



Repentance: What it Is and How to Do it

2 Corinthians 7:2-12
April 24, 2022

The Big Idea: The call to and necessity of repentance is at the heart of **following** Jesus (Mark 1:15). Repentance should be a **regular** occurrence, as we learn to lovingly call one another to turn away from **sin** and renew our commitment to **obey** Christ and His commands.

2 Corinthians 7:2-12 (ESV)

7 ²Make room in your hearts for us. We have **wronged no one**, we have **corrupted no one**, we have **taken advantage of no one.** ³I do not say this to condemn you, for I said before that *you are in our hearts*, to **die together** and to **live together.** ⁴I am acting with great **boldness** toward you; I have great **pride** in you; I am filled with **comfort**. In all our **affliction**, I am overflowing with **joy**.

⁵For even when we came into Macedonia, our bodies had no rest, but we were afflicted at every turn—**fighting without and fear within.** ⁶But **God, who comforts the downcast, comforted us** by the coming of Titus, ⁷and not only by his coming but also by the comfort with which he was comforted by you, as he told us of your longing, your mourning, your zeal for me, so that I rejoiced still more. ⁸For even if I made you grieve 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. ⁹As it is, **I rejoice**, not because you were grieved, but **because you were grieved into repenting.** For you felt a **godly grief**, so that you suffered no loss through us.

¹⁰For **godly grief produces a repentance that leads to salvation without regret**, whereas **worldly grief produces death.** ¹¹For 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 innocent in the matter. ¹²So although I wrote to you, it was not for the sake of the one who did the wrong, nor for the sake of the one who suffered the wrong, but in order that your earnestness for us might be revealed to you in the sight of God.

Paul Does 3 Things in His Approach Which We Can Emulate:

1. He examines **himself** and his dealings with them.
 - Often, we would need to start a conversation with an acknowledgment of what responsibility **we have** in the matter – what we've done wrong
 - Matthew 7:5
 - In this case – with this particular situation, Paul is able to say, "I haven't wronged you, corrupted you, or taken advantage of you." This will often **not** be the case with us!
2. He makes it clear that he is not **condemning** them (v. 3). Live or die, they are in Paul's heart. He simply desires that things be dealt with honestly, that there be repentance, and they see a full **restoration** of their relationship.
3. He encourages them by speaking sincerely and **highly** of them – he's proud of them, comforted by them, and joyful because of them!

How to Lead Someone (Perhaps Ourselves) Towards Repentance

- It starts with a **loving** confrontation about the **problem**. [v. 8; 2:4]
 - Like Paul, you may have **second** thoughts about the confrontation
 - But, you know it is **never** the loving thing to avoid the truth.
- Next, is a response of "sorrow" on the part of the one confronted.
 - "worldly grief" – pain that ends with **anger**, **defensiveness**, and ultimately **death**
 - "godly grief" – pain that ultimately accepts the **truth** of the rebuke, **repents** of the sin, and **changes** the behavior
 - Genuine repentance will always include a change in **heart** and **behavior**.

Matthew 21:28-31; Isaiah 55:7; 2 Corinthians 7:11