

Art Of Confessing Sin

Introduction.

1. If we were to ask the question, "How many remember the day you were baptized?" I am sure that most of us remember that grand day. It was a day of joy and happiness. It was wonderful to know that the blood of Christ had washed away all our sins. It was wonderful to realize that we would never have to give account for those sins. It was wonderful to know that we would never be punished for those sins. It was wonderful to know that we had started our march to heaven.
2. **But here is a problem.**
 - a. All of us have sinned many times since that grand day when we were baptized into Christ.
 - 1) Some or most of us have sinned often and terribly after our baptism.
 - 2) We have shamed ourselves.
 - 3) We have shamed others, and most of all we have shamed God.
 - b. **Many of us may have lost the joy of salvation.**
 - 1) We no longer feel the joy we once had.
 - 2) We feel remorseful and sinful and do not feel we are still on the march to heaven.
3. **But here is the good news.** The joy we once had can be restored. God has made provision whereby we can have joy by having the continual cleansing of our sins by the blood of Christ.
 - a. This joy does not come by being baptized again. It is not God's will that we be baptized again and again.
 - b. This joy comes from confessing our sins to God and knowing He has forgiven us.
 - c. **This is what God's word teaches us to do.**
 - 1) Jesus commended the sinner in the temple because he prayed. "God be merciful to me a sinner."
 - 2) **The apostle John gave this assurance to Christians.** (1 Jn. 1:7, 9).
 - a) John assures us that God will forgive all our sins.
 - b) Just as we were raised from the watery grave of baptism, cleansed by the blood of Jesus, so we can rise from our prayers knowing that we have been cleansed from all unrighteousness!
5. **With this in mind, let study together the 51st psalm.**
 - a. In this psalm we have what David wrote after he was guilty of adultery with Bathsheba.
 - 1) In this psalm of David we see that he genuinely poured out his heart to God.

2) We know from other scriptures that God forgave him of his sins.

b. **David** also provides us an example of **how one should confess his sins to God**.

1) He provides what I like to call "The Art Of Confessing Our Sins."

2) He tells us how one should go about confessing his sins to God.

Appeal To God's Mercy and Love

1. David teaches us we must appeal to God's mercy and love. (Psa. 51:1,2).

Ps 51:1 Be gracious to me, O God, according to Your lovingkindness; According to the greatness of Your compassion blot out my transgressions.

Ps 51:2 Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity And cleanse me from my sin.

2. **Note the basis of David's plea for forgiveness.**

a. He does not seek it on the basis of his kingship or personal merits or vast wealth.

b. David sought forgiveness based upon God's lovingkindness and tender mercies.

3. The pardon we seek should have God's mercy and love as its basis.

a. We must not think for a moment that God's forgiveness is based on our worthiness or merit.

b. Forgiveness is on the basis of God's goodness and grace.

c. It would be good for us to keep in mind the **parable of the Pharisee and publican**. (Lk. 18:9-14).

Acknowledge Sins To God

1. David acknowledged his sins to God. (Psa. 51:3, 4).

Ps 51:3 For I know my transgressions, And my sin is ever before me.

Ps 51:4 Against You, You only, I have sinned And done what is evil in Your sight, So that You are justified when You speak And blameless when You judge.

2. Note how David acknowledged his sins.

a. He did not try to hide them, but cried out "my sin is ever before me."

b. He admitted that it was a sin against God Himself: "Against Thee, Thee only, I have sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight."

1) It is true he had sinned against Bathsheba, Uriah, his own wife.

2) David knew that it was ultimately against God Himself!

3. **He accepted the condemnation of God against him delivered by Nathan**. (1 Sam. 12:1-13).

- a. He knew God was both "just" and blameless" in judging him.
 - b. He knew Nathan was obeying God in delivering the message of condemnation.
4. **It is imperative that we acknowledge our sins.**
- a. It is not enough simply to be aware we are sinners. It is not enough to admit we are sinners.
 - b. Neither is it right to fault God for our sins.
 - 1) We are the ones guilty.
 - 2) We are the ones who sinned against the Holy God.
 - 3) We must confess our sins to God.

Understand Where We Are And Where God Wants Us

- 1, We must understand where we are and where God wants us. (51:5-6)

Ps 51:5 Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, And in sin my mother conceived me.
 Ps 51:6 Behold, You desire truth in the innermost being, And in the hidden part You will make me know wisdom.

2. Until forgiven one is in deep sin facing its great consequences.
- a. Using hyperboles are common in poetic language, and David, using this language describes, the depravity in which he found himself.
 - b. He was not trying to escape responsibility by saying he was born that way; only that he knew he was utterly sinful.
 - c. He was brought forth in a world of sin and, as a free moral agent, had sinned.
 - d. He was not claiming his conception was sinful and he had been born out of wedlock.
3. **David knew God wanted much more than excuses or mere outward faith.**
- a. David knew what God wanted. He wanted "truth in the inward parts" and "wisdom in the hidden parts."
 - b. This is figurative language illustrating that truth and wisdom are to be as pervasive in him as sin had been!
 - c. David knew that God desired to provide more than just forgiveness.
 - 1) God desires total restoration, with understanding and wisdom on our part.
 - 2) He desires that we be equipped for faithful service.

Prayed For Renewal And Restoration

1. David next prayed for renewal and restoration. (Psa. 51:7-12).

Ps 51:7 Purify me with hyssop, and I shall be clean; Wash me, and I shall be whiter than snow.

Ps 51:8 Make me to hear joy and gladness, Let the bones which You have broken rejoice.

Ps 51:9 Hide Your face from my sins And blot out all my iniquities.

Ps 51:10 Create in me a clean heart, O God, And renew a steadfast spirit within me.

Ps 51:11 Do not cast me away from Your presence And do not take Your Holy Spirit from me.

Ps 51:12 Restore to me the joy of Your salvation And sustain me with a willing spirit

2. David prayed for forgiveness using figurative language.

a. To purge him with hyssop - Psa 51:7	c. To hide His face from his sins - Psa 51:9
b. To wash him whiter than snow - Psa 51:7	d. To blot out all his iniquities - Psa 51:9

3. Yes, David wanted to be forgiven, but he desired more than the forgiveness of sins.

a. He wanted **joy and gladness**. (Psa. 51:8). See above.

b. He wanted **a new heart**, and **renewal of a steadfast spirit**. (Psa. 51:10). See above.

c. He wanted **continuation of God's presence and Spirit**. (Psa. 51:11,12). See above.

4. As we ask God for forgiveness, we should look to God for more than just forgiveness!

a. We should also ask for a complete renewal and total restoration!

b. A return to "the joy of salvation" (that joy experienced when we first obeyed the gospel)!

Resolve To Offer Grateful Service

1. David resolved to offer grateful service. (Psa. 51:13-17)

a. He resolves to teach other sinners and transgressors. (Psa 51:13).

13 Then I will teach transgressors Thy ways, And sinners will be converted to Thee.

b. He resolves to praise God for His righteousness in delivering him from sin. (Psa 51:14-15).

Ps 51:14 Deliver me from bloodguiltiness, O God, the God of my salvation; {Then} my tongue will joyfully sing of Your righteousness. Ps 51:15 O Lord, open my lips, That my mouth may declare Your praise.

1) He knew that God delights in something more than animal sacrifices. (Psa.51:16).

16 For Thou dost not delight in sacrifice, otherwise I would give it; Thou art not pleased with burnt offering.

2) He knew a broken and contrite heart is what really pleases God. (Psa 51:17).

17 The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; A broken and a contrite heart, O God, Thou wilt not despise.

2. As we confess our sins we should look beyond obtaining forgiveness for past sin.
 - a. We should look beyond obtaining forgiveness for past sin.
 - b. We should look beyond obtaining present joy and gladness of heart.
 - c. We should be making commitments regarding future service.

Prayed For God's Purposes

1. David finally, at the end of this psalm, prayed for God's purposes. (Psa. 51:18-19)

Ps 51:18 By Your favor do good to Zion; Build the walls of Jerusalem.
Ps 51:19 Then You will delight in righteous sacrifices, In burnt offering and whole burnt offering; Then young bulls will be offered on Your altar.

2. He prayed that God would fulfill His purpose for Zion (Jerusalem). (Psa 51:18).
 - a. He prayed that God would be pleased with Israel's sacrifices. (Psa 51:19).
 - b. Thus his confession of sin ends with a desire for that which pleases God.
3. As we confess our sins, we should not be selfish, praying for only our needs.
4. **What about God's desires?** His purposes?
 - a. As Jesus taught us in "The Lord's Prayer," it is important to pray for God's will to be our own will. (Matt. 6:10).
 - b. We should pray "Thy Will be done on earth, as it is in heaven."

Conclusion.

1. I hope I have not made the practice of confessing sins sound complicated.
 - a. Certainly there are occasions where a simple "I have sinned..." may suffice.
 - b. This is illustrated in the prayer of the tax collector. (Lk 18:13-14).
2. Yet if we desire to be less self-centered in confessing our sins, we can follow David's example:

a. Appeal to God's mercy and lovingkindness	d. Pray for renewal and restoration
b. Acknowledge our sins to God	e. Resolve to offer grateful service
c. Understand where we are and where God wants us	f. Pray for God's purposes

3. By praying as David did, we are sure to experience forgiveness itself and the joy of forgiveness.
 - a. The Christian who confesses his sins is a truly happy individual .

b. He can live with confidence of eternal life with God.

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