

# What Is Repentance?

**Focus:** What repentance truly is – sorrow over sin and faith in Christ's forgiveness.

**Key Verse:** *"Repent and believe in the gospel."* — Mark 1:15

**Text:** NAS 1995

**Introduction:** Dear friends in Christ: As we live physically, we are all together on earth – *but our entrance into eternity is only a heartbeat away!* We all hope for heaven, *but many have a false hope:* **Proverbs 14:12** **"There is a way which seems right to a man, but its end is the way of death."**

What are the requirements for heaven?

- Many people ask:
  - Am I good enough?
  - Have I helped enough needy people?
  - Have I been faithful enough in ➔ reading my Bible,  
➔ praying, ➔ attending church, ➔ attending Bible class,  
➔ serving, and ➔ giving money?
- What did Jesus say? **Mark 1:15** **"...the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe in the gospel."** // What does that mean? Keep listening to learn and benefit...

## 1. Distinguishing Between Repentance and Repent:

- a. Repentance is a noun: A word that **names an action.** For example, Peter wrote: **2 Peter 3:9** **"The Lord is... not wishing for any to perish but for all to come to repentance."** // *To be in a state of repentance.*

b. **Repent** is a verb: A word that **calls for an action**. For example, Philip preached in Samaria: **Acts 8:22**  
“...repent of this wickedness of yours...” // Turn from the wickedness that is in your heart!

2. **Two Usages of the Word, Repent:** The word “repent” is sometimes used in a **narrow sense** – meaning only to repent. Other times it is used in a **wide sense** – meaning both to repent and believe. Here is an example of each:

- Narrow:** **Mark 1:15** “...repent and believe in the gospel.” // Since “believe” is written separately, we know the usage of “repent” is narrow.
- Wide:** **Ezekiel 18:32** “For I have no pleasure in the death of anyone who dies... Therefore, repent and live.” // Since “repent” is by itself and leads to life, we know the usage is wide – repent AND believe!

3. **What Repentance Is Not:** Repentance is **not**:

- Self-improvement – *I stopped getting drunk!*
- Making up for sin – *I gave back what I stole!*
- Earning God’s favor – *I did good to overcome my bad!*
- A one-time emotional experience – *I was overwhelmed by my sins and cried, so now I’m good!*

4. **What Repentance Is:** It takes place in the heart.

- It is a change of mind and direction** – *a turning ➔ away from sin and ➔ toward God.*
- It includes both contrition and faith:**

- i. **Contribution – godly sorrow over our sins:** The Holy Spirit works through **God's word of Law** to expose → our sin and → our need for forgiveness.
  1. When Peter's hearers were pierced to the heart, they cried out: **Acts 2:37** ... “Brethren, what shall we do?” // At that moment, the HS had worked godly sorrow in their hearts.
  2. Good News: **Psalm 51:17** “...A broken and a contrite heart, [O] God, You will not despise.” // Think about your own sins... Has the Holy Spirit worked godly sorrow in your heart?
- ii. **Faith – trust in Jesus for the forgiveness of sins:** The Holy Spirit works through **God's word of Gospel** to give us faith to trust in Jesus for forgiveness. Peter proclaimed this good news: **Acts 10:43** “...everyone who believes in [Jesus Christ] receives forgiveness of sins.”

## 5. **Contribution and Faith:** Are they both necessary? Yes!

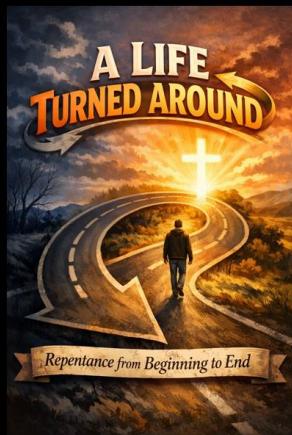
- a. **Without contribution (godly sorrow), repentance is false.** For example: **Exodus 9:27** “...Pharaoh sent for Moses and Aaron, and said to them, ‘I have sinned this time; the LORD is the righteous one, and I and my people are the wicked ones.’” // He SAID IT to escape the plagues, *but his actions did not change.*
- b. **Without faith, repentance becomes despair.** For example: **Matthew 27:3, 5** “...Judas... felt remorse and returned the thirty pieces of silver... **and** he went away and hanged himself.” // Judas had no faith in Jesus *for the forgiveness of his sins.*

**Conclusion:** I encourage you to go over this sermon again and thoroughly apply it to your life!

This Wednesday is Ash Wednesday. When we gather for worship at **11** and **7**, I will address the second question in this series: **Can Anyone Be Saved Without Repentance?**

**Saturdays 4, Sundays 9**

**Wednesdays 11 & 7**



1. **What Is Repentance?**
2. **Can Anyone Be Saved Without Repentance?**
3. **Who Turns the Heart - Us or God?**
4. **How Does God Break a Hard Heart?**
5. **How Does God Heal a Broken Heart?**
6. **When Did God Begin Repentance in Us?**
7. **Is Repentance an Event or a Life?**
8. **Why Is Daily Repentance Extremely Important?**
9. **How Is a Sin Infection Like a Physical Infection?**
10. **Will Repentance Radically Change Our Thinking and Living?**
11. **What Causes Us to Die and Rise Each Day?**
12. **What Are the Great Blessings of Confession and Absolution?**

**Let Us Pray:** Father in heaven, for all who are repentant – *grant them peace in Jesus*; for all who are deceived – *move them to consistently hear and eternally benefit from your life-changing word!*

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