

Repentance Explained From Greek And Hebrew



Foundations (Day 59)
by Derek Prince

We've seen that the first of the six foundational doctrines is, logically, repentance. First of all, we need a clear understanding of the meaning of the word repentance as used in the Scripture.

In the New Testament the English verb "to repent" is normally used to translate the Greek verb metanoein. This Greek verb metanoein has one definite meaning throughout the history of the Greek language, right through classical Greek down into New Testament Greek. Its basic meaning is always the same: "to change one's mind." Thus, "repentance" in the New Testament is not an emotion but a decision.

Knowing this fact serves to dispel many false impressions and ideas connected with repentance. Many people associate repentance with emotion – with the shedding of tears and so on. It is possible, however, for a person to feel great emotion and to shed many tears and yet never repent in the scriptural sense. Other people associate repentance with the carrying out of special religious rites or ordinances – with what is called "doing penance." But here, too, the same applies: it is possible to go through many religious rites and ordinances and yet never repent in the scriptural sense. True repentance is a firm, inward decision; a change of mind.

If we turn back to the Old Testament, we find that the word most commonly translated "to repent" means literally "to turn," "to return," "to turn back." This harmonises perfectly with the meaning of repentance in the New Testament. The New Testament word denotes the inner decision, the inner change of mind; the Old Testament word denotes the outward action which is the expression of the inward change of mind – the act of turning back, of turning around.

Thus, the New Testament emphasises the inward nature of true repentance; the Old Testament emphasises the outward expression in action of the inner change. Putting the two together, we form this complete definition of repentance: Repentance is an inner change of mind resulting in an outward turning back, or turning around; to face and to move in a completely new direction.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries

Devotional

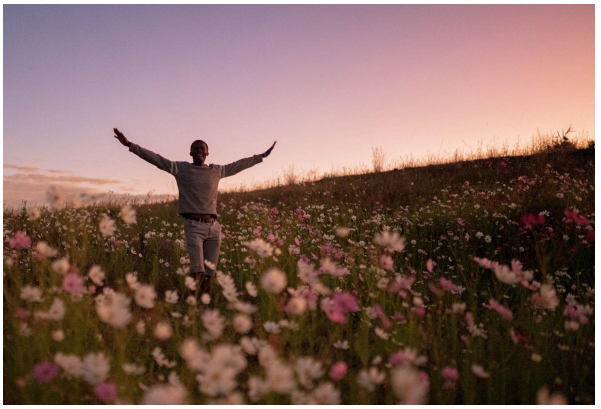
Transcript: WD-B052-059-ENG
Last Updated: 03 Feb 2025
Website: derekprince.com

Bible Teaching Resources



Books

Illuminate and expand your understanding of the Bible with the Derek Prince collection of Christian books.



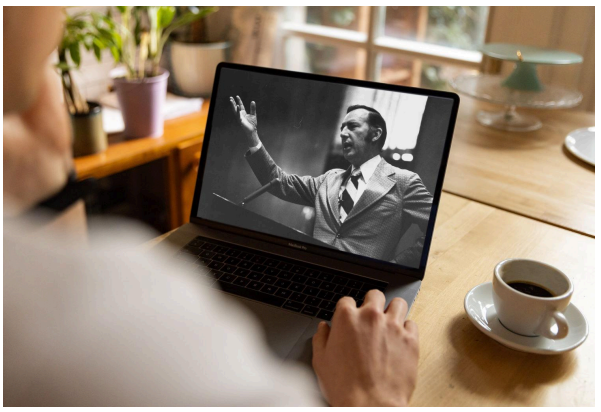
Daily Devotionals

Browse free biblically inspired daily devotionals by Derek Prince for practical teachings to uplift your Christian faith.



Legacy Radio

Listen to inspiring 10-minute messages and connect faith to life with the Derek Prince Legacy Radio podcast.



Sermons

Watch original and digitally remastered sermons by Derek Prince. Includes full message transcripts (free download).



Official App

Available free, download the official Derek Prince Ministries app and equip your faith, anywhere, anytime.



Proclamations

Declare life and experience the transformative power of God's Word with our Bible-based Proclamations.

Copyright © Derek Prince Ministries