

# Repentance Or Remorse?



The Decision Is Yours (Day 11)
by Derek Prince

We continue to look at this very important decision: to repent.

In the book of Acts, repentance is revealed as the first requirement for salvation. After Peter had preached that dramatic message on the day of Pentecost and the crowds were convicted, cut to the heart, this is how they responded in Acts 2:37–38. They said:

> "'Brothers, what shall we do?' [How can we escape from the consequence of our awful sins? And this is what Peter replied:] 'Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ so that your sins may be forgiven. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit.'"

Notice, the first requirement: repent... then be baptized... then you receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. So repentance is an essential preliminary to faith and it prepares the way for God to move.

Now, let me say just something briefly about the meaning of the word "repent." The Greek word has a clear meaning in secular Greek and is almost always translated "to change your mind." Repentance is changing your mind. You've been living one way, you decide to live another way. You change your mind. We understand that in the natural, it's the same in the spiritual. The Hebrew word that's normally translated "repent," means to turn or to return. Put them together and you get the total picture. The Greek word gives you the inner decision, "I'm going to change my mind." The Hebrew word, typically enough, gives you the outward action, "I'm goiing to turn around and walk exactly the opposite way that I've been walking." Put those two together. That is repentance and it's a decision.

We need to distinguish between two things that seem alike but are very different. One is repentance, which is a decision, not an emotion; the other is remorse, which is an emotion and not a decision. There's a very clear example in the experience of Judas. After he had betrayed Jesus, he had remorse but he did not have repentance. This is what it says in Matthew

27, verses 3–5:

> "When Judas, who had betrayed him, saw that Jesus was condemned, he was seized with remorse and returned the thirty silver coins to the chief priests and the elders. 'I have sinned,' he said, 'for I have betrayed innocent blood.' 'What is that to us?' they replied. 'That's your responsibility.' So Judas threw the money into the temple and left. Then he went away and hanged himself."

You see, committing suicide is not the fruit of repentance; it's the result of remorse. People who commit suicide usually do it because they've failed to repent. Judas had very strong emotion, emotion that drove him to suicide. But the one thing he missed out was repentance. He didn't change his mind. We cannot make the same mistake; we need to make the right decision.

Devotional

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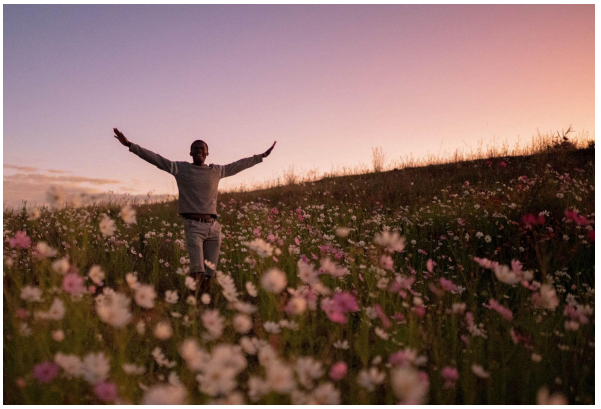


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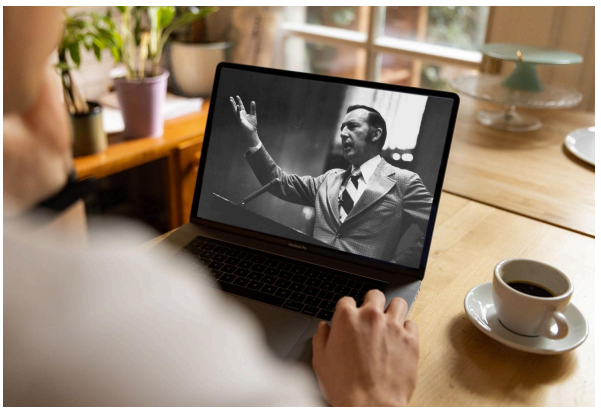
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