



# confession

## **What is Confession?**

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# WHAT IS CONFESSION

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## What is Confession of Sin?

We can all think of times in our lives when someone sinned against us. Maybe someone stole something from us. Maybe someone was unkind with their words, or unfair in a game. We have all been wronged at one time or another. We have also wronged people as well. We have been unfair, unloving, and unkind at different times in our lives. All of these different situations where others or ourselves have fallen short of doing what is right is called “sin.” Sin separates us from God and others. The word “sin” comes from a Greek word that means “missing the mark.” Have you ever shot a slingshot, arrow or nerf gun at a target and missed what you were aiming at? When we sin it is like missing the target of God’s perfect law. We will all miss hitting the target of God’s law. That is why Jesus came to perfectly fulfill God’s law for us (Mt. 5:17).

Now that we know what sin is, what about the word “confession?” The Greek word for confession means to “agree or admit.” It has the idea behind it of declaring oneself guilty of something. When we confess, we are agreeing or admitting that we made a mistake. As Christians, we are to confess our sins to God (1 Jn. 1:9) and to others (Jms. 5:16). Confession of sin allows us to take responsibility for failure. It allows us to humble ourselves before God and others so that we can receive forgiveness. Confession is a great thing, but a very difficult thing to do. Humans have struggled from the beginning of time with confession. Our first parents, Adam and Eve struggled with confessing their sins and so do we. When Adam and Eve sinned they immediately tried to hide themselves from the presence of God. Here is some of that story from Genesis 3: “Then the LORD God called to the man, and said to him, “Where are you?”<sup>10</sup> He said, “I heard the sound of You in the garden, and I was afraid because I was naked; so I hid myself.”<sup>11</sup> And He said, “Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten from the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?”<sup>12</sup> The man said, “The woman whom You gave to be with me, she gave me from the tree, and I ate.”<sup>13</sup> Then the LORD God said to the woman, “What is this you have done?” And the woman said, “The serpent deceived me, and I ate.” (Gen. 3:9-13)

Notice what happened when God confronted Adam and Eve? Adam blamed Eve and Eve blamed the serpent. Neither of them confessed their sin openly but instead tried to make excuses for their decision, rather than take responsibility. Confession of sin helps a person to take responsibility for an action that needs forgiven. I am hoping that through reading this booklet and answering the questions, you will begin to see clearly the importance of confessing your sins to God and others. If you are able to take responsibility for your failures, you will be able to have strong relationships with others and most importantly with God. I recommend for parents to read through just one chapter a night with their kids and talk through the “questions to consider,” and “things to remember.”

# 1

## Confession to God

### Memory Verse:

“If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.”

I John 1:9

### The greatest commandment

In the gospel of Matthew a lawyer came to Jesus and asked Him, what the greatest commandment was. Jesus answered him, “YOU SHALL LOVE THE LORD YOUR GOD WITH ALL YOUR HEART, AND WITH ALL YOUR SOUL, AND WITH ALL YOUR MIND.” (Mt. 22:37. Clearly, this means that we should love God with our whole being. We should make nothing a priority above serving God. However, each one of us fall short of this calling to love God with everything. Every one of us will sin against God by not putting Him first at some point in our lives. Romans 3:10 says, “as it is written, “THERE IS NONE RIGHTEOUS, NOT EVEN ONE.” Each one of us are sinners that need to be saved. Because sin happens, confession must happen. Have you made a habit of confessing your sins to God? It is very important to realize your weaknesses and take responsibility for them. In the Sermon on the Mount Jesus expectation is for His disciples to be people of prayer. He doesn’t say, “if you pray,” but rather “when you pray” you should pray in a specific way. In the model prayer sometimes called the “Our Father” Jesus says at one point we should pray “and forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” (Mt. 6:12) The word “debts” here means “sins.” Jesus says that we should pray for forgiveness of our sins and also forgive those who have sinned against us. Confessing those sins during prayer is one healthy way for us to humble ourselves before Almighty God.

### I Thought that I was already forgiven?

You might be thinking, “why should I confess my sins if I have already been forgiven through what Jesus accomplished for me on the cross?” This is a great question. It is true that when you believe the gospel and are born again, you receive forgiveness for your sins, past present and future. Jesus last words on the cross were “tetelestai” meaning “paid in full.” Your sins were totally paid for on the cross, but as a way of continuing a healthy relationship with God you and I must keep sensitive hearts to our sin. Confession is a way of us acknowledging before God our weaknesses and our continued need for him. If we don’t confess and take responsibility for our sins we can easily become hard-hearted toward our sin. Hebrews 3:13 says, “But encourage one another day after day, as long as it is *still* called “Today,” so that none of you will be hardened by the deceitfulness of sin.” Sin deceives us and the longer we go without confessing, the more we allow our heart to become hardened to sin. In our Old Testament’s we read the story of King Saul’s life. King Saul is a perfect example of what happens to someone who refuses to acknowledge sin in their life. After David killed Goliath, Saul became very jealous of David. Saul’s sin of jealousy had taken such root in his life that on many occasions he tried to murder David without cause (I Sam. 18:11, 13, 17, 20; I Sam. 19:1, 10, 11, 18). Saul knew that he was sinning against David and even admitted it (I Sam. 26:21), but he never turned to God in confession and repentance. Confession keeps the lines of communication open between you and God. In church life we take the Lord’s Supper several times a year. The bread and juice serve to remind us of the body and blood of Jesus. When we eat the bread and juice we recognize the great sacrifice that Jesus made in our behalf. Confession also helps to remind us of our need for relationship with Jesus. It allows us to get spiritually clean before God. One time when I was a kid it had just rained really hard. The ditch across the street had totally filled up with water. My friends and I were running our bikes off in this ditch for a couple of

hours having a blast! We were totally covered in mud. I remember that my mom wouldn't let me in the house until I had completely hosed off with water outside. Being muddy didn't mean that I wasn't my mother's son anymore. It did mean that as long as I was covered in mud, our relationship couldn't be quite the same. The mud had come between us. I wasn't free anymore to run around in the house until the mud had been hosed off. Confession works a lot like the water hose outside my house did. When we sin, it doesn't mean that we aren't children of God anymore. It does however, limit the relationship. Our memory verse says, "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." Confess your sins to God and be cleansed again.

### **Walls**

When we sin, we naturally want to hide from God. Our sin becomes like a wall we build between ourselves and God. When we enjoy certain sins and are unwilling to admit that they are a problem we deceive ourselves. I John 1:8 says, "If we say that we have no sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us." Notice that it says, "we deceive ourselves." It doesn't say that we deceive God. God knows the truth and it is impossible to hide from Him. The great historian Herodotus said that the walls of the ancient city of Babylon were 80 feet thick! Imagine how difficult it would be to break through a wall that thick! Over time our continued sins in certain areas build up in to thick walls because of our unwillingness to confess them. Over time it becomes more and more difficult to admit fault and take responsibility. Confession tears walls down. Confession allows you to live in relationship with God. Those walls of sin that we place between ourselves and God are walls for us, but God sees right through them. The scriptures teach us that nothing can be hidden from God. Hebrews 4:13 says, "And there is no creature hidden from His sight, but all things are open and laid bare to the eyes of Him with whom we have to do." All things are open and laid bare before God. You and I cannot hide behind a wall from Almighty God. We might as well as quickly as possible confess whatever sins are hindering our relationship with Him and remove those walls. A great bible scholar and pastor named Augustine from the 4<sup>th</sup> century had a favorite verse out of the Proverbs. It says, "He who conceals his transgressions will not prosper, but he who confesses and forsakes *them* will find compassion." To conceal a sin is to try to hide it. This verse says that whoever wants to find compassion from God must confess and turn away from sin.

### **Questions to consider:**

1. Is it possible for us to love God with our whole being, or will we fail at this?
2. Does Jesus have anything to say to us about confessing our sins through prayer?
3. If Jesus has already forgiven me for all of my sins, why should I confess sins that I committed today?
4. What did King Saul try to do to David when he refused to confess and repent of the sin of jealousy?

### **Things to remember:**

1. Ongoing confession for the Christian is healthy and cleanses us from sins that we commit.
2. Unconfessed sin can lead to a hardened heart.
3. When we harden our heart to God's truth and don't confess sin, we build walls between us and God.
4. No sin that we ever commit is hidden from God. We should quickly take responsibility for our sins through confession.

## 2

### Confession to others

#### Memory Verse:

“Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed.”

James 5:16a

#### The cookies got me

Have you ever done something wrong and were so embarrassed that you hid it? Maybe someone asked you if you had done something and you had when you knew you shouldn't have and you lied about it. Once, I snuck downstairs during Christmas time and got in to the Santa Claus cookie jar when everyone was sleeping and ate a bunch of the chocolate chip cookies out of it. I then carefully snuck back upstairs so that no one would hear me. I was feeling guilty about what I had done but managed to get to sleep. The next afternoon when my father opened up the cookie jar, he noticed most of them were gone. He began asking everyone who ate them. He was going around the room asking, and finally came to me. “Marty, did you eat these cookies?” What do you think that I said? I had the chance right then and there to confess my sin to my father. I knew that I wasn't supposed to eat those cookies. I had snuck down the stairs while everyone was sleeping! I felt terrible inside. I knew that what I had done was wrong and I wanted to confess, but instead I looked at my father and said, “it wasn't me.” He began to press in to me a little bit. “Are you sure it wasn't you?” “Are you sure that you are telling me the truth?” Here was my second chance to do the right thing! I looked him straight in the eyes and said, “no, it wasn't me.” I felt terrible inside. I had a second chance and for some reason, I couldn't get myself to take responsibility. Because I decided the lie instead of the truth, my insides were churning. I was literally almost physically sick because of my sin. I hated lying to my father, and I knew inside my heart that God knew what I had done. I needed to confess this sin. Holding in a lie is a little bit like holding your breath in. Try, right now, holding your breath for as long as you can.

#### **GO! Don't worry, I will wait.**

What happened at the end when you couldn't take it any longer? The same thing that happens to everyone. Your mouth bursts open and you quickly suck in the oxygen that your body needs. When you confess, you exhale all of the carbon dioxide (sin) that you had inside and quickly breath in that new fresh oxygen of forgiveness. When I finally confessed the sin to my father, I felt free. It was like breathing in fresh air again, rather than holding my breath. Do you need to confess sin to anyone?

#### **The 2<sup>nd</sup> greatest commandment**

Do you like it when someone lies to you? Would you like it if someone stole something from you? How about if someone called you a really bad name, or spread a rumor about you? Of course, you wouldn't like this. you wouldn't want anyone to treat you this way. Instead you would prefer truth, kindness and consideration from others. Jesus tells us that the second greatest commandment is to “love your neighbor as yourself.” (22:39) Do you think that when Jesus says “neighbor” he is talking about your next-door neighbor? If so, you would be wrong. Your “neighbor” is any human being that you come in to contact with. This can be your friend across the street at school or maybe your brother or sister. Your neighbor is anyone.

The problem with the command to love your neighbor as yourself is not that it isn't a good command. The problem is that we aren't good. Many times we will fail to love others as much as we love ourselves. Many times we will sin against our neighbor by not being considerate of them. When we sin against them we break this second greatest commandment. So, how do we go about making right a sin we have committed against someone else? We must confess it to them and ask for forgiveness. In the gospel of Luke, Jesus tells us of the story of the prodigal son. The prodigal son treated his family and in particular his father terribly by asking for his inheritance before his father was dead. Then, the

prodigal went out and completely wasted his entire inheritance (the money his father had worked his whole life for) on wasteful living. After some hard times the prodigal finally came to his senses and decided that he was going to confess his sins to his father. In the story the prodigal said, "I will arise and go to my father, and I will say to him, 'Father, I have sinned against heaven and before you. I am no longer worthy to be called your son. Treat me as one of your hired servants.'" (Lk. 15:18-19). Notice that the prodigal knew that he had broken the 1<sup>st</sup> and 2<sup>nd</sup> commandments. He had sinned against "heaven" (God) and "you" (his father). In order to love his neighbor (his father) the way that he would want to be loved he had to confess his sin to his father. This confession of the prodigal broke the chains that sin had had on his life. His father is so excited to forgive and restore his son that he says, "...let us eat and celebrate. For this my son was dead, and is alive again; he was lost, and is found." (Lk. 15:23-24). If you have any unconfessed sin that you have committed against someone, take some time like the prodigal did to think about what you need to say to them when you see them again. When you do see them take some time to confess your sin and ask for forgiveness.

### **Confess your sins first**

When you sin against someone and know you made a mistake you will feel guilty inside. You might reason with yourself that if you just serve God better, it will make the mistake ok. Jesus says that instead of trying to serve God better or give an offering that it is actually more important to make things right with the other person first. Jesus says in the Sermon on the Mount, "Therefore if you are presenting your offering at the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you, leave your offering there before the altar and go; first be reconciled to your brother, and then come and present your offering. (Mt. 6:23-24). Notice that it is more important to Jesus that you make things right with your "brother" than it is to give an offering to the church. Your "brother" here is not speaking about your brother at home. You may have heard the expression, "they are my brother or sister in Christ." This is referring to any other Christian that you may have offended with your sin. Go confess to your brother and make it right as quickly as you possibly can! When you confess your sin to your "brother" it is good for both you and them. It helps the other person know that you value your relationship with them. It also teaches you to be humble, admit your faults and receive forgiveness.

### **Questions to consider:**

1. What is the 2<sup>nd</sup> Greatest Commandment in the bible?
2. What should I have quickly done when my father asked me if I had eaten the cookies?
3. Is there anything that you need confess to your parents or to another friend?
4. Who is your neighbor? Your next door neighbor? Who is your brother? Your brother in your home?

### **Things to remember:**

1. Remember that when you were holding your breath, after a minute or so, you felt like you were going to explode. Holding unconfessed sin in, can make you feel similar.
2. After holding your breath, when you took that first breath in you felt great relief. Confessing your sin is like exhaling the carbon dioxide that builds up in your lungs. Taking in the fresh oxygen is like taking in forgiveness. It is freeing and feels great.
3. The prodigal son confessed his sin to his father. When he did this, his relationship was restored. When we confess our sins to others, it breaks down the walls that we built between us from sin.
4. Jesus would rather you confess your sins to your brother first before giving an offering. Remember, to Jesus your brother is more important than your money.

### 3

## The Power of Words

### Memory Verse:

“By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host.”

Psalm 33:6

### WORDS

I believe that words are the most powerful thing in the universe. Let me explain. Genesis 1:2-3 says, “The earth was formless and void, and darkness was over the surface of the deep, and the Spirit of God was moving over the surface of the waters. Then God **said**, “Let there be light”; and there was light.” Notice that I highlighted the word “said.” All that God had to do was say the word and the heavens and the earth were created. The power of His mighty word created the heavens and the earth instantly out of nothing! Talk about power! C.S. Lewis in his book *The Magician’s Nephew* pictures the creation of the world called “Narnia” by the powerful voice of the Lion, Aslan (a Christlike figure). By the singing voice of the lion, everything comes into existence out of nothing. At the end of the creating the Lion Aslan says, “Narnia, Narnia, Narnia, awake. Love. Think. Speak. Be walking trees. Be talking beasts. Be divine waters.” Lewis pictures in his book something similar to what it must have been like when God created during creation week.

Words are so powerful that God the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the trinity is called the “Word.” Before God became man in the person of Jesus, God the 2<sup>nd</sup> person had always been. God the 2<sup>nd</sup> person is known as Jesus or the “Word.” Listen to John chapter 1:1-3. “In the beginning was the **Word**, and the **Word** was with God, and the **Word** was God. He was in the beginning with God. All things came into being through Him, and apart from Him nothing came into being that has come into being.” Notice that this verse says the “Word was God,” and created all things. Who is this “Word” you may be wondering. Verse 14 says, “And the **Word** became flesh, and dwelt among us, and we saw His glory, glory as of the only begotten from the Father, full of grace and truth.” The Word that created everything and took on flesh (became a person) is Jesus! Can you imagine anyone more powerful than Jesus? Of course not! And what is He called? The Word!

### God’s Words and Our Words

Because God’s words are so powerful and we are made in His image, our words are very powerful as well. William Tyndale was a bible scholar that believed every person should have the right to read the Word of God for themselves. Up until the time that he lived, the bible was read in churches in the Latin language. Most of the people didn’t understand the Latin language and so William wanted to translate a bible into the English language for his people. The King of England forbid William from making a translation in to the English language, but William disobeyed him and made an excellent English translation. However, he was caught and tied to a stake. There, he was choked and burned to death. Why did the King want him dead? Because he wanted to translate God’s Word. Words cost William his life. Words are so powerful though that we still know William Tyndale’s last words. Before he died at the stake he said, “Lord, open the eyes of the King of England!” God’s words and our words are very powerful things. People get fired from jobs sometimes for saying insensitive words. People also get honored and standing ovations for good words. Words have the power to hurt, or the power to heal. Our words are more powerful than us. In fact, someday it is possible that someone is reading these words on this page right now, and myself, the author has been dead for several years. My words will outlast me. Because of this, we must make the most of our words.



## **Sticks and Stones**

Have you ever heard the little poem, “sticks and stones may break my bones, but your words will never hurt me?” Did you know that this little saying is not true? Words many times can and do hurt. I can prove it. Has anyone ever punched you on the arm or leg, or maybe even accidentally slipped in to you and hurt you? Why did it hurt? Because they physically harmed you whether accidentally or not. Words can have the same effect on us because words are physical things as well. Has anyone ever said anything to you that made your stomach hurt? Have you ever gotten butterflies or started to sweat because of unkind words directed at you? Just like the pain of getting hit on the arm, unkind words can give you a similar unpleasant response in your bodies. Words are actually sound waves or air vibrations sent out from your mouth toward someone else. When the other person hears it, what is actually happening is that the air wave “hits” tiny hairs inside the person’s inner ear and their brain then interprets the information as good, or bad, positive or negative. So, you see that just like hitting someone, words from your mouth can “hit” in a physical way as well. That is why choosing them carefully is important.

### **Say the right words**

Now that you see how important words are, it is important to use them when we confess our sins to God and others. Don’t just say “I’m sorry” to your sibling when you have been unkind. Use the power of your words to specifically name the sin that you did against them. Confess with words the specifics of the situation and then ask them to forgive you for what you have done. Just saying that you are sorry for something doesn’t allow you to take full credit for the sin that you have committed. You and I need to own our sin. If your mother asked you to clean your room or take out the trash and you disobeyed her, how would you confess this sin? The right words might look something like this; “Mom, I know that you asked me to take out the trash. I didn’t obey you and I sinned against you and God. Would you please forgive me for this?” How about when you have talked mean to a brother or sister? My brother’s name is Mike. I might say, “Mike I have no excuse for the way that I talked to you. It was unkind and sinful. Would you please forgive me?” Taking complete responsibility like this, demonstrates maturity and allows your words to express your heart. Simply saying “I’m sorry” doesn’t really acknowledge the sin or the details of the situation. Confession of the details helps us to name the sin out loud to God or others and receive the full power of forgiveness. Naming the sin is not only good for you, but also the person that you have sinned against as well. Just as words can “hit” the inner ear causing pain, they can also enter gently and kindly with words that are uplifting. Confession is using the power of your words for the glory of God. If you have some confessing to do to God or others, use your words to bring comfort and healing. Never say, “if you would stop doing this, I would stop sinning against you.” That’s called rationalizing your sin. When you confess, forget what the other person did to you. Confession is for you to get your sin right with them. Allow God’s Spirit to move on their hearts to get things right with you.

### **Questions to consider:**

1. What does John 1:1 call Jesus?
2. What did God use to create?
3. Why did the King of England want to kill William Tyndale?
4. How can our words be like punching someone physically?
5. Why is saying “I’m sorry” not good enough?

### **Things to remember:**

1. Jesus is called “The Word.”
2. God created the universe by simply saying the words.
3. Our words are very powerful things. They can bring others pain or comfort.
4. Confession of sin needs to be specific. Name the sin and ask for forgiveness. Own the sin.
5. The poem “Sticks and Stones” is not true. Words can and do hurt people.

## 4

### Confession and Pride

#### Memory Verse:

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

James 4:6

#### It's hard to be wrong

It's hard to be wrong isn't it? Has anyone ever pointed out to you a failure and you immediately denied it even though you knew that what they said was true? Why is it so difficult for us to admit something that we have done wrong? The answer to this question is the word "pride." Being prideful means to look down upon others and exalt yourself above them. The Proverbs tell us that wisdom says, "Take my instruction and not silver, and knowledge rather than choicest gold. For wisdom is better than jewels and all desirable things cannot compare with her." (Pr. 8:10-11). **Wisdom** and **instruction** should be more desirable to us than gold, silver, or even expensive jewels. Pride has a way of not allowing us to be completely honest about things. Prideful people hate hearing that they made a mistake, so instead they makes excuses for their wrong behavior. Pride and confession don't mix. Confession comes from a humble heart and never from a prideful heart. Notice the memory verse above. "God is opposed to the proud....." Do you know what it means to be opposed to something? It means that God disapproves of the proud. That is a scary thought isn't it? I don't want God opposed or disapproving of me, do you? Of course not! If God is opposed to pride, then we ought to be opposed to it as well. This means that we should be quick to listen to the Holy Spirit and to others about sins that we have committed. We should be quick to confess the wrongs we have committed and not make excuses. Not admitting the wrong is just our own pride, not allowing us to be wrong about something, even when we know that we are. Be ok with being wrong. We are all sinners who make mistakes and need to be forgiven. When you are wrong, don't make the situation worse by denying the wrong thing you did. Take responsibility and confess that sin to God and others. Quickly get your relationships corrected and on the right path. James 4:10 says, "Humble yourselves before the Lord, and He will lift you up."

#### The broken CD player

My new truck was only one month old and the CD player quit working on it. In the console of my truck I always kept a little key that I needed to open the post office box for my family to get our mail. Mysteriously, it had disappeared at the same time. Two of my girls then 2 (Emma) and 3 (Anna) had been playing in my truck earlier in the day. I asked my 3 year-old (Anna) if she had seen the key that was in my console. She said that the 2 year-old (Emma) had taken the key and shoved it down in the CD player. Now, my key was gone and my new truck CD player was broke all at the same time. I was upset, but moved on. Two years later when Emma was 4 and Anna was 5 we were riding down the road in the truck and Anna said, "Dad, I have something to tell you." I said, "yes dear?" She said, "I was the one who put the key into your CD player and I blamed it on Emma because she wasn't talking very well yet. Will you please forgive me?" I said, "of course I forgive you." Isn't it crazy that even a child as young as 3 has trouble admitting that they have done something wrong? Confession is difficult no matter what your age. I asked Anna, why she told me. She said that she had felt bad about doing it all that time and had to tell me. When we have sin that is unconfessed it is like having a weight that is holding us down until we finally confess the sin and make it right. In the famous book called Pilgrim's Progress the author John Bunyan talks about the moment that the main character of the book named Christian puts his trust in Christ to forgive his sin. Up until that point in the book Christian is carrying a huge burden on his back that is made up of his unconfessed sin. When Christian gives his life to Jesus this huge weight of sin falls

off of his back and rolls down to the bottom of the hill. Confession of sin feels like that huge weight being lifted off. Just like my daughter Anna and just like the fictional character Christian. Do you have sin that you need to confess? Confess the sin and let the burden roll down to the bottom of the hill.

### **Practice confession in your family**

Confessing sin can be embarrassing. Because of the pride that we struggle with, it is difficult for us to admit wrongdoing. A safe place to practice confession of sin is in your family. Proverbs 17:1 says, "Better is a dry morsel and quietness with it than a house full of feasting with strife." This proverb is telling us that it is better to nearly go hungry in a peaceful family than to be rich with any food that we want and live in a home full of fighting. Do you agree with this proverb? Having harmony in your home with your parents and siblings is something that you should strive after every day of your life. When there is strife and fighting in the home it is like someone banging on piano keys at random. The keys being hit in no particular order makes a terrible sounding noise. When there is love in the home it is more like a beautiful piano piece being played. The notes being hit at precisely the right time, makes a pleasing sound and a calm atmosphere come to life. When you sit down with your family to pray before bed, or a morning devotional, stop next time and take some time for confession of sin. Confession can be done before the whole family or on an individual basis. Make sure and take full responsibility and say the words that illustrate what you have done wrong. It may be more difficult at first, but it is an incredibly important practice that helps us to be grow in our relationship with Christ and others.

My family regularly practices private (1 on 1) and public (our whole family together) confession of sin with each other. When I can tell that there is some fussing going on between my children, I wait until the next devotional time and we set that time aside to confess to one another. Some of our confession times have been very powerful instruments for good in our family. There have been times when I was harsh with my children, and times that they were disrespectful to me and our confession to each other allowed us to forgive one another. If we want our Christianity to be more than just ideas, we must put to practice the things that we know to be true. Confession of sin helps to reconcile us with others and God. It also helps shape us in to humble people who always realize their need for Jesus and relationships with others.

### **The most important confession**

I mentioned earlier that "words" are the most powerful thing that we have. In fact Romans 10:9-10 says, "that if you **confess** with your mouth Jesus *as* Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved; for with the heart a person believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he **confesses**, resulting in salvation." If you have not confessed your sins to Jesus and trusted that His death in your place on the cross purchased salvation for you, I invite you to do that. God desires a relationship with you. If you don't have a relationship with Him, don't hold back. Confess your sins, and let God forgive you. Trust Christ and believe the gospel.

### **Questions to consider:**

1. Do you remember what two things should be more precious to us than gold, silver and jewels?
2. God is opposed to the proud. What does this mean?
3. When the burden of sin fell off of Christian's back in the story Pilgrim's Progress, how do you think Christian felt?
4. If you said something harsh or mean to someone you know, practice out loud right now in how you would confess that sin to the person. Say the words.....
5. Are you a Christian? Have you made the most important confession that Jesus is Lord of your life?

### **Things to remember:**

1. A family without harmony is like a piano being banged on. It sounds terrible.
2. Confession of sin in a family setting is a safe place to get used to a life of confession of sin.

## Memory Verses

### Confession to God:

"If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

I John 1:9

### Confession to Others:

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed."

James 5:16a

### The Power of Words:

"By the word of the LORD the heavens were made, and by the breath of His mouth all their host."

Psalm 33:6

### Confession and Pride:

But He gives a greater grace. Therefore *it* says, "GOD IS OPPOSED TO THE PROUD, BUT GIVES GRACE TO THE HUMBLE."

James 4:6

## References

### Chapter 3

C.S. Lewis. *The Magician's Nephew*. pg. 70