

REPENT

Regret Is Not Repentance

A single-session Bible study based on the album REPENT

**Two men fell.
One died in regret.
One lived by seeing again.**

Suggested length: 60 to 75 minutes

Facilitator guide with Scripture readings, song cues, teaching notes, and discussion questions

Reader Assignments and Song Plan

Assign these passages at the start. The song cue is placed beside each reading so the leader does not have to hunt for it mid-study.

Reader	Passage	Purpose	Song Cue
1	Matthew 4:17	Jesus begins His public message with repentance.	Track 1: Repent
2	Matthew 27:3-5	Judas and metamelomai: regret after the fact.	Track 6: Thirty Pieces
3	2 Corinthians 7:10	Godly grief versus worldly grief.	Track 12: Two Men Fell - short excerpt
4	Luke 22:54-62	Peter denies Jesus and weeps bitterly.	Track 7: Rooster in the Dark
5	John 21:15-19	Peter is restored and sent by Jesus.	Track 9: Fire, Fish & Sand
Optional	Romans 12:2	Repentance as the renewing of the mind.	Teach briefly, no required song.
Closing	Reflection	Bring the whole study home.	Reprise Track 12: Two Men Fell

Leader note

You do not need to play whole songs. A verse and chorus is enough. The songs are emotional doorways, not speed bumps in the teaching.

Big Idea

Repentance is not merely feeling bad about sin.

Biblical repentance is a changed mind, a changed way of seeing God, sin, grace, yourself, and the Kingdom.

Word	Meaning	Teaching Handle
metamelomai	Regret, remorse, sorrow after the fact.	Judas saw the sin.
metanoia	A change of mind, a new way of seeing.	Repentance sees the Savior.

Judas experienced regret. Peter shows the fruit of repentance and restoration. Regret saw the sin. Metanoia saw the Savior. That distinction is the heart of this study.

Opening

Start with this question:

Opening question

When you hear the word "repent," what do you picture?

Let people answer honestly. Common answers may include:

- Shame.
- Tears.
- Guilt.
- Confession.
- An altar call.
- Promising to do better.
- Turning from sin.
- Feeling terrible.
- Getting right with God.

Then say:

Most of those things may happen around repentance, but they are not the center of repentance.

The New Testament word often translated as repentance is metanoia, and it means a changed mind, a new way of seeing.

The issue is not: Can I feel bad enough?

The issue is: Will I see God rightly and turn toward Him?

Introduction: Two Men Fell

Let us begin with a stark contrast.

Two men were close to Jesus. Both failed Him catastrophically.

Judas betrayed Him for silver. Peter denied Him to save face.

Both men were broken by what they had done. Both men experienced sorrow. Both men knew they had failed. But their stories end worlds apart.

Judas was crushed by regret. Peter was restored by Jesus.

In English, we often use the word "repent" broadly, but the original Greek helps us see something important.

Matthew 27 uses *metamelomai* to describe Judas. That means regret, remorse, sorrow after the fact.

Metanoia, the word most often connected to biblical repentance, means a changed mind, a transformed way of seeing.

That matters because the world often thinks Judas had the "right" response: be crushed, punish yourself, drown in guilt, disappear under the weight of what you did.

But that kind of sorrow leads nowhere. Today, we will see why metanoia, seeing rightly, is the road to life.

Passage 1: Jesus Begins With Repentance

READ
D

Matthew 4:17

SONG
CUE

Track 1: Repent

Use this to introduce the whole theme: Judas and Peter both fell, but they did not walk the same road afterward.

Teaching Point

Jesus first public message was not: "Feel bad enough so God will accept you."

His message was: "Repent, for the Kingdom of heaven is at hand."

That means repentance is not mainly about staring inward at your shame. It is about seeing reality differently because Jesus has arrived.

Repentance begins when I realize:

- God is not who I thought He was.
- Sin is not as harmless as I thought it was.
- Grace is not as far away as I thought it was.
- The Kingdom is nearer than I thought it was.
- My failure is not the final word I thought it was.

The arrival of Jesus changes the way we see everything.

Repentance is not the art of feeling worse. It is the grace of seeing truer.

Discussion Questions

- What wrong idea about repentance did you grow up with?
- Why do people often reduce repentance to "feeling bad"?
- What changes when repentance starts with seeing Jesus instead of staring at shame?

Passage 2: Judas and Metamelomai

**REA
D**

Matthew 27:3-5

**SONG
CUE**

Track 6: Thirty Pieces

Use this during the Judas section. Let the song carry the weight of silver, remorse, and isolation.

Teaching Point

This is the Judas passage.

Judas sees that Jesus is condemned. He feels remorse. He returns the silver. He admits, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." Then he goes out and hangs himself.

This is where the Greek word matters. Matthew uses metamelomai for Judas. It means regret, remorse, sorrow after the fact.

Judas was not casual about his sin. He was crushed by it. He saw the evil of what he had done. He even confessed that innocent blood had been betrayed.

But regret did not save him.

That is the terrifying point. Regret can tell the truth about sin and still leave you dead inside.

Judas saw his guilt, but he did not see grace. He returned to the temple, but he did not run to Christ. He confessed his wrong, but he did not receive mercy.

Regret sees the sin. Repentance sees the Savior.

Discussion Questions

- What did Judas get right?
- What did Judas miss?
- Why is it possible to feel terrible about sin and still not turn toward God?
- Where do people today "return the silver" instead of running to Jesus?

Examples: punishing themselves, isolating, giving up, over-apologizing, trying to make up for sin through religious effort, refusing forgiveness, living as though their failure has more authority than Jesus.

Passage 3: Godly Grief Versus Worldly Grief

READ
D

2 Corinthians 7:10

SONG
CUE

Track 12: Two Men Fell - short excerpt

Use this here to frame the fork between sorrow that leads to life and sorrow that leads to death.

Teaching Point

Paul gives us the cleanest summary of the whole study.

There is a sorrow that leads to life. There is a sorrow that leads to death.

Worldly grief says:

- I am ruined.
- I am disgusting.
- God is done with me.
- I can never come back.
- My failure is my identity.

Godly grief says:

- I have sinned.
- I need mercy.
- Jesus is still Lord.
- Grace is still real.
- I must turn toward Him.

The difference is not whether you feel bad. Both kinds of grief can hurt deeply.

The difference is where the grief leads.

Worldly grief collapses inward. Godly grief turns Godward.

Worldly grief builds a prison out of shame. Godly grief opens the door and says, "Go to Jesus."

The question is not, "Did it hurt?" The question is, "Where did the hurt lead?"

Discussion Questions

- How can you tell the difference between conviction and condemnation?
- What does worldly grief sound like in your head?
- What does godly grief invite you to do?
- Why does shame often feel more "spiritual" than grace?

Passage 4: Peter's Failure

**REA
D**

Luke 22:54-62

**SONG
CUE**

Track 7: Rooster in the Dark

Use this during the Peter denial section. The rooster tells the truth, but it does not get the last word.

Teaching Point

Peter's failure was awful. Let us not sanitize it.

He denied Jesus publicly. He denied Jesus repeatedly. He denied Jesus after loudly promising he would never do it.

Peter did not fail quietly in a corner. He failed in the open, under pressure, around a fire, while Jesus was being taken toward the cross.

Then the rooster crowed. Jesus turned and looked at Peter. Peter remembered the word of the Lord. Then Peter went out and wept bitterly.

Peter's tears were real. His grief was real. His collapse was real.

But Peter's tears were not the Savior.

His story did not end in the courtyard. It moved toward the shoreline.

This is where Peter differs from Judas. Peter's sorrow did not become his final identity. His failure was exposed, but it did not become his grave.

The rooster told the truth, but Jesus wrote the ending.

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Peter wept so bitterly?
- What do you think Peter saw in himself that night?
- Have you ever had a "rooster moment," where the truth about you broke through?
- What makes that moment dangerous?
- What makes that moment merciful?

Passage 5: Peter's Restoration

REA
D

John 21:15-19

SONG
CUE

Track 9: Fire, Fish & Sand

Use this during the restoration section. Move from the courtyard fire to the shoreline fire.

Set the Scene

Peter is back by the water. Jesus is on the shore. There is a charcoal fire. There is breakfast. There is memory in the air.

Peter denied Jesus around a fire. Now Jesus restores Peter around a fire.

Jesus asks Peter three times: "Do you love Me?"

Then Jesus gives Peter purpose: "Feed My sheep. Follow Me."

Teaching Point

This is one of the most beautiful restoration scenes in Scripture.

Jesus does not restore Peter in a courtroom. He restores him over breakfast.

He does not say: suffer enough, prove enough, beg enough, feel bad enough, pay Me back.

He asks: "Do you love Me?" Then He says: "Feed My sheep. Follow Me."

Peter's restoration is not Jesus pretending the denial never happened. The three questions clearly mirror the three denials.

Jesus deals honestly with Peter's failure. But Jesus does not use Peter's failure to destroy him. He uses the moment to restore him and send him.

That is grace with muscle on it. Not cheap grace. Not sentimental grace. Restoring grace. Calling grace. Grace that looks failure in the face and says, "You are not finished."

Restoration is not God ignoring your failure. Restoration is Jesus proving your failure does not get the final word.

Discussion Questions

- Why do you think Jesus asked Peter three times, "Do you love Me?"
- How does Jesus deal honestly with Peter's failure without crushing him?
- What does "Feed My sheep" tell us about grace?
- Why is it hard to believe God still gives purpose after failure?

Optional Sixth Passage: Renewing the Mind

READ

Romans 12:2

SONG
CUE

No required song.

Use this only if time allows. It connects the study to the daily rhythm of Christian life.

Teaching Point

This connects directly to metanoia.

Repentance is not just a one-time emotional moment. It becomes the rhythm of Christian life.

God keeps renewing the way we see:

- The Father.
- The cross.
- Ourselves.
- Sin.
- Grace.
- Failure.
- Obedience.
- Other people.
- The Kingdom.

The Christian life is not endless shame. It is continual renewal.

God is not merely trying to make us feel worse about what we have done. He is teaching us to see rightly.

Repentance is not the art of feeling worse. It is the grace of seeing truer.

Main Contrast

Judas	Peter
Betrayed Jesus.	Denied Jesus.
Felt remorse.	Wept bitterly.
Returned silver.	Was drawn back to Jesus.
Saw his guilt.	Saw grace.
Isolated himself.	Was restored in relationship.
Regret led to death.	Repentance led to calling.

The key difference: Judas had metamelomai, regret. Peter shows the fruit of metanoia, a changed mind that could receive restoration.

Judas saw what he had done. Peter eventually saw who Jesus still was.

Judas carried silver back to the temple. Peter was brought back to breakfast with Jesus.

Judas died alone in regret. Peter lived by seeing again.

Group Reflection

Quiet question

Where have I been confusing regret with repentance?

Second question

What is one thing God may be asking me to change my mind about?

Possible answers:

- I thought God was mostly disappointed in me.
- I thought my failure disqualified me forever.
- I thought feeling ashamed made me holy.
- I thought grace was for other people.
- I thought repentance meant punishing myself.
- I thought God wanted distance until I cleaned myself up.
- I thought if I hated myself enough, that would somehow honor God.
- I thought my sin was stronger than His mercy.

Closing Challenge

Say this clearly:

Do not stop at regret.

Regret may tell you something is wrong, but regret cannot make you whole.

When you fail, do not run to isolation. Do not run to self-punishment. Do not run to the rope. Do not run to the temple with silver in your hands.

Run to Jesus.

Run to the fire. Run to the shore. Run to the One who already knows and still calls your name.

The rooster may tell the truth about your failure, but the risen Christ gets the final word over your life.

Closing Song Reflection

READ

Final reflection

**SONG
CUE**

Reprise Track 12: Two Men Fell

Use this to bring the entire study into one picture. Play a longer section here if you only used a short excerpt earlier.

Before playing the song, say:

This song holds the whole study in one picture.

Two men fell. One was crushed by regret. One was restored by Jesus.

The difference was not that Peter's sin was small. The difference was that Peter's story moved toward mercy.

As you listen, ask yourself: Am I standing in regret, or am I walking toward Jesus?

Closing Prayer

Lord Jesus,

Teach us true repentance.

Not regret that traps us.

Not shame that buries us.

Not sorrow that turns us inward until we cannot breathe.

Give us metanoia.

Change our minds.

Teach us to see the Father rightly.

Teach us to see the cross clearly.

Teach us to see our sin honestly.

Teach us to see grace as nearer than our shame.

When the rooster crows in our lives, let us not run from You.

Let us run toward the fire You have already prepared.

Restore us.

Call us.

Send us.

And when regret tells us our story is over, teach us to hear Your voice again:

Follow Me.

Amen.

**Two men fell.
One died in regret.
One lived by seeing again.**