

What Does the Bible Mean by “Repent”?



Matthew 3:1-2 In those days came John the Baptist, preaching in the wilderness of Judaea, And saying, **Repent ye**: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand.

What does “repent” mean in the Bible? Does the Bible ever say “repent of your sins”? Do you have to repent for sins to be saved? Do other religions believe that you need to repent of your sins? Is repenting of sins, works? Pastor Steven Anderson answers all of these questions and more using only the Bible.

If we have to turn from our sins to be saved, **NOBODY WOULD BE SAVED!** Our salvation cannot be earned. If it could be earned, Jesus died on the Cross in vain.

Romans 11:6 And if by grace, then is it no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then is it no more grace: otherwise work is no more work.

The Bible defines “repent” in different ways depending on the context and the language the text was written in. Most of the Old Testament was written in Hebrew.

*Genesis 6:6 And it **repented** the LORD that he had made man on the earth, and it grieved him at his heart.*

Obviously, in this text, God was not repenting of sin because God does not sin.

Strong’s Concordance defines the repent in Genesis 6:6 as:

5162. נָחַם nacham naw-kham'
a primitive root; properly, to sigh, i.e. breathe strongly; **by implication, to be sorry**, i.e. (in a favorable sense) to pity, console or (reflexively) rue; or (unfavorably) to avenge (oneself):—comfort (self), ease (one’s self), repent(-er,-ing, self).

The “repent” in the way Peter used in his sermon on Pentecost day has the meaning of changing your mind about Who Jesus is!

*Acts 2:38 Then Peter said unto them, **Repent**, and be baptized every one of you in the name of Jesus Christ for the remission of sins, and ye shall*

receive the gift of the Holy Ghost.

The New Testament was written in Greek. The word repent was translated from the Greek word *metanoeo*.

3340. μετανοέω *metanoeo* met-an-o-eh'-o
from 3326 and 3539; **to think differently** or afterwards, i.e. reconsider (morally, feel compunction):—repent.

Acts 17:29 Forasmuch then as we are the offspring of God, we ought not to think that the Godhead is like unto gold, or silver, or stone, graven by art and man's device.

*30 And the times of this ignorance God winked at; but now commandeth all men every where to **repent**:*

In order words, change your mind about those gods made of gold, or silver, or stone! Stop thinking about them as your God and acknowledge the God of the universe and His Son Jesus Christ!

Do you know people who need to think differently about God, Jesus, sin, and life in general? I sure do! They are not basing their worldview on the Bible. This is why they think differently than I do. I hope they will repent, meaning change their mind, realize their perceptions were based on falsehoods, and accept the truth of the Bible and the Gospel.