



# Links Players

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## The Ultimate Mulligan

*The time is fulfilled, and the kingdom of God is at hand; repent and believe the gospel. (Mark 1:16)*

After finishing the 18th hole, while settling bets and sharing stories about our round of golf, there are always a few shots you wish you could take back. In a friendly game, your buddies might have mercy and offer a mulligan.

According to several sources, the term “mulligan” originates from one or both golfers with the last name Mulligan—either David Mulligan, a player and member at Winged Foot, or possibly John A. “Buddy” Mulligan, a locker room attendant at Essex Falls Country Club in New Jersey.

In the context of life and getting a “do over” (or a mulligan), our Lord and Savior was very clear when he declared, “Repent and believe in the gospel.”

When you hear the word “repent,” do you wonder what it really means? Have you ever told yourself, “I am okay, or I am a good person; God and I understand each other”? But, in reality, you have not truly changed a pattern that disobeys God.

Repentance is powerful and deeply significant. It is often misunderstood and stigmatized. It is not just an act of feeling sorry and regret; it is the gateway to a renewed life filled with God’s love and grace.

When we embrace repentance, we open ourselves to a deep relationship with God and enable our lives to become a living testament to his boundless love.

To repent means to turn away from something – to shift our direction from sin and disobedience back toward God.

The root word of repentance comes from the Greek word “metanoia,” which signifies a change of mind or heart. This transformation is a pivotal step not only in our spiritual journey but also in how we express God’s love to others.

The story of the prodigal son, found in the Gospel of Luke 15:11-32, is a vivid illustration that encapsulates the heart of repentance and reflects the overwhelming love and forgiveness that God extends to us.

Repentance is not about shame or condemnation. Instead, it is an invitation to return home – home to safety, love, and acceptance. God’s arms are always open, ready to welcome us back when we choose to turn away from our missteps. It involves recognizing our shortcomings and taking tangible steps to return to a right relationship with God and others.

In 2 Corinthians 7:10, Paul writes, “Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.” (NIV)

Godly sorrow acknowledges our need for change and invites us into deeper engagement with God’s grace. It compels us to seek transformation—not just for ourselves, but also for how we interact with the world.

Living a life rooted in repentance allows us to embody God’s love as we actively work to reflect our grace to others.

James 5:16a encourages us, “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (NIV)

This is not just a call to acknowledge wrongdoing; it is a valuable opportunity to foster trust, support, and growth in our relationships.

Our LINKS conversations during fellowships provide an opportunity for us to live transparently with one another. It should be a safe and trusted environment where we can truly repent amongst our brothers and sisters and ask for the ultimate mulligan.

God’s love will fill the spaces in our hearts that once harbored guilt, shame, or anger. As we receive this love, we grow in our capacity to extend grace to others.

**Prayer: Lord, help us to wake up every day thinking of honoring you in mind, action, and spirit. If we need to repent, implore us to do so, knowing you will forgive everything when we accept the work Jesus did on the cross.**

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Chris Hermann

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