

The Importance of Confession

In one sense, we do not need to go beyond the simple fact that the Lord has told us to confess our sins to Him (I John 1:9) and to one another (James 5:16). Because the Lord has said it, we will do it. But because we are trying to understand the good designs of the Lord, why is it that God calls us to confess our sins to Him and to others that we have offended?

Some of us might think that God just wants to make us feel bad. Quite the contrary. God can have us feel bad without the confession part! He could just leave us alone with His wrath. Confession, however, is meant to bring healing and restore relationships.

The spite, haughtiness, anger, revenge, malice is all put aside as well as the broken relationship.

*"But now you also, put them all aside: anger, wrath, malice, slander, and abusive speech from your mouth."
(Colossians 3:8, NASB).*



Instead we take up love, comfort, acceptance, peace and joy as we strengthen bonds in our relationships.

*"And so, as those who have been chosen of God, holy and beloved, put on a heart of compassion, kindness, humility, gentleness and patience; bearing with one another, and forgiving each other, whoever has a complaint against anyone; just as the Lord forgave you, so also should you. And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.
(Colossians 3:12-14, NASB).*



**Without confession,
brokenness remains.**



**With confession,
healing and unity come.**

God's greater purpose is to bond us together to work together as one with Him. If confession is not properly carried out, then what could be mended stays shattered bringing disappointment and loneliness to all. God's beautiful designs are shown through His commandments. Confession leads to healthy and beautiful community of relationships.

And beyond all these things put on love, which is the perfect bond of unity.

CONFESSION OF SINS

Cleaning the conscience

Confession brings two significant results. Both are to be remembered and no neglected: forgiveness and cleansing (restoration).



*" If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to **forgive** us our sins and to **cleanse** us from all unrighteousness." (1 John 1:9, NASB).*

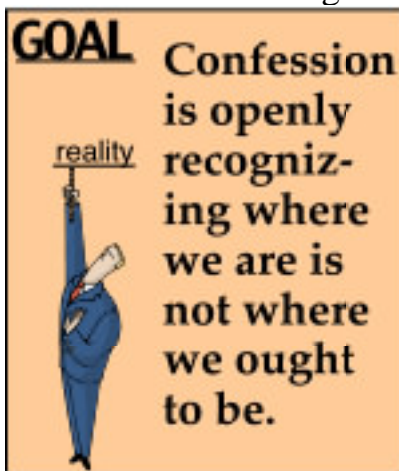
Confession of sins

Our search for forgiveness must be thorough. We are not to treat our sin lightly. God didn't. God placed our penalty upon Christ. This is the reason we want to be thorough in seeking cleansing and freedom from our sin.

On the other hand we are not to be wallowing in despair over our sin. We might think to live rejected after confession shows proper contrition. But this is wrong. When we are forgiven, we are forgiven. If we live in despair over our failures, then we are in sense telling the Lord that His forgiveness means nothing and that there is no real forgiveness.

So what is the proper way to confess our sins?

We need to be thorough and thankful. By being **thorough**, we



confront our sins in detail along with full apologies and restitution. We deal with it. We let Him deal with us. And then, we can move on. The Lord is not pleased if we only deal with some of our past sins. The list might be 100 to 200 long and contain some of the most gross sins, but when they are openly dealt with, we can enjoy a full and free relationship with God and others. Many Christians have lived in the shadows of their past sin and therefore live in a meager understanding of Christ's power, grace and love.

Confession leads to thankfulness because of the cleansing and restoration. Many have not grown up in a family with restoration. The pains of bitter remarks still sting their souls after many years. But this is not the way it should be or is with the Lord our Father. When a son does wrong, he is surely corrected and things are necessarily straightened out. However, forgiveness is not just acceptance of the wrong that was done but the full restoration with the involved persons including God Himself.

Part of our confessional prayer should include what is called 'taking back ground.' This is based on the premise that God wants to completely restore us. As long as we sin, His blessing is held back so that we are not encouraged in evil ways. But when we repent and confess, then we are able to step back in His full joy and blessing. The ground that we have lost during the battle, can be taken back by His power and design.

Steps Involved in Confession

On the next page is a form to fill out. It can be copied many times if needed. It is important to be thorough. Each of the headings are here described so the form can be filled out correctly.

Sinful act/attitude

We need to state clearly what wrong we have done. Jesus taught that even when a man thinks upon a woman with lust, it is adultery. Heart desires are considered sin as much as the actual sinful behavior. The consequences are different but the judgment is the same. If multiple sins have occurred with a person, we might print out a sheet just for that one person or situation.

Results

When we acknowledge the painful results from our waywardness, it helps us see the pain from the other person's perspective. We can better identify with those that have suffered from our lives and speak forth a more sincere apology.

Persons Involved

God is always involved. Every caress, every word, every desire shows up on His radar screen. When we do contrary to what He wants, then we as His children need to come humbly asking for forgiveness. We do not mean that we are saved again. No. Once His child, always His child. We mean instead that we want to be back on talking terms. This is restoration.

Apologies are necessary where possible. We are not just trying to straighten out our relationship with God but also with individuals. The apology needs to go as broad as the offense is known. For example, if a person lusted in his heart, it would be very inappropriate to apologize to that woman. However, if a person's adulterous affair affected a large group in the church, then a public apology is necessary. Apology is not just saying, "I'm sorry." After our confession of wrong, we need to ask them, "Will you please forgive me?"

Restitution given

We need to pay back more than we have stolen or damaged. Even if there was full consent, damage to a person's inner being and relationships occurred. A monetary gift can't fully pay back the pain suffered. But when we can pay back something, we should. We should be liberal in our giving even if we must suffer. Remember we deserve death for falling short of God's demand. Ask God if there is anything you can do to bring healing.

Confessional prayer

In this confessional prayer we tell God all about what we have done in each of these steps. In a sense it brings good closure to each problematic area. Write down the date you confessed it. Confession brings forgiveness as well as cleansing and full restoration. An example of a prayer is included on the last page.





CONFESSION OF SINS

# Sinful act/attitude	Results	Apologized to persons involved	Restitution given	Confessed Date
#				<input type="checkbox"/>
#				<input type="checkbox"/>
#				<input type="checkbox"/>
#				<input type="checkbox"/>
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A Confessional Prayer

In our confessional prayer to God, it is helpful if we include the following sections. Under each section is a segment of a possible prayer.

Details of the wrong: An example might be:

"I have worried so much that my husband might have an affair that I have inadvertently encouraged him to do so. My attitude, spirit and behavior has been anything but warm and welcoming. I have been critical."

Depiction of results: An example might be:

"As a result of my anxiety, I not only have been critical but also secretly working hard to make money in case something like that might happen. Because of this I have neglected my home, wife and mothering duties. Others have suffered because of my own worries."

Request for forgiveness of moral debt, restoration and pledge of faithfulness.

"Lord, I have been so ignorant of your command. I despised your words rather than treasure them. Because of this, I only chose what I thought was best for me. I usurped your position of master and expected you to be my slave. I have earlier on trusted my own abilities to get by. I see now that I have not trusted you. Now because of Christ Jesus, I ask and plead that by His blood of Jesus Christ to totally cleanse me of this sin and restore me to yourself. I thank you for your love and acceptance. I thank you for your forgiveness. I now pledge myself to trust you and plead to keep me from being wise in my own eyes. By your power please keep my heart close to You."

Ask God to take back ground in your life.

"Lord, I recognize that unless you give special grace, there will be a great void in my life. I ask you by Your wonderful grace take back any ground I have lost through my activity over the last six months. Restore me fully to you, spiritually, emotionally and otherwise."

Request for those who are hurt in this ordeal.

"My Father, I have hurt my husband, 2 children and my friend Peg's life. I have gone astray. I have brought criticism into their lives. I need your help to work through me and others to bring back what I have destroyed. You promise that 'all things work together for good' and now I ask that you bring some good out of all the evil that has been done."

Thanks and closure

"I now have lifted this trust in the idol of self up to you in Christ's blood for full forgiveness. I am forgiven and thank you for that. Help me to be faithful to follow through with my commitment. And if at any time in the future, the Accuser would bring this account back to my mind to manipulate my feelings, I pledge myself to remember that on this date I have been forgiven and the charge has been wiped from your books, and I have been fully restored to you. In the powerful Name of Jesus Christ I pray, Amen."