sorry for their evil actions only when others find out about their sin. However, godly sorrow brings repentance.

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

2 Corinthians 7:10**2. It is not trying to be a good man**

Many people try to be good by changing their way of life, depending on their own strength. This is not true repentance. Even though we know what is good and righteous, and we want to do it, we often cannot carry it out due to our sinful nature.

For I know that good itself does not dwell in me, that is, in my sinful nature. For I have the desire to do what is good, but I cannot carry it out. For I do not do the good I want to do, but the evil I do not want to do—this I keep on doing. Now if I do what I do not want to do, it is no longer I who do it, but it is sin living in me that does it.

Romans 7:18-20

Those who think they can become good and righteous by depending on their own strength usually do not want to repent of their sins because they think that they are good enough. The truth is, because of our sinful nature, our righteous acts are like filthy rags in God's eyes, as prophesied by Isaiah.

All of us have become like one who is unclean, and all our righteous acts are like filthy rags; we all shrivel up like a leaf, and like the wind our sins sweep us away.

Isaiah 64:6

The context of this passage is referring specifically to the Israelites during Isaiah's time, who had turned away from God. Isaiah was writing concerning his nation and their hypocrisy. Nevertheless, throughout the Bible, self-righteousness is condemned. Paul explained that we cannot do anything to save ourselves, but our salvation is a result of God's grace.

However, as believers, we are created in Christ Jesus for good works—to help and serve others. While there is nothing we can do to earn our salvation, God's intention is that our salvation will result in acts of service.

For we are God's handiwork, created in Christ Jesus to do good works, which God prepared in advance for us to do.

Ephesians 2:10

Our righteous acts do not produce salvation but are, in fact, evidence of our salvation.

3. It is not being merely religious

The Pharisees were strictly religious. They religiously fasted, prayed and participated in every ritual. However, they performed rituals in order to show off. They did not truly repent.

So when you give to the needy, do not announce it with trumpets, as the hypocrites do in the synagogues and on the streets, to be honoured by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full. But when you give to the needy, do not let your left hand know what your right hand is doing, so that your giving may be in secret. Then your Father, who sees what is done in secret, will reward you. And when you pray, do not be like the hypocrites, for they love to pray standing in the synagogues and on the street corners to be seen by others. Truly I tell you, they have received their reward in full.

Matthew 6:2-5

4. It is not just knowing biblical truths

We may not repent even if we know of the biblical truths. Satan knows that Jesus is the Son of God, but he does not repent.

You believe that there is one God. Good! Even the demons believe that-and shudder. Your foolish person, do you want evidence that faith without deeds is useless?

James 2:19-20

Reflection Station

1. What sins must I turn away from my life?

For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.

Romans 3:23

Sin is defined as anything that falls short of the standard of God. (Refer to **Galatians 5:19-21**, **1 Thessalonians 4:3-7** and **2 Timothy 3:1-7** for some examples of sins.)

2. How do I intend to live my life from now on so that I might be upright and honest before God?

Keep your servant also from wilful sins; may they not rule over me. Then I will be blameless, innocent of great transgression.

Psalm 19:13

Psalms 19:13 explains that "upright" does not mean being "perfect". No one can reach that standard of being "sinless". However, when God wants us to be upright, He expects us to be deliberate in wanting to change our character for the better.

Mentor Chat

1. How often must I repent?

If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:8-9

2. How do I repent?

If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:9

3. What if after I have repented, I make the same mistake again?

Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

Let us then approach God's throne of grace with confidence, so that we may receive mercy and find grace to help us in our time of need.

Hebrews 4:16

4. Sometimes we have blind spots in our lives, so how would I know that I have sinned?

As iron sharpens iron, so one person sharpens another.

Proverbs 27:17

Conclusion

To be a Christian means to believe in the gospel and to live a life of repentance. True repentance means that we are sorry of our sins, confess our sins and turn away from our sins. We are willing to be transformed by God, and to walk in His purposes.

**Repentance means we stop going our way,
and turn around in our hearts to go God's way.**

Memory Verse

IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS, HE IS FAITHFUL AND JUST AND
WILL FORGIVE US OUR SINS AND PURIFY US FROM ALL
UNRIGHTEOUSNESS.

1 JOHN 1:9



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