

The choice to forsake sin and repent may be hard, but it will bring joy.

Some people struggle with charity. Some people struggle with purity. But as a kid, Elder Dale G. Renlund struggled with lighting firecrackers before sacrament meetings.

In his talk “Repentance: A Joyful Choice,” Elder Renlund describes how, when he was a deacon, his friend persuaded him to light a firecracker in their chapel before sacrament meeting. He did so, and a burnt aroma filled the chapel throughout the meeting, interfering with everyone’s ability to worship. Elder Renlund felt terrible for his actions, and he sought the gift of repentance to help remedy his guilt.

Like Elder Renlund, all of us commit sin—some sins major, and some sins minor. (Elder Oaks refers to these minor sins as “grains of sand or specks of dirt that come out in the weekly wash.”) But regardless of their classification, all of these sins need to be repented of, which can sometimes be an unsavory process.

But the result of regaining peace of mind and the companionship of the Spirit ought to justify the momentary discomfort of confessing and forsaking our sins, for, when we do these things, “the same is forgiven, and . . . the Lord . . . remember[s] them no more” (Doctrine and Covenants 58:42–43). As we recognize the gift of repentance for what it is, we can choose to repent confidently, and more importantly, we can repent with joy. As Elder Christofferson says, “there should be a smile on our faces when we speak of it [i.e., repentance].”

Let us seek the Lord’s forgiveness, for, as Elder Renlund says, “Our Redeemer chooses to forgive because of His incomparable compassion, mercy, and love.” Let us access that love. Let us choose joy, and let us choose repentance.

Comment [1]: This is a great introduction. Wonderful hook!

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Comment [2]: Where in the chapel? Can you add a specific to help us picture this funny story better?

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Comment [3]: Nice word choice!

Comment [4]: Should we say “ought to justify” or can we just say “justifies” to add some strength to this statement?

Comment [5]: Can we add a brief clause repeating “what it is” so that we know exactly what you mean?

Comment [6]: To make this nice and parallel, can we combine this into one sentence? “Let us access love, let us choose joy, and let us choose repentance.”