

The Turnaround

Repentance isn't perfection. It's being willing to change.

Focus:
Repentance, Religiosity,
Change

Settle in

Take a deep breath. Turn off notifications on your phone if you can. Ask God to quiet your heart and open your eyes to what he wants to show you today.

Scriptures

Matthew 21:28-32

Matthew 3:2, 3:8, 3:11, 4:17

2 Corinthians 7:10

Parking lot

Write down distracting thoughts here:

Thought starter

“Repentance” is a **change of heart** that leads to a **change in your actions**. It's a spiritual turnaround—from living your way to living God's way.

Here's what you'll learn in this quick quiet time:

- Repentance isn't about being perfect. It's about being willing to change.
- Repentance isn't just talk. It shows up in how you live.
- Repentance is for everyone. God welcomes everyone who turns to him.



Key passage: The Parable of the Two Sons

Read this passage and circle, underline, or highlight any words that stand out to you.

Matthew 21:28-32 NIV

“What do you think? There was a man who had two sons. He went to the first and said, ‘Son, go and work today in the vineyard.’ [29] “**I will not,**’ he answered, but later he **changed his mind and went**. [30] “Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘**I will, sir,**’ but he **did not go**. [31] “Which of the two did what his father wanted?” “The first,” they answered. Jesus said to them, “Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you. [32] For John came to you to show you the way of righteousness, and you did not believe him, but the tax collectors and the prostitutes did. And even after you saw this, you did not repent and believe him.

Repentance is change, not perfection.

Matthew 21:28-29 NIV

“**I will not,**’ he answered, but later **he changed his mind** and went.

Truth bomb: Repentance isn't about being perfect—it's about being honest and willing to change.

- The father in the story represents God, and he invites everyone to live in obedience to him.
- The first son messed up, but his heart changed, and he chose obedience.
- A spiritual turnaround happens when you stop resisting and start responding to God.



View on web ↗

Notes:

**Write it down**

- In what areas have I said “no” to God, but now feel him nudging me to say “yes”?

**Respond**

God, thanks for giving me the chance to have a turnaround. Give me the courage and desire to say “yes” to you.

**Repentance is more than empty promises.****Matthew 21:30 NIV**

“Then the father went to the other son and said the same thing. He answered, ‘I will, sir,’ but he did not go.



Truth bomb: God is not looking for a religious performance. He’s looking for a change of heart.

- The second son gave an answer that sounded good, but he didn’t follow through.
- This is a warning: don’t just “talk Christian”—live it.
- True repentance bears fruit, which means it shows up in the way we live.

**Reflect**

- Are there areas where I’m saying “yes” to God but not actually following through?
- How might my self-deceit be keeping me from having a spiritual turnaround?

**Respond**

God, help me be honest instead of trying to say the right thing. Change my heart so that I want to obey you.

**God welcomes all who turn to him.****Matthew 21:31 NIV**

“Truly I tell you, the tax collectors and the prostitutes are entering the kingdom of God ahead of you.



Truth bomb: Jesus will flip your expectations about who will be welcomed into the kingdom.

- The “outsiders” who repented would be welcomed in before the religious.
- No past is too messy to have a turnaround. God looks at your heart, not at your history.
- Repentance opens the door to joy, healing, and a relationship with God.

Notes:

**Reflect**

- Do I believe God welcomes me fully when I turn to him, no matter my past?

**Respond**

God, I'm grateful that my past is not too messy for you. Help me be willing to change rather than trying to be perfect. Show me what to change so that I can have a close friendship with you.

**Final Thought**

Repentance isn't just feeling bad—it's choosing to turn around. It's a change of heart, mind, and direction. Whether you've resisted, delayed, or stumbled, God is always ready to receive you when you choose to turn around.

**Supporting Scriptures:****Matthew 3:2 ERV**

John said, "Change your hearts and lives, because God's kingdom is now very near."

Matthew 3:8 AMP

So produce fruit that is consistent with repentance [demonstrating new behavior that proves a change of heart, and a conscious decision to turn away from sin];

Matthew 3:11 ERV

"I baptize you with water to show that you have changed your hearts and lives. But there is someone coming later who is able to do more than I can. I am not good enough to be the slave who takes off his sandals. He will baptize you with the Holy Spirit and with fire.

Matthew 4:17 GW

From then on, Jesus began to tell people, "Turn to God and change the way you think and act, because the kingdom of heaven is near!"

**Bonus: Two kinds of sorrow****2 Corinthians 7:10 NLT**

For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

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Notes:

2 Corinthians 7:10 ESV

For godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret, whereas worldly grief produces death.

2 Corinthians 7:10 NIV

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

- **Godly sorrow** means feeling sorry because you know your sin hurts God. It leads you to turn back to God, make better choices, and find peace and hope.
- **Worldly sorrow** means feeling bad because of guilt or getting caught. It doesn't help us change and can leave us feeling hopeless.
- **This shows us that not all sadness is the same.** Some kinds of sorrow help us heal and grow—they lead us back to God and make us stronger.