

# WORD STUDY FORM

**1. ENGLISH WORD** Repent (noun — Repentance)

**2. ENGLISH DEFINITION**

“To feel such remorse or regret for past conduct as to change one’s mind regarding it.”

**3. COMPARISON OF TRANSLATIONS** Luke 13:3

“Repent” — NIV, NASB, KJV, *Amplified*, etc.

“Turn from your sins” — *Good News Bible*

“Leave your evil ways and turn to God” — *Living Bible*

**4. ORIGINAL WORD AND SHORT DEFINITION**

- “metanoeo” (Greek), “to change one’s mind”
- “metamelomai” (Greek), “to regret or show remorse”

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### 5. OCCURRENCES IN THE BIBLE

Two different Greek words are translated “repent” in the New Testament:

#### A. *Metanoeo*

“Repent” (verb), 34 times

5 times in Matthew

2 times in Mark

9 times in Luke

5 times in Acts

1 time in 2 Corinthians

12 times in Revelation

“Repentance” (noun), 24 times

3 times in Matthew

2 times in Mark

5 times in Luke

6 times in Acts

1 time in Romans

2 times in 2 Corinthians

1 time in 2 Timothy

3 times in Hebrews

1 time in 2 Peter

#### B. *Metamelomai*

“Repent” (verb)—6 times

3 times in Matthew

2 times in 2 Corinthians

1 time in Hebrews

### Interesting Insights

- The word is never used in the gospel of John; but it is used in Revelation 12 times.
- The author Luke used it the most (Luke and Acts).
- Repentance is not emphasized much in the Epistles because they were written to believers.

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### 6. ROOT MEANING AND ORIGIN (use reference books)

*Metanoeo* literally means “to perceive afterward.” It is made up of two Greek words: *meta*, which means “after” (implying change), and *noeo*, which means “to perceive” (*nous* is Greek for “the mind”).

From this we get the meaning of “to change one’s mind or purpose.” In the New Testament this change is always for the better, and it denotes a genuine, complete change of heart and life.

Not only does it imply a turning away (negative) from sin, but a turning to (positive) that which is right and godly. It means more than just feeling sorry for wrong you’ve done. It also means to completely change your mind about the sin and go a different way.

*Metamelomai* comes from *meta* (“after”) and *melo* (“to care for”). It means to regret or express remorse for something you wish you hadn’t done. It means to have painful anxiety (sorrow) over a past deed. This is *not* genuine repentance. It means to regret something you did without ever really changing your mind about it. (“I’m sorry I got caught, but I’m not sorry I did it.” Or “I’m not sure I wouldn’t do it again.”) The best illustration of this is Judas. He was regretful for betraying Jesus (*metamelomai*—Matt. 27:3), but he never genuinely repented of it (*metanoeo*).

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### 7. HOW THE WORD WAS USED

#### A. In Other Writings:

*Metanoeo* was not used much in classical Greek literature. When the word was used, it did not mean the radical change of a person's life as a whole as it does in the New Testament.

#### B. Throughout the Bible:

- Repentance (*nâham*) in the Old Testament is seen most clearly in Ezekiel 18 and 33:10–20.
- “Repent” was the basic message of John the Baptist (Matt. 3:2), Jesus (Matt. 4:17), the 12 disciples (Mark 6:12), Peter at Pentecost (Acts 2:38).
- It is commanded by God for everyone (Acts 17:30; 2 Peter 3:9).
- It is part of saving faith (Luke 13:5; Acts 3:19).
- It produces joy in heaven (Luke 15:7, 10).
- It is proven by our actions (Acts 26:20).
- Jesus used the word 17 times in the Gospels and 8 times in Revelation.
- What causes us to repent?
  - God’s goodness to us (Rom. 2:4)
  - Godly sorrow for our sin (2 Cor. 7:9–10)
  - God’s grace (2 Tim. 2:25)
- It is a foundational truth of the Christian life (Heb. 6:1).

#### C. In the Context of the Passage: 2 Corinthians 7:9–10

This verse shows the difference between genuine repentance (*metanoeo*) and mere regret (*metamelomai*). Real godly sorrow brings about genuine repentance. This brings about a change of life, not just regret.

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### 8. APPLICATION

“Or do you show contempt for the riches of his kindness, forbearance, and patience, not realizing that God’s kindness is intended to lead you to repentance?” (Rom. 2:4)

#### **Sin to Confess/Attitude to Change**

I have held a personal grudge in my heart against John ever since the incident in the mountains last fall. It has put a strain on our relationship. The Lord has convicted me about this in the past, but I have put off making restitution. I know I have sinned. I want to repent of this sin now. Tomorrow afternoon I will go to John and ask his forgiveness. I want to straighten this matter out.

### RESOURCE BOOKS USED

*New International Dictionary of New Testament Theology, Vol. 1*  
*Vine’s Expository Dictionary of New Testament Words*  
*Young’s Analytical Concordance to the Bible*

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## 7. HOW THE WORD WAS USED

**A. In Other Writings:**

**B. Throughout the Bible:**

**C. In the Context of the Passage:**