

## Game Changers | Coming Home... | Discussion Guide - 2 Corinthians 7:10; Romans 2:4

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*A Sad Word for a Really "Happy" World.* The word "repentance" is common in the Bible but seldom used today. We tend toward believing that we are able to ignore pain and sadness. We are like Charlie Sheen in his infamous 2011 interview about "Winning"! When asked about his day to day life he responded...

*"It's perfect. It's awesome. Every day is just filled with just wins. All we do is put wins in the record books. We win so radically... it's scary." -Charlie Sheen*

Like Mr. Sheen, we are not always honest with ourselves. One of the many reasons we are able to trust the Bible is that it never ignores sadness. Instead, it gives us a way to address it.

### Repentance Is Not God Wanting You To Feel Bad

Repentance involves the actions of remorse and return. Consider Peter's words in Acts 3.

**Acts 3:19-20 (NLT)** Now repent of your sins and turn to God, so that your sins may be wiped away. 20 Then times of refreshment will come from the presence of the Lord...

Most often we get stuck in remorse. We think more about our failures than our relationship with God. We often think of it in terms of how we feel, but it is much more.

### Repentance Is A NEW Mind

**Romans 12:2 (NLT)** Don't copy the behavior and customs of this world, but let God transform you into a new person by changing the way you think...

A NEW Mind means we have new thoughts. Often our remorse leads us to feelings of inconvenience and annoyance. New thoughts reveal something more significant about our "mistakes". They break the heart of God.

**2 Corinthians 7:10 (NLT)** For the kind of sorrow God wants us to experience leads us away from sin and results in salvation. There's no regret for that kind of sorrow. But worldly sorrow, which lacks repentance, results in spiritual death.

Paul presents "Godly" Sorrow in contrast to "Worldly" Sorrow. The difference is one of God's perspective versus the World's. The World's is performance based and filled with regret, guilt, shame, and fear of loss.

Godly Sorrow grieves the loss or abandonment of a relationship. We could have lived with God, for His glory, and in His joy. But, we chose our own way and experienced isolation.

### Repentance Is A NEW Direction

So, it's not a changed mind, but also a change in action, in behavior, and a change in life trajectory. The word translated "repent" in the new testament comes from an ancient military

term. In modern times, a drill sergeant would yell, "About Face!" Then the soldiers in formation would stop, turn 180 degrees and march in the opposite direction. Repentance is the turn away. We have so many things we need to change. Repentance begins those changes.

**Revelation 2:4-5 NASB** 'But I have this against you, that you have left your first love...

## Repentance is A NEW Relationship

When we experience spiritual numbness or feel God is distant, it is repentance that restores the relationship. We desperately need a relationship with Him. God understands this about us. It is why so much of the Bible is an account of relationships. One of the most well known is a Father and Son story.

In Luke 15, we meet a rebellious and entitled son who demanded his inheritance before his father's death. In effect, he declared his own father "dead" to him. And, in an unprecedented move, the Father does just that, he gives him the inheritance. The next part of the story is predictable. There were parties and friends until the money was gone. Then he was left alone and became homeless and hungry. One day, while caring for a herd of pigs, Jesus tells us that he came to his senses and decided he would go home.

This story crafts a powerful image of repentance. For in it, we clearly see repentance as a walk home and complete restoration as the conclusion.

**Romans 2:4 (NLT)** Don't you see how wonderfully kind, tolerant, and patient God is with you? Does this mean nothing to you? Can't you see that his kindness is intended to turn you from your sin?

We turn from our "mistakes", which the Bible calls sins. We change our mind about God, His mercy, and His expectations. We come home. When we take these actions, a new world of possibilities become available to us.

**Isaiah 53:6 (NLT)** All of us, like sheep, have strayed away. We have left God's paths to follow our own. Yet the Lord laid on him the sins of us all.

## Talk About It...

- *What are your first thoughts regarding today's topic? Please share with the group.*
- *Do you have any remorse in life that you find difficult to release?*
- *Discuss the difference between performance and relationship. Is our remorse because of consequences or because of lost relationship with God? Is relationship more important? Why?*
- *Give an example of a time you changed direction in your life. Was it difficult? Why did you do it? What was the result?*
- *Consider the story of the prodigal son and **Romans 2:4**. Does God want you to come home? How would you be received?*
- *Is there a need to "come home" in your life? Is there someone you could share it with?*
- *Is there anything in today's topic that you would be excited to share with a friend?*