



# FUNDAMENTAL #9

## *What is repentance?*

### MEMORY SCRIPTURE

*Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out, so that times of refreshing may come from the presence of the Lord. —Acts 3:19*

### SUMMARY STATEMENT

In one of our other big questions, we learned that *sin* means going against what God tells us to do and that there must be a consequence. So what happens next? After we've damaged our relationship with God by sinning, what happens after that?

That's where a beautiful gift from God comes in. Repentance is that gift. It helps us set things right with God once more and repair the damage we did when we rejected Him. We do this by going to God in prayer and asking Him to forgive us, and then we make a complete effort to *change*. We don't just say "I'm sorry." We try very hard not to make the same mistake again. Repentance means that we recognize we did wrong, we ask God to forgive us, and we make a big change. Sincere repentance will lead to baptism and receiving the Holy Spirit, which is when a person becomes a member of the Body of Christ (the spiritual Church of God).

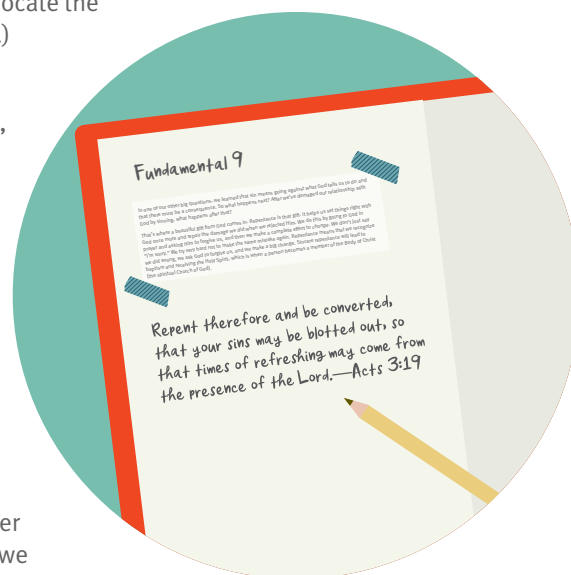
### BEGIN YOUR STUDY

(You may find you need a reminder of the meaning of *sin*. Feel free to locate the resource **"Fundamental #6: What Does Sin Mean?"** for a quick review.)

Read the memory scripture together with your children, then read through the summary statement (remember to simplify the statement, if necessary). Have your children cut and paste the summary statement from this page in their **"Fundamentals Bible Study Journal"** (as suggested in the **Memorizing Scripture** resource **"The Fundamentals"**).

Discuss how to *repent* means "to change as if turning around and going in another direction." You could have younger children act out this concept by instructing them to walk one way then turn around and go the complete opposite direction when you give the signal (decide on a prearranged signal such as blowing a whistle, ringing a bell, or playing music and having it stop).

Next have your child write the memory scripture, **Acts 3:19**, in his or her journal. Discuss how we all sin and need to repent by admitting what we have done wrong, asking God to forgive us, and changing to do the right thing.





## DIGGING DEEPER INTERACTION #1

Have your children read the memory scripture and define repentance in their own words. Remind your children that aside from Jesus Christ, everyone who has ever lived has sinned (**Romans 3:23**). As a result, we need to recognize our mistakes, ask God to forgive us, and use God's Word (the Bible) so we know how to change and do what is right. It is not easy to admit our mistakes, but God wants to forgive us and wants us to have happy, rewarding lives.

Today you and your children are going to work on a challenging activity. Ask your children to think of mistakes they have made. You can begin by discussing a mistake *you* have made (one you feel would be appropriate to share with your child) and how you repented and God helped you to learn from your mistake and to change.

Take three pieces of paper or index cards. On each one, have your children write down one mistake they have made (decide as you go if you'd like to start with just one card or use all three today). Model for your children how to pray and ask for forgiveness. Then have your children repent of the sin they wrote down by asking God to forgive them and help them to change and not make the same mistake again.

After you and your children pray together, take a thick black marker or black paint and completely cross off or scribble over the sin written down (so that it looks redacted). Tell your children that when you repent and ask God to forgive your sins, He blots them out. The sin is not recorded anymore!



## DIGGING DEEPER INTERACTION #2

This is a great Fundamental for drawing closer to God through prayer, as well as a great opportunity to teach your children more about how to pray.

In the previous interaction, we focused on asking for forgiveness for wrongdoing. In this interaction, continue to encourage your child to build prayer habits by creating a prayer journal. There are different ways to do this based on the age and interests of your children. Here are a few options:

- Create a “prayer book” that highlights how to talk to God in prayer based on **Matthew 6**. Create one page for each topic in the model prayer. Your child can refer to this book while praying. (You may also find the **“Jesus Christ’s Model Prayer”** infographic useful from the [LifeHopeandTruth.com](http://LifeHopeandTruth.com) website.)
- Create a picture book of who and what to pray for each day. This could be your child’s personal photo album of the people in your life that your child wants to pray for each day.
- Buy a composition notebook or personal journal and have your children write down each day what they want to pray about. They can use the journal as they pray to God. In time, they can also look back over the journal to see how God has answered their prayers. This is especially helpful for older children. (You may wish to have them glue the model prayer infographic in the front of the journal to help guide them.)



## BIBLE STORY: JONAH

What happens when we ignore God's words? What happens when we listen and repent? Read about both approaches and how God responded dramatically in the short book of Jonah.

You and your children might enjoy reading the EEI resource **"Jonah, the Runaway Prophet"** to review the story and find some great discussion questions. (Find it in the **People of the Bible** section.)

## BONUS IDEAS

There are examples throughout the Bible of people repenting. See if you and your children can find an example of a sincere repentance and another of a false repentance (someone apologized for a wrong, but it wasn't a genuine apology), and contrast the two.

Refer to the EEI resource **"Studying and Praying Together"** (in the **Christian Family** section) to help your children develop strong Bible study and prayer habits.

## WRAP-UP ACTIVITY

Have your children write the memory scripture **Acts 3:19** on a poster. Have them decorate it with images or drawings of things they find "refreshing" or something that makes them feel refreshed—like a cold glass of lemonade, a gentle waterfall, a great gulp of fresh air, or a big warm hug. Hang the poster somewhere in the house for display.

To end your study, have your child recite the memory scripture for a small audience, perhaps during a family morning time routine of reading and recitation.

