



IDoR Understanding Repentance Lesson Outline

1. What is sin?

In simplest terms, sin is any action, attitude, or thought that violates God's law, His will, His way. (1 John 3:4) The sinfulness of thoughts, attitudes, or actions is not determined by how offensive we find it, but by what God says. We have all sinned (Romans 3:23) and the punishment for our sin is eternal death. Through Jesus, we can have forgiveness of sin and eternal life. (Romans 6:23)

Pause to ponder and pray:

- How do I respond when someone's actions/choices offend me? How do I respond when my own actions/choices offends God?
- How often do I describe my sin the way God describes it?
- How often do I recognize sin in my life? in the lives of others?
- Ask God to help you see sin in general and the sin in your life the way He sees it.

2. What is repentance?

The Greek word translated as "repent" is *metanoeō*¹. It means much more than a simple "I'm sorry." Instead, to repent is to "perceive afterward" or see our sin from God's perspective. When we see our sin as God sees it, we must also commit to change in our behavior.

Pause to ponder and pray:

- What are examples of something God calls sin but our society finds socially acceptable?
- How often do I ask for forgiveness without relinquishing my sin?
- Take time now to name your sin before the Lord using the terms He uses. Pride. Judgmental, critical spirit. Lust...etc. Commit to turning from the sin and ask Him for cleansing and freedom.

3. Why is repentance importance?

Repentance for the forgiveness of sin and belief in Jesus is the only way to have eternal life. (Mark 1:15)

Questions to consider:

- What is the difference between believing *about* Jesus and believing *in* Jesus?
- How does believing in Jesus change our life? Attitudes? Actions?

- Ask God to reveal areas where you need to experience life-changing belief in Jesus and His power to save and transform.

4. What does Jesus say about repentance?

Jesus began His public ministry with the same short sermon John the Baptizer used. "Repent for the Kingdom of Heaven is at hand." (Matthew 4:17) Jesus came to call sinners to repentance. (Luke 5:32) Repentance is for everyone. (Luke 24:46-47) Unless we repent, we will perish. (Luke 13:3,5)

Pause to ponder and pray:

- How did Jesus address the need for repentance with Pharisees and religious leaders?
- How did Jesus address the need for repentance with those who knew themselves as sinners?
- Which sins were most distressing to Jesus?
- What sin does Isaiah 58 specifically address?
- In what ways do I have the heart of a Pharisee?
- In what areas does my heart need to change to be more like God desires?
- Ask God to forgive any areas of recognized sin and reveal any unrecognized areas.

5. How do we repent?

Repentance begins by seeing our sin the way God sees it. The Bible is the primary source for understanding what God says about sin. We not only agree with God about our sin, we ask for forgiveness and commit to turn from it. This is not a "piecrust promise," one easily made and quickly broken. Instead, it should be "set in stone," a commitment we make with full intention of fulfillment.

Pause to ponder and pray:

- Is it repentance if I intend to do it again?
- How do I know what God considers sin?
- What if I mess up and repeat the sin? Will Jesus forgive me again?
- Confess any often-repeated sin and ask God to break the bonds that draw you back to it.

6. What are the benefits of repentance?

In Psalm 32, David describes physical and spiritual distress as a result of his sin. When he confessed and repented of all he'd done, God forgave him, cleansed him, and restored their relationship. According to Psalm 103, God responds to repentance with an outpouring of blessings. He not only forgives our sin, but He also redeems us, renews us, removes our sin as far as the East is from the West, and more.

Pause to ponder and pray:

- Read Psalm 32. How have I experienced the discomfort of sin?
- How have I experienced the joy and relief of forgiveness?
- Read through Psalm 103 and make a list of all the benefits of repentance. (Try to find all twelve.)
- How have I experienced the benefits of repentance mentioned in Psalm 103?
- Spend time in thanksgiving and praise. Confess and repent of any sin God has revealed, then end your time together with worship and praise to the Only One who can forgive sin, cleanse unrighteousness, and restore a right relationship with our God.

¹"G3340 - metanoeō - Strong's Greek Lexicon (nasb95)." Blue Letter Bible. Web. 31 Jul, 2024.
<<https://www.blueletterbible.org/lexicon/g3340/nasb95/mgnt/0-1/>>."