Go and Sin No More

Materials Needed

1 copy of *Go and Sin No More Scenarios* p. 3 and *Talk Bubbles* pp. 4-7; enough copies of *Go and Sin No More Cards* p. 8 for each student to have one

Prepare in Advance

Cut apart the *Go and Sin No More Scenarios* p. 3 and the *Go and Sin No More Cards* p. 8. Read through the activity.



A woman taken in the act of adultery was brought to the Lord by her accusers, who were ready to stone her to death. They challenged the Lord to say she should be stoned, as the ancient law of Moses demanded. But the Lord suggested the person who was without sin should throw the first stone, and turned and wrote in the dust. After her accusers left the Lord told her to "Go, and sin no more." The Lord asks us to turn from our sins and start a new life as well.

This story plays out in our lives again and again. The Heavenly Doctrines for the New Church lay out steps we can take to sin no more—to become a heavenly person. The first is to learn true and good ideas from the Word. Then we must...

1. Take an honest look at our thoughts and actions (I was wrong).
2. Admit responsibility to ourselves and the Lord for the wrong we are doing (I am sorry).
3. Pray for help to resist doing evil (Lord, help me).
4. Stop doing what is wrong and start doing something new and better instead (I will change).

This activity explores these "steps of repentance" by acting out scenarios.

1. Everyone makes mistakes! If we never made mistakes we would never experience the joy of success! We feel the joy of success when we have mastered something that has been difficult for us.
2. Some mistakes are small and do not appear to have consequences. Other mistakes are bigger and not only have immediate consequences, but may also affect us for a long time.
3. The woman taken in adultery knew she had done wrong, and her sin was made public in a difficult way.
4. The Heavenly Doctrines reveal four steps people can take to get back on track if they have done something they know is wrong. The process starts

New Church Concept Repentance

The Lord loves everyone, and wills to be conjoined to them, but He cannot be conjoined as long as the person is in the delight of evil. These delights cannot be removed by the Lord, unless the person examines themselves, acknowledges and confesses their evils before the Lord, and wills to desist from them, and thus perform repentance. See *Apocalypse Revealed* 937:3

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Go and Sin No More *continued*

with knowing what the Word says about what is right and wrong.

5. The first step is to admit what you have done wrong to yourself and to the Lord. (Hold up the *Talk Bubble* saying "I was wrong"—p. 4.)
6. The next step is to feel sorry about was done. (Hold up "I am sorry"—p. 5.)
7. The next step is asking for the Lord's help—because without Him we can do nothing. (Hold up "Lord, help me"—p. 6.)
8. With His help, we need to stop doing what is wrong and start doing what is right. This is how we change. (Hold up "I will change"—p. 7.)
9. We will act out scenarios in which people make mistakes. Your group will act out the mistake and create a follow-up sequence showing where the situation could go from that point by using the four steps: I was wrong; I am sorry; Lord, help me; I will change. The Word Bank below may be used to help students identify why they reacted in a particular way, pav-ing the way to an apology.
10. Divide students into groups of 2-3. Give each group a *Go and Sin No More Scenario* (p. 3). Give groups about five minutes to plan their dramatizations.
11. Call one group at a time to act out their scenarios. Give the group the *Talk Bubbles* to hold up at the right times as they act out their scenario.
12. Discuss each scenario. Questions might include, "Are there other ways in which this scenario could end?" "Did the right person take responsibility for what had happened?" "Did the person really show signs of making changes?"
13. Wrap up the activity by giving each student a *Go and Sin No More Card* (p. 8) to take home.
14. Thanks to the Revs. John Odhner and Mark Pendleton for their contributions to this activity.

New Church Concept
Temptation

Temptation is induced by evil spirits who dwell with us in our evils and falsities; these spirits excite our evils and accuse us. But angels from the Lord, who dwell in our good intentions and truths, call forth the truths of faith that are with us, and defend us. See *Spiritual Experiences* 8960

Word Bank

overreacted	lost it	terrified	hysterical
panicked	emotional	unnerved	frightened
shocked	traumatized	distracted	thoughtless

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Go and Sin No More Scenarios

1. You are at a friend's house and realize you urgently need something from home. You borrow your friend's bike, race home, drop the bike on the driveway behind a parked car and dash in the house. Your dad is running late, jumps into the van, and backs up, running over the bike. You come out to see that the bike is destroyed! You say it's your dad's fault.

2. You and your best friend are having a great time rough-housing. His Mom yells at you both to look out for his 4-year-old sister. Suddenly his sister is between the two of you as you're tackling each other. She gets hurt and is bleeding.

3. You are at an amusement park with your friend and her family. Your friend's dad lectures you both about getting to a meeting place on time. Right before you are supposed to meet you beg your friend to go on your favorite ride one last time. She eventually says yes, but the line is long and you both arrive late. She gets in big trouble.

4. Your friend tells you she has a crush on your brother. You think you are being helpful and tell your brother about it. It totally backfires. Your friend is mad and says she will never talk to you again.

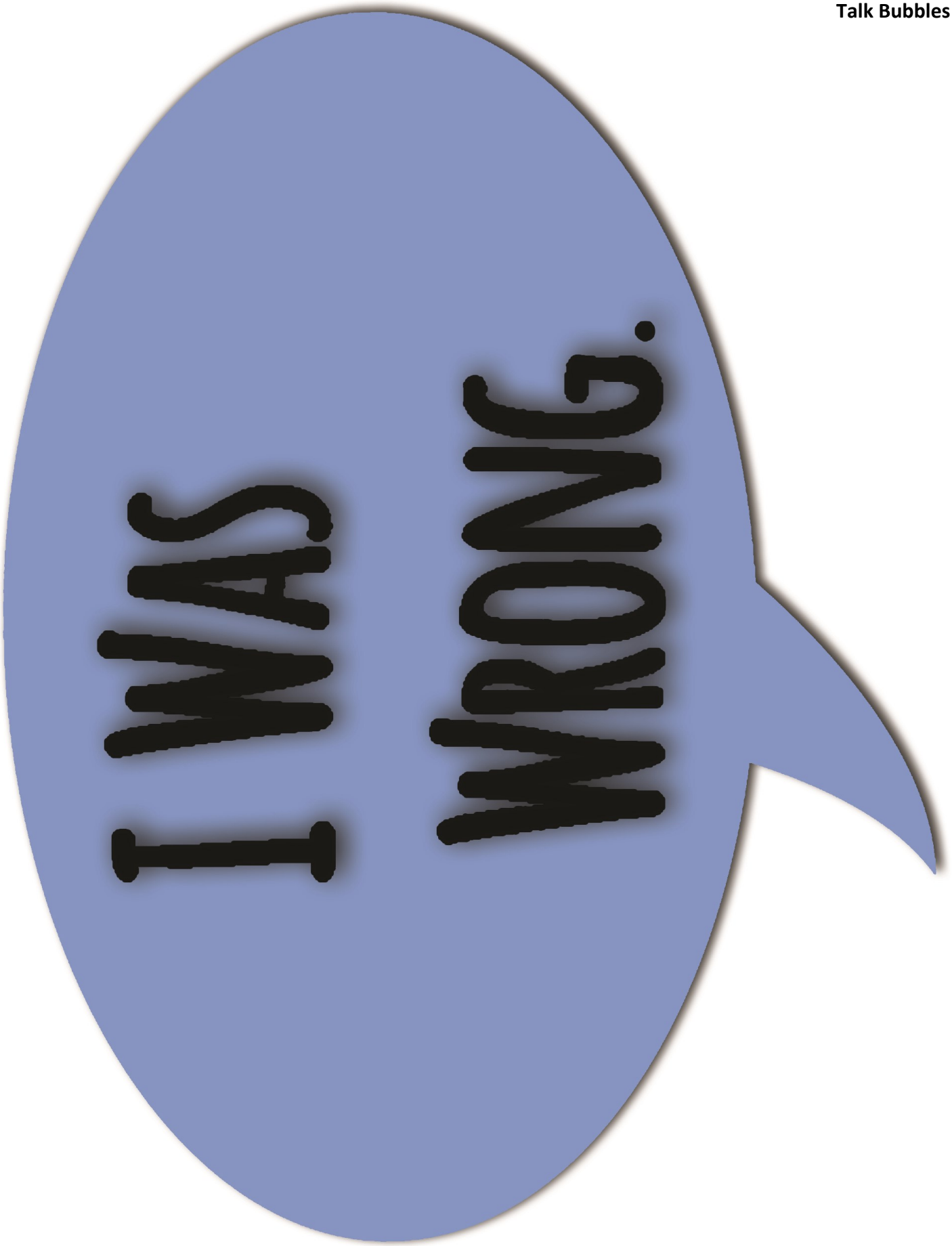
5. You are terrified of spiders and all your friends know it. One friend thinks it will be funny to show you a spider. You scream, lose your balance and fall, hitting your head. You are mad and yell nasty names at your friend. Your friend won't look at you or talk to you now.

6. You are with friends. Someone says something that makes you feel stupid in front of everyone. You have a quick tongue and know you can easily win a war of words. You take her down verbally and make her look really dumb. You know it's worked—she looks crushed and sulks away.

7. Your soccer team is losing. You have done a great maneuver and kicked the ball to a teammate who has a chance at scoring on an unguarded goal. Your teammate bungles the kick and misses the goal. You are mad and scream at him angrily, humiliating him in front of everyone watching, including a girl he likes.

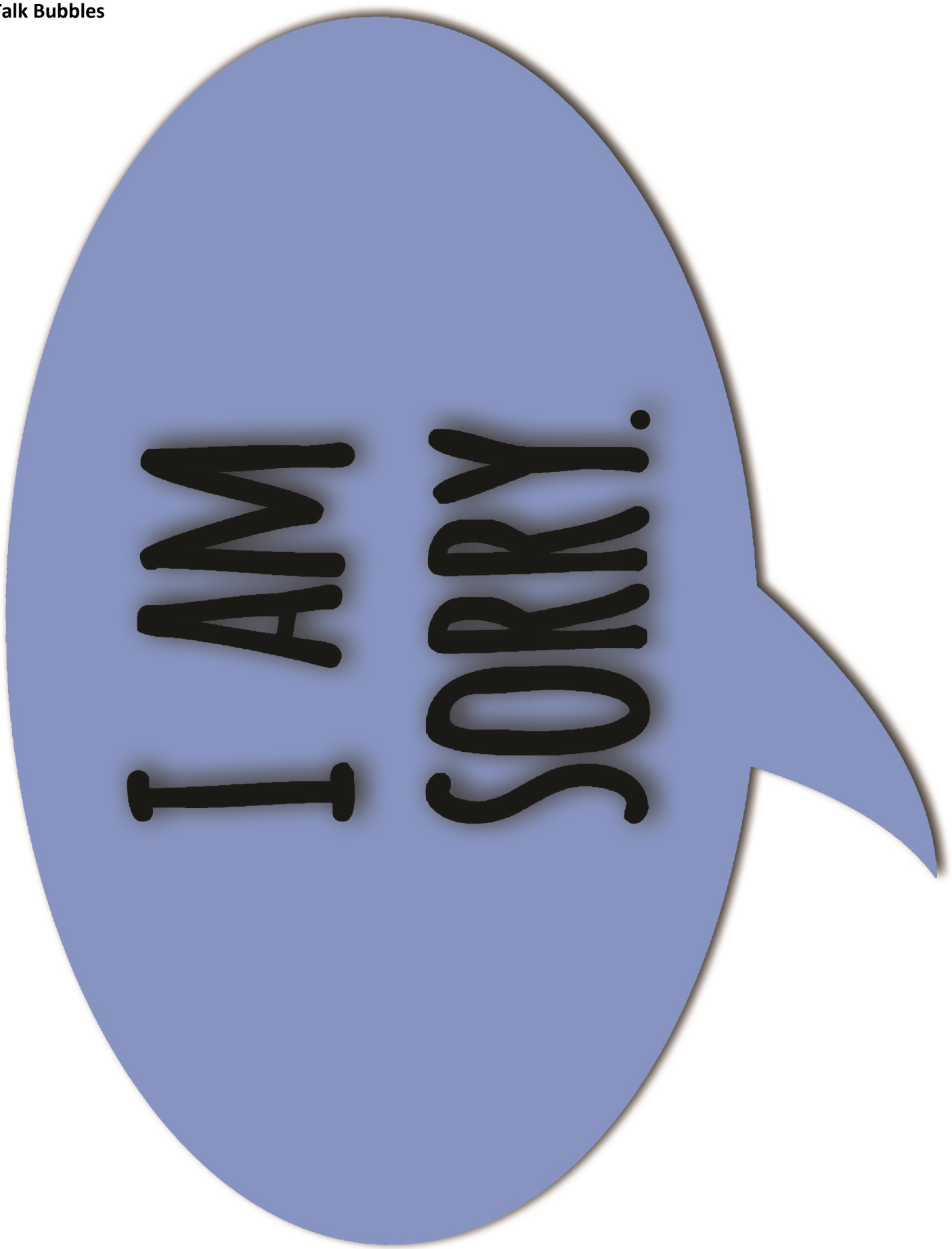
8. You are taking care of your friend's dog while his family is out of town. They tell you to put the dog in a pen in the yard. You forget to secure the gate and come back to find the dog has chewed the wheels off a skate board.

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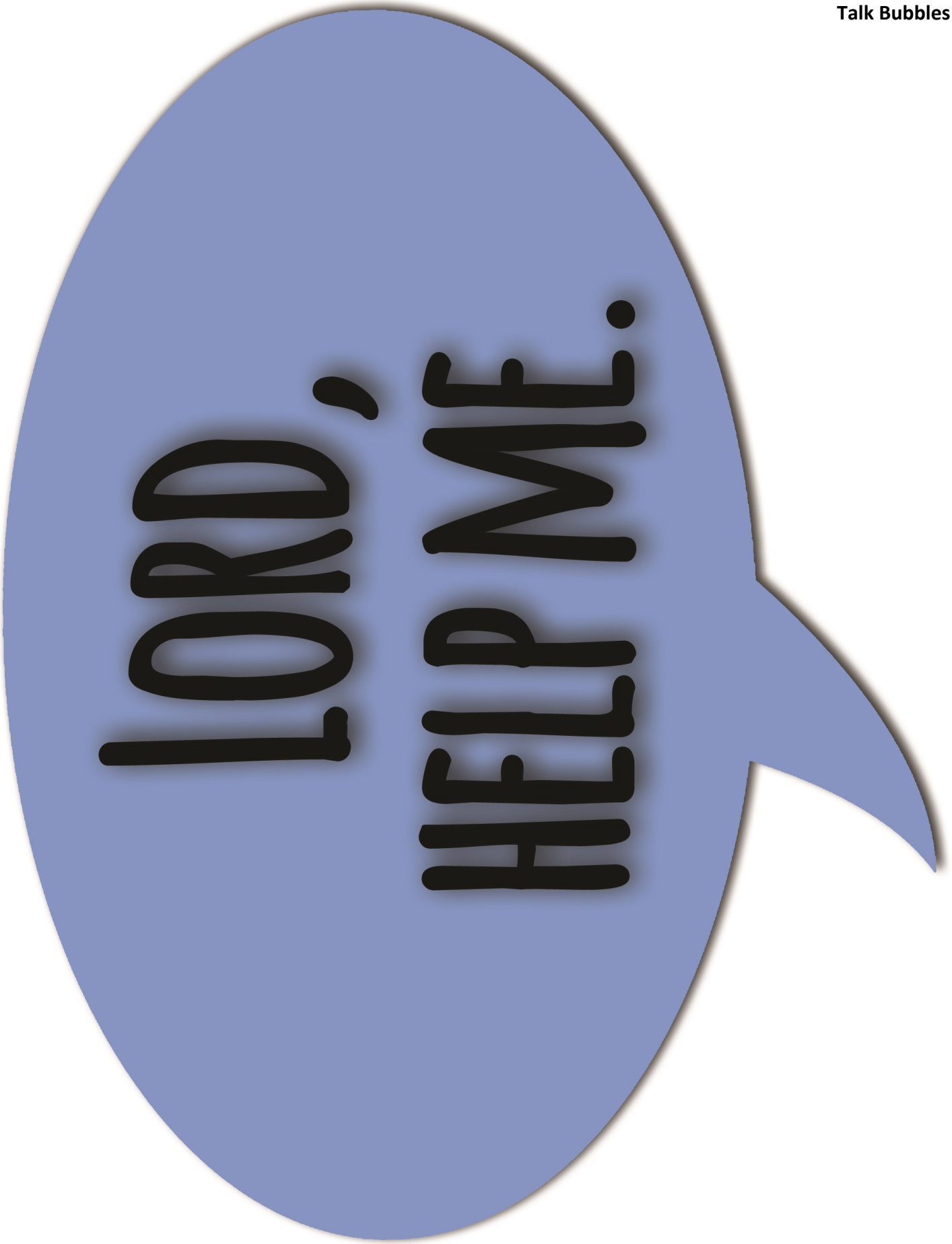


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Talk Bubbles

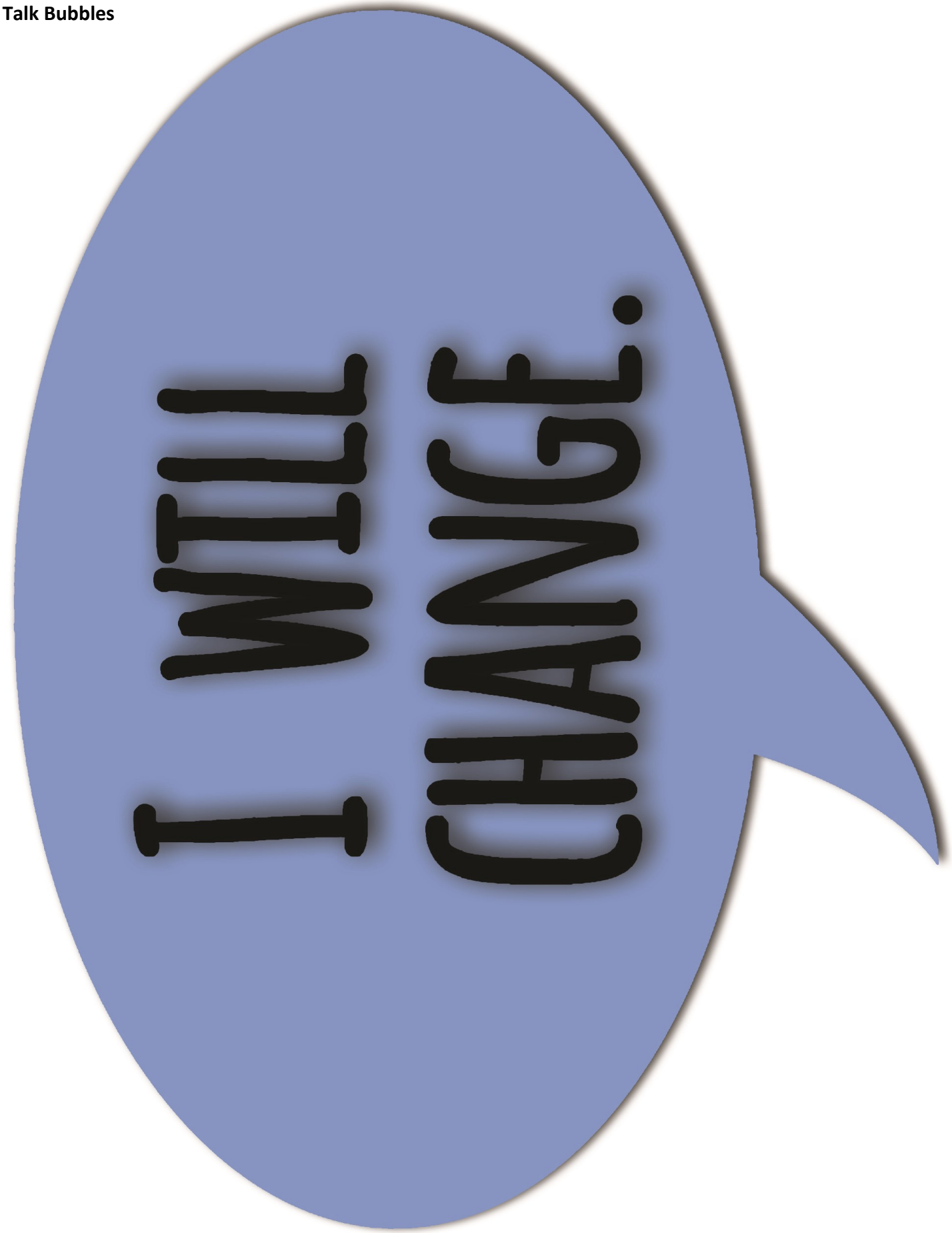


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Talk Bubbles



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Go and Sin No More

I was wrong "God has found out the iniquity of your servants" (Genesis 44:16). Confession is to be that we see, recognize and admit to our evils and that we are discovering that we are miserable sinners (*True Christianity* 539).

I am sorry The Lord is near to those who have a broken heart, and saves such as have a contrite spirit (Psalm 34:18). If we feel any anxiety when we reflect upon our having done what is evil, it is a sign that we...will afterward allow ourselves to be reformed (*Arcana Coelestia* 5470).

Lord, help me God be merciful to me, a sinner (Luke 18:13). One who believes in God also says inwardly, "With God's help I will overcome it"; and then prays, and gets help This is not denied to anyone (*Charity* 203).

I will change "Go and sin no more" (John 8:11). "Although I am thinking about this and intending it, I will not do it because it is a sin (*True Christianity* 535). If you afterward abstain from one or another sin which you discover in yourself...you are on the way to heaven (*True Christianity* 530). Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance…. He who has two tunics, let him give to him who has none; and he who has food, let him go and do likewise" (Luke 3:8,11). Live a new life, which must be a life of good (*Apocalypse Explained* 250.3). The truth of faith and the good of charity compose our new life (*Arcana Coelestia* 9296.2).

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