

Confessing Our Sins

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

Introduction

1. Confession is perhaps one of the most difficult and misunderstood concepts of prayer.
2. DISCUSSION: What makes confessing sin difficult?
 - a. Embarrassing?
 - b. Ashamed?
 - c. Painful to admit?
3. FOLLOWUP DISCUSSION: What are common misconceptions about confession?

Discussion

I. The Bible Pattern of Confessing Sin

- A. Leviticus 5:5: *"when he is guilty...he shall confess that he has sinned in that thing."*
- B. Leviticus 26:40-46: *"If they confess... I will remember my covenant."*
- C. Numbers 5:5-10: *"He shall confess the sin which he has committed."*
- D. Psalm 32:3-6: *"I acknowledged my sin... I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."*
- E. Daniel 9:20: *"I was praying, and confessing my sin and the sin of my people."*
- F. Ezra 10:1: *"While he was confessing and weeping..."*
- G. Matthew 3:5-6; Mark 1:5: *"baptized... confessing their sins."*
- H. Acts 19:18: *"And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds."*
- I. James 5:16: *"Confess your sins to one another."*
- J. 1 John 1:9: *"If we confess, He is faithful and just to forgive."*

II. When We Conceal and Fail to Confess Sin

- A. Psalm 32:3-4: *"When I kept silent..."*
 1. *My bones _____ through my _____ all day long.*
 2. *Your (God's) hand was _____*
 3. *My vitality was turned into _____.*
- B. Psalm 38:1-5, 18:
 1. Vs. 1: *Lord, do not _____ and _____.*
 2. Vs. 2-3: *"For your _____ me deeply, and your hand _____ me down. There is no _____ in my flesh because of your _____, nor any _____ in my bones because of my _____."*
 3. Vs. 3-5: *"For my _____ have done over my head; like a heave _____ they are too heavy for me."*
 4. Vs. 18: The solution: *"I will _____ my _____; I will be in _____ over my _____."*
- C. Question: Have you ever diminished, denied, or ignored your sins?
- D. Proverbs 28:13: *"One who _____ his _____ will not prosper, but one who _____ and _____ them will find _____"* (NASB).

III. The Blessedness of Confessing and Acknowledging Our Guilt

- A. The effects of concealing our sins are removed:
1. Psalm 30:2: "O LORD my God, I _____ to You, and You _____ me."
 2. Psalm 32:5: "I _____ my sin to You, and my iniquity I have not _____. I said, 'I will _____ my transgressions to _____, and You _____ the iniquity of my sin.'"
 3. Psalm 103:2-3: "Bless the Lord... who _____ all your _____, who _____ all your _____."
 4. James 5:16: "_____ your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be _____."
 5. 1 John 1:9: "If we _____ our _____, He is faithful and just to _____ us our sins and to _____ us from all _____."
- B. Be Specific.
1. In many examples where sins were confessed, notice the need to be specific.
 - a. Leviticus 5:5: "And it shall be, when he is guilty in any of these matters, that he shall confess that he has sinned _____."
 - b. Acts 19:18: "And many who had believed came _____ and _____ their _____."
 2. It is appropriate to broadly ask forgiveness of sins, but when we are aware of specifics, it is important to be specific.
 - a. Jeremiah 42:19-22: Refusal to acknowledge and put away specific sins indicates a heart not fully turned to God.
 - b. 2 Corinthians 7:10-11: Godly sorrow leads us to "clearing of ourselves" in a matter.

IV. Our Advocate with the Father – Why Confession is Essential to Forgiveness

- A. 1 John 2:1: Jesus is our advocate who stands in the presence of the Father making intercession for us (See also Romans 8:34; Hebrews 7:25).
1. The Bible consistently uses courtroom imagery in the removal of guilt.
 2. Psalm 109:6-7: An accuser also stands by the judge like a prosecuting attorney.
 3. Zechariah 3:1-5: Notice how God balances justice and mercy.
- B. Revelation 12:10-11: Victory over our accuser is obtained through the blood of Jesus.
1. Satan (adversary) is the accuser of the brethren.
 2. By what do the saints overcome the accuser? _____
 3. This is how our filthy robes are removed.
- C. Confession of sins is the appeal we make in Jesus' name and by His blood to remove our guilt (blame), so we can be holy and blameless before God (Ephesians 1:4).
1. 2 Peter 3:14: Be diligent to: _____
 2. 1 John 1:8-2:3: How do we "be diligent" to do that?
 - a. 2:1: We must strive to _____
 - b. If we sin, we have _____
 - c. 1:9: How do we appeal to our advocate? _____

Conclusion

1. Confessing is the practice of a heart that truly seeks salvation in Jesus.
2. But there is still more Bible teaching on confession that we haven't touched on here.
 - a. James 5:16: Confess your sins "one to another."
 - b. "The effective prayer of a righteous man accomplishes much."
3. We will address these concepts next.