

This midweek study will explore why it's important for students to recognize their need for repentance. Use the following outline, activity, playlist, and video ideas to lead a midweek event for your students.

Essential Doctrine: Repentance

Repentance is a response to God's gracious call to salvation. It includes a genuine sorrow for one's sin (Luke 5:1-11), a turning away from one's sin toward Christ (Acts 26:15-20), and a life that reflects lasting change and transformation (Ps. 119:57-60). It is the human counterpart to God's work of regeneration; in other words, the human side of our conversion.

1 Repentance is genuine sorrow over sin (Luke 5:1-11; 2 Cor. 7:10).

Repentance can sometimes have a depressing tone to it because we have acknowledge something bad, but sorrow over repentance is actually a good thing; it is evidence of the Holy Spirit working in your life.

- ▶ *What is the difference between true repentance and just feeling guilty?*

Read Luke 5:1-11.

- ▶ *What does Jesus do with someone who has a repentant heart? What effect does repentance have on a person?*

Jesus took ordinary individuals who were aware of their sinfulness, and made them powerful disciples after they repented. They weren't perfect, but they truly repented and trusted Christ for forgiveness.

- ▶ *How would your life be different if you truly repented and trusted Christ for forgiveness?*

Read 2 Corinthians 7:10.

Godly sorrow leads to the removal of sin and regret. Godly repentance is the first step in having a relationship with God.

- ▶ *What is preventing you from taking that step of repentance in faith toward Christ?*

2 Repentance is turning from your sin and toward Christ (Acts 26:15-20).

Option: Play a round or two of "Hokey Pokey." Instruct students that while this is a fun kids' game, it contains something true about our walk with Christ. The song says, "You do the Hokey Pokey and you turn yourself around. That's what it all about." As we walk with Christ, we do certain things that displease God. Eventually, through the conviction of the Holy Spirit, we come to a place where we trust Jesus to "turn us around" through repentance. And, like the song says, "That's what it's all about." Christian repentance is about responding to the Holy Spirit's conviction and allowing Him to turn us around for good.

- ▶ *What are the specific ways you need to repent and allow the Spirit to turn you around?*

Repentance is the admission that you don't have it all together. Part of being repentant is admitting that you aren't the center of the universe and putting God in the proper place in your life.

Read Acts 26:15-20.

- ▶ *What does it say about God that He made a way to rescue people from their sin even when they were in clear rebellion against Him?*
- ▶ *Why is repentance so important when it comes to knowing Christ?*

We are not only called to turn from sin, but we are also called to turn toward Christ when we repent.

3 Repentance is shown through a transformed life and lasting change (Ps. 119:57-60; Matt. 3:8).

Read Psalm 119:57-60 and Matthew 3:8.

Repentance isn't a momentary decision. When we repent, we acknowledge our wrong-doing and commit to living a life transformed with lasting change.

- ▶ *What does it look like for someone to say they have repented but lack true life change?*

Repentance and life-change go hand-in-hand. If there is true repentance, then true life change will be shown as well. You can't have one without the other.

WRAP IT UP

- ▶ *What do you need to express genuine sorrow over?*
- ▶ *What things do you need to turn from and what are some ways you can turn toward Christ?*

Challenge students to know repentance is the human aspect to God's work of regeneration, helping us to see what takes place from the human side of conversion.