

CONFESSION WITH SORROW

He that covereth his sins shall not prosper:
but whoso confesseth and **forsaketh** *them* shall have mercy.

Pro 28:13

Major Premise: There is evidently a difference for the believers between
simply admitting a sin to God
and a deep confession of the soul
accompanied with a decision or determination
not to commit that same sin ever again.

This paper deals wholly with the believer's confession of daily sin. The confession which restores the believer's fellowship with the Lord.

The classic illustration of confession in Scripture is recorded by David in Psalm 51. Let's see how often feelings and emotions bubble to the surface. Contrition seems an integral part of David's confession.

Blue letters emphasize an element which is beyond simple admission of guilt.

Psalm 51.1-19

To the chief Musician,

*A Psalm of David, when Nathan the prophet came unto him,
after he had gone in to Bathsheba.*

Have **mercy** upon me, O God, according to Thy **lovingkindness**: according unto the multitude of Thy **tender mercies** blot out my transgressions.

Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and **cleanse** me from my sin.

For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is **ever before me**.

Against thee, thee **only**, have I sinned, and done this **evil** in thy sight: that Thou mightest be justified when Thou speakest, and be clear when Thou judgest.

Behold, I was shapen in iniquity; and in sin did my mother conceive me.

Behold, Thou desirest truth in the inward parts: and in the hidden part thou shalt make me to know wisdom.

Purge me with hyssop, and I shall be **clean**: **wash** me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me to hear **joy** and **gladness**; that the bones which **Thou hast broken** may rejoice.

Hide Thy face from my sins, and **blot out** all mine iniquities.

Create in me a **clean** heart, O God; and **renew** a right spirit within me.

Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not Thy holy spirit from me.

Restore unto me the **joy** of Thy salvation; and uphold me with Thy **free** spirit.

Then will I teach transgressors Thy ways; and sinners shall be converted unto Thee.

Deliver me from blood **guiltiness**, O God, thou God of my salvation: and my tongue shall **sing** aloud of Thy righteousness.

O Lord, open Thou my lips; and my mouth shall shew forth Thy **praise**.

For Thou desirest not sacrifice; else would I give it: Thou delightest not in burnt offering.

The sacrifices of God are a **broken** spirit: a **broken** and a **contrite** heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

Do good in Thy good pleasure unto Zion: build Thou the walls of Jerusalem.

Then shalt Thou be pleased with the **sacrifices of righteousness**, with burnt offering and whole burnt offering: then shall they offer bullocks upon Thine altar.

This Psalm is a prayer which is directed to the God Who lives in heaven but this did not come from David's theological brain, it gushed out of a broken heart. And afterward it refreshed David's heart with praise, thanksgiving, cleansing, restored joy, renewed spirit, and gladness.

This event seems like a BIG sin, but if the truth be told there are no LITTLE sins. I believe that the difference in sins in God's mind has to do with the gravity of the consequences. You've probably heard someone say, "If you were the only person on earth and only told one lie in your life, Jesus would have had to die on the Cross to pay the penalty for that one sin." Although that isn't a verse in the Bible here is a verse that comes close.

"There shall in no wise enter into it any thing that defileth,
neither whatsoever worketh abomination,
[or maketh a lie:](#)
but they which are written in the Lamb's book of life.

Revelation 21.27

The Lord's brother James said pretty much the same thing.

Whosoever shall keep the whole Law,
[and yet offend in one point,](#)
he is guilty of all.

James 2:10

God's holiness has obligated Him to withhold blessings from His disobedient children.

Whom the Lord loveth He [chasteneth](#).
but if ye be without chastisement. . .then are ye bastards, and not sons.
Hebrews 12.6,8

Many true believers are living with a sloppy idea of confession. They may think of God as the kindly grandfather who accepts any form of admission of guilt as sufficient. They believe all we have to do is tell God we were wrong and all will be forgiven even if they are making plans to do the same thing tomorrow.

Interestingly, although the Catholic priest cannot forgive sins, the Roman Catholic dogma for a true confession has the implicit meaning of not only acknowledgement, but also must include the heart cry of ". . .and I don't ever want to commit that sin again."

It is easy to abuse grace. The Corinthian church was rebuked 14 times for an assortment of spiritual crimes, yet they seem to have been smug about tolerating those sins.

Confession comes from the Greek word homo-logeo = "speak" + "same"

This Word means that we are to say about our sin the same thing that God says: ungodly, unrighteous, wicked, evil, and corrupt. Sin is not accidental. We don't just happen to commit adultery. We know when we are lying. Uncontrolled anger is not always premeditated but we recognize it is wrong when it explodes. It is true that on occasion we have all done something wrong but did not realize it had been forbidden by God. Our confession comes late but God expects that we admit it and also forsake it, Proverbs 28.13.

God is obligated to withhold blessings from those who sin without confession. Some have argued that sometimes the consequences don't always seem to fit the crime in Scripture. It looks too harsh to disallow Moses to enter the Promised Land for simply striking the rock instead of speaking to it, Numbers 20.11. Again, 4 million Hebrews were forced to spend 40 years wandering in the wilderness because they were afraid to enter a land occupied by giants, Numbers 14. And thirty-six men died at Ai because Achan had stolen a bar of gold. Another time Jesus seemed too lenient to the adulteress by saying, "Go and sin no more," John 8. David seemingly got away with the murder of Uriah with a mere slap on the wrist, II Sam 11. though his child died, while Moses got away with no recorded consequences for killing an Egyptian, Exodus 2.

"Shall not the Judge of all the earth do right?" Gen 18.25. Every parent has learned that he/she corrects different children in different ways. Let God do whatever chastening He cares to dish out. God's ways are not our ways, Isaiah 55. We expect chastening if we "regard sin in our hearts," Proverbs 28.13, but we fully expect no punishment when we confess immediately and forsake immediately.

God must have many ways of dealing with His stubborn children. He may withhold a job promotion from one, bring cancer to another, and send a nasty neighbor to live next door to another. I have two friends who have admitted to me they knew that they were being punished by God's loving hand by broken leg bones, others by overwhelming lack of joy, and another by allowing him to marry a godless mate. In each case the chastening worked and they were restored. Yes, several had to endure long term consequences, but their deep confession brought full forgiveness. In my own life I try to confess sin immediately and deeply. I can recall a time while I was witnessing to an unbeliever and I told a blatant lie. Some might call it a fib, an exaggeration, but the Holy Spirit's hand pressed hard on me and I immediately, but silently with deep contrition, confessed that lie with a promise not to do it again. Another time I was pulling a work trailer behind my car. I knew its brake lights did not work when I picked it up. That's illegal of course. I traveled seven miles and it was as if the Holy Spirit whispered in my hear, "Phil, I'm disappointed in you. Stop the car right now!" I stopped, left the trailer by the side of the road, went home to pick up my trailer lights. Oh, what a relief! No chastening except the short, painful broken fellowship with my Savior.

You've probably done the same kind of thing yourself, I suppose.

A friend of mine in ministry walked boldly, but surreptitiously, into adultery and stayed there for years. Eventually he quit. When asked how others could avoid his travesty he simply said, "Take care of little sins."

Yes, any believer can camp out in sin. That's the reason Paul strongly warns us, "Let not sin therefore reign in your mortal body, that ye should obey it in the lusts thereof," Rom 6:12. Sin can reign or God would not have commanded us so strongly to avoid it. If we can spend a whole afternoon holding a grudge, then we could continue doing it for two days. If for days, there is nothing to stop us from holding a grudge for two weeks, or two months, or two years. The Holy Spirit does not have a button He can push to prevent sin from reigning. That is our choice alone.

May we all be faithful in immediate deep confession so that the Lord can be "faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness," I John 1:9. What a blessing to learn to enjoy the washing which comes with contrition, confession, and forsaking.

Amen.