# Repentance

*Topic chosen after an emailed question about past sins and the proper way to repent. Outline taken from* [Copeland](http://executableoutlines.com/2cor/2co7_9.htm) *and modified with points from “*[What Repentance Is Not](http://lavistachurchofchrist.org/LVarticles/WhatRepentanceIsNot.html)*” by Joe R. Price via The Spirit's Sword, 2009.*

* + - 1. Scripture Reading: 2 Corinthians 7:9-11

1. Introduction
   * + - 1. A prominent theme in the preaching of the Gospel is the call to repent...

Jesus wanted it to be preached in His name to all nations – Luke 24:46-47

Peter proclaimed the call to repent in his first two sermons – Acts 2:36-38; 3:19

Paul spoke of repentance to philosophers and kings – Acts 17:30-31;26:19-20

* + - * 1. However, the call to repentance is often neglected in modern day preaching...

By some who preach "faith only"

By some who in reaction stress "baptism"

By some who consider it “elementary”

* + - * 1. One cannot truly preach the gospel of Christ without the call to repent; I hope to show, Godly sorrow brings about:

Repentance

A changed life with works worthy of repentance

[Let's begin by...]

1. DEFINING "TRUE REPENTANCE"
   1. SOME MISCONCEPTIONS or bad definitions OF REPENTANCE...
      * + 1. Repentance is not denying and covering up sin.

There is no change of mind toward sin when our intent is to refuse to acknowledge our sin to God or to those we have sinned against.

“He who covers his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy” (Proverbs 28:13).

Sin is only truly “covered” when it is forgiven by God: “Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered” (Psalms 32:1).

Repentance is necessary for that forgiveness to occur.

* + - * 1. Repentance is not being afraid because of one’s sin.

Felix was afraid when he came face to face with his sin, but he did not repent (Acts 24:25).

Demons believe and tremble, but they are still lost (James 2:19).

It can be good to be afraid of our sins when that fear moves us to godly sorrow, a changed mind and a changed life. But fear alone does not mean you have repented of your sins

* + - * 1. Repentance is not simply being sorry for sin.

Judas was “remorseful” (NKJV) when he saw that Jesus was condemned to death,

but his sorrow led him to suicide (Matthew 27:3-5).

That’s not the action of godly sorrow that leads to salvation without regret (II Corinthians 7:10)!

Herod was “exceedingly sorry” when Herodias’ daughter asked for John’s head on a platter. But, he stood by his rash oaths to save face, and killed John (Mark 6:26).

Just being sorry for your sin does not mean you have repented

2 Corinthians 7:9-10 shows that repentance is an OUTCOME of sorrow

Sorrow leads to repentance; sorrow itself is not repentance

* + - * 1. Repentance is not confessing sin.

Many people confess (acknowledge) their sin but never repent.

Certainly one must admit his sin in order to be forgiven (I John 1:9).

But confessing sin does not mean one has changed his mind about the sin.

The drunkard or the adulterer may confess their conduct is sin yet continue to sin,

never changing his heart about the sinful action.

* + - * 1. Repentance is not merely a promise to stop sinning.

When John preached repentance to sinners he said they must “bear fruits worthy of repentance” (Luke 3:8).

When the people asked him, “What shall we do then?”,

he did not say, “just promise not to do it again.”

No, he gave specific instructions on changing their conduct as a result of their repentance (Luke 3:10-11).

One does not repent by just saying, “I won’t do it again.”

Repentance will result not only in promising not to sin, but also in changing one’s life to reflect a change of heart.

The liar must stop lying; not just promise to stop while continuing to be dishonest.

* + - * 1. Repentance is not merely reformation.

An alcoholic may reform because his liver has been damaged; not because his soul has been damaged.

Reformation alone is not “repentance leading to salvation” (II Corinthians 7:10).

He is sorry for his poor health and he reforms; but his soul is still in sin.

Changing your conduct without changing your heart is not repentance.

* + - * 1. Repentance is not "a changed life"

Some understand that repentance is a converted life

But Acts 3:19 reveals that repentance and conversion are two separate things

Peter says "Repent therefore and be converted" or “and turn back”

If repentance is the same as conversion, then Peter is being redundant

As we shall see, the order is actually this:

First, sorrow

Then, repentance

Finally, a changed life

* 1. A PROPER DEFINITION OF REPENTANCE...
     + - 1. The verb translated “repent” in the New Testament (metanoeo, me-tä-no-e'-ō, G3340)

literally means “to perceive afterwards”;

so that repent means “to change one’s mind or purpose” (Thayer).

* + - * 1. W. E. Vine's definition ...

"change of mind"

"involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God"

* + - * 1. So think of repentance as simply "a change of mind" in which we DECIDE to "turn from sin and turn to God"

Which is PRECEDED by sorrow

And is FOLLOWED by a changed life

[Repentance is therefore a decision of the mind in which one decides to change their life; but what prompts one to make such decision?]

1. PRODUCING "TRUE REPENTANCE"
   1. IT IS "GODLY SORROW" THAT PRODUCES REPENTANCE...
      * + 1. This we glean from our text (2 Corinthians 7:9-10); but note carefully:

It is not simply "sorrow", but sorrow that is "Godly"

For there is a sorrow that is "of the world"

* + - * 1. Note the difference between "godly sorrow" and "worldly sorrow"...

"Worldly sorrow" is a SELFISH kind of sorrow

E.g., when one is sorry because HE got caught

E.g., when one is sorry because what one did made HIM look bad

In "worldly sorrow", one is more concerned about SELF!

"Godly sorrow" is sorrow directed toward GOD ("godly" is lit. "according to God")

i.e., one is sorry because their actions are sins against a Holy God (Psalm 51:4)

Also, one is sorry for the price GOD must pay to have our sins removed

In "Godly sorrow", one is more concerned with GOD than self!

Some more differences (2 Corinthians 7:10)...

"Worldly sorrow" produces regret; "Godly sorrow" produces repentance which is not to be regretted

"Worldly sorrow" produces death; "Godly sorrow" produces repentance leading to salvation

[If "Godly sorrow" leads to repentance, how best to produce this "godly sorrow" in others?]

* 1. PRODUCING "GODLY SORROW" THAT LEADS TO REPENTANCE...
     + - 1. Nathan's rebuke to David in 2 Samuel 12:7-12 provides some insight...

He made an appeal to God's love (7-8)

He revealed the sin (9)

He warned of the consequences (10-12)

* + - * 1. The Gospel of Christ, when properly taught, is designed to so produce "godly sorrow", and in turn, repentance...

It appeals to God's love as a basis for repentance – Romans 2:4

It reveals our sin – Romans 3:23

It warns of the consequences – Romans 2:5-11

* + - * 1. Our best hope for producing repentance in others that leads to salvation is proclaim the gospel in its entirety, we need to teach:

The "commands" (believe, repent, be baptized)

The "promises" (remission of sins, eternal life, gift of the Holy Spirit)

All in light of the Gospel plan of salvation (man's sin, God's love, the coming judgment)

[Finally, consider the...]

1. INDICATIONS OF "TRUE REPENTANCE"
   1. OUR TEXT (2 Corinthians 7:11) MENTIONS SEVERAL...
      * + 1. "diligence" (KJV – “carefulness”, NASB – “earnestness”)

This can be defined as "earnestness, zeal, sometimes with haste accompanying it"

I.e., being quick to do what is right!

Examples of conversion in ACTS demonstrate this diligence in that every case described in detail shows people obeying the gospel after just one lesson!

* + - * 1. "clearing of yourselves"

To clear one's self of blame

E.g., quick to stop doing what is wrong, if such is the case

E.g., quick to respond to the offer of forgiveness when one realizes their guilt

* + - * 1. "indignation"

This involves a sort of anger, or moral outrage

I.e., toward the SIN which required the repentance

* + - * 1. "fear"

Lest the sin should be repeated

Lest the sin should not be entirely removed

* + - * 1. “deep longing” (KJV – “vehement desire")

I.e., a fervent wish

Especially to be right in God's eyes

* + - * 1. "zeal"

This involves an "eagerness and ardent interest in pursuit of something"

In this case, to turn from sin and turn to God

* + - * 1. "justice" (KJV – “revenge”, NASB – “avenging of wrong”)

As the NIV puts it, "what readiness to see justice done"

Satan wants us to sin, he tempts us (1 Peter 5:8 – “roaring loin…looking to devour us”)—what better “revenge” than to repent!

* 1. SUCH ARE THE "SIGNS" OF TRUE REPENTANCE...
     + - 1. Not apathy, not half-hearted service
         2. But a desire to do "works befitting repentance" – Acts 26:20  
            “I preached…that they should repent and turn to God, and do works worthy of repentance.” HCSB

1. CONCLUSION
   * + - 1. Is this indicative of OUR repentance?

Can we look at our lives and see signs that we have really had "a change of mind"?

That we have truly made "a decision to turn from sin and to turn to God"?

If we have not yet obeyed the gospel...we have not repented!

If we have become slack in our service...we are in need of repentance!

* + - * 1. If so, then we are in need of a healthy dose of "godly sorrow", brought about by realizing...

God's love for us

The fact we have all sinned

And the consequences if we do not repent!

Repent

Changed life with works worthy of repentance

* + - * 1. May the love of God and the reality of the coming judgment move us all to "True Repentance"! The blessings for those who do repent are wonderful!   
           (Acts 2:38-39; 3:19)
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