

# 1 • Repentance is More Than...

Calls to **"repent"** are all over the Bible (**Ezek 18:30**; **Matt 3:2**; **Mark 1:15**; **Acts 2:38**; **8:22**; **17:30**). Clearly, it matters to God. Clearly, it involves *us*, as his creation. Clearly, it is a choice God is calling us to make—he's not going to force us against our will. So what is **"repentance"**?



Maybe a good place to start is recognizing that repentance is more than:

- \* Getting \_\_\_\_\_ while doing something wrong
- \* Suffering the \_\_\_\_\_ of my bad decisions
- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* \_\_\_\_\_
- \* Saying, "I'm \_\_\_\_\_."

A good Bible passage that can help us begin to understand what repentance really involves is **2 Corinthians 7**. What came before *2 Corinthians*? The letter we call *1 Corinthians*. Paul's first letter to the church in Corinth was full of rebukes, corrections, and warnings. The church in Corinth was a troubled church in many ways. But notice what Paul writes to these same saints in **2 Corinthians 7:8-11**:



For even if I made you \_\_\_\_\_ with my letter, I do not regret it—though I did regret it, for I see that that letter grieved you, though only for a while. As it is, I rejoice, not because you were grieved, but because you were grieved into \_\_\_\_\_. For you felt a \_\_\_\_\_ grief, so that you suffered no loss through us.

For godly grief \_\_\_\_\_ a \_\_\_\_\_ that leads to salvation without regret, whereas \_\_\_\_\_ grief produces death. For see what earnestness this godly grief has produced in you, but also what eagerness to clear yourselves, what indignation, what fear, what longing, what zeal, what punishment! At every point you have proved yourselves \_\_\_\_\_ in the matter.

**What is repentance?** We are "grieved into" repenting, but the Holy Spirit wants us to understand that there's a big difference between "worldly" grief and "godly" grief. Worldly grief "produces death." That's not what God is looking for. Godly grief "produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret." That's what we want to learn more about. That's what Peter preached in **Acts 3:19-20**, "Repent therefore, and \_\_\_\_\_ back, that your sins may be blotted out, that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord." Sins can be forgiven. We can be innocent in the sight of God. But not without repentance.

## For Class & Family Discussion:

- In what very important ways is repentance more than:
  - Getting caught while doing something wrong?
  - Suffering the consequences of my bad decisions?
  - Regret?
  - Embarrassment?
  - Saying, “I’m sorry”?
- Why do you think Paul wrote in **2 Corinthians 7:8** that he “did regret” making the Corinthians “grieve” with his first letter?
- In your own words, what’s the difference between “worldly grief” and “godly grief”?
- In what way does “worldly grief” produce “death”?
- In what way does “godly grief” produce “repentance that leads to salvation without regret”?
- How would you rephrase **2 Corinthians 7:11** with your own words?
- With all of that in mind, let’s go back to some of those passages we noticed at the beginning of our study. In your own words, what is God teaching us about repentance in:
  - **Ezekiel 18:30-32**?
  - **Matthew 3:1-2**?
  - **Mark 1:14-15**?
  - **Acts 2:37-41**?
  - **Acts 8:22**?
  - **Acts 17:30-31**?
- **Romans 2:4** contains really important news. What do we need to see and understand?