

## WHAT DOES THE WORD REPENT MEAN?

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QUESTION: What does the word REPENT mean?

ANSWER: The fundamental and basic meaning of the word repent is, “change.” This change is clearly illustrated in two New Testament passages. First, Matthew 21:28-29. In this passage a father asked his son to work in the vineyard. The son refused but later repented and obeyed his father. The son completely changed his ways.

Second, Luke 15:17. In this passage the prodigal son changed by going home and asked his father for forgiveness. He changed from riotous living to humility. Repentance, therefore, is a complete and total change of every conceivable aspect and element of one life. When one repents, they go from wrong living, to living right. It is a change of mind, heart, will, soul, habit, strength, and desire.

Paul told the Athenians to change their ways in Acts 17:30. They were idol worshipers and Paul told them to worship the One and only True God (Acts 17:22 ff). Peter and John told the Jews in Jerusalem to “repent...and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out” (Acts 3:19).

Therefore, repentance is vitally important to every accountable human being. One cannot be saved and come into the fellowship with God without first repenting of sin and being baptized (Acts 2:38).

Christians also need repentance, because without it sins cannot be forgiven (1 John 1:9). Jesus said, “Except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish” (Luke 13:3).