

Key Steps of Repentance

Pastor Jon Donohue



Repentance is a key component of living the Christian faith. Repentance is the act of being sorry for sin, asking forgiveness for sin, and then turning to follow a new path of godliness. If we are to be people who pray effectively, we must first be people who repent regularly. Follow these steps as you walk through your time of repentance with the Lord.

1. Quiet your spirit, allowing yourself to hand over distractions to the Lord in order to be fully present with Him. If it helps to write distractions down so you can get them out your mind for the time being, that's a good method to use.
2. Invite the Holy Spirit to bring any and all matters to mind that you need to ask the Lord for forgiveness. These can be actions taken, words spoken, feelings harbored, thoughts entertained, and more. Recognize that each of these distract us and distance us from intimate relationship with God, impacting the effectiveness of our spiritual and prayer life.
3. As each matter comes to mind, bring it before the Lord with a repentant spirit, asking Him to forgive you for it, and then asking Him to fill you with His Spirit and to empower you to live a life of godliness instead. Trust that His forgiveness is for you through the work of Christ on the cross.
4. Continue this process until no more matters needing repentance come to mind. If you need to ask someone else for forgiveness, do so as soon as possible.
5. We can also "stand in the gap" on behalf of our community and nation, asking the Lord to forgive us as a people for the sin of our land. This is a powerful act of intercession, similar to what Moses did on behalf of Israel when the nation sinned against God. Ask the Lord to bring the sins of our people to mind, and as representatives of our people, ask for the Lord's forgiveness for each. At the same time, pray that the Lord will bring a revival of faith to our people and leaders, leading them to repentance and Godly change as well.
6. Use 2 Chronicles 7:14 as a guide for your prayers: ¹⁴ *Then if my people who are called by my name will humble themselves and pray and seek my face and turn from their wicked ways, I will hear from heaven and will forgive their sins and restore their land.* Notice that revival of the land must be preceded by humble prayer, seeking the Lord, and acting in repentance.

Repentance is always the best way to begin any time of prayer. Make repentance a daily practice and a regular start to your times of prayer.