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Tools for Discipleship – Confession

1 John 1:8-10; James 5:16; Proverbs 28:13

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Using This Study

❶ EXAMINE His Word

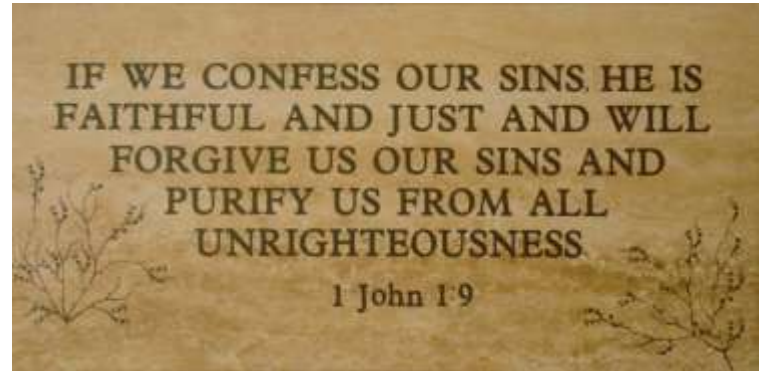
What does God SAY? Open your time with prayer. The words God uses to communicate matters, so go back and pay close attention to the details that are emphasized or repeated in the passage.

❷ EXPLORE His Word

What does God MEAN? Asking questions of the text helps surface how the details relate to the message God wants to communicate.

❸ EMBRACE His Word

Why does it MATTER to me? Embrace God by responding to what you discover in His word in faith and obedience.



This week our tool for discipleship is confession. Confession is something that many Christians overlook, especially those that are not part of the high church. Confession can be very scary at times, especially when we feel that someone may judge us for what we have done; it seems easier to just keep it between us and God. However, there are some very important aspects of confession that should not be overlooked. We have clear instruction from the Bible to confess our sins. Today we will look at some of the benefits and reasons that we should value the chance to confess our sins, knowing that Jesus Christ is ready and waiting to forgive us.



EXAMINE His Word (Observation)

What does God SAY? Prayerfully note significant details and terms emphasized in these passages.

Read 1 John 1:8-10 (NET)

⁸ If we say we do not bear the guilt of sin, we are deceiving ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ But if we confess our sins, he is faithful and righteous, forgiving us our sins and cleansing us from all unrighteousness. ¹⁰ If we say we have not sinned, we make him a liar and his word is not in us.

Read James 5:16 (NET)

So confess your sins to one another and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great effectiveness.

Read Proverbs 28:13 (NET)

The one who covers his transgressions will not prosper,
but whoever confesses them and forsakes them will find mercy.

1. Who is involved in the text? Author, audience, main characters.
2. Where and when is this taking place? Geography and timeline.
3. What actions are carried out or commanded? Look for the verbs.
4. Is there anything repeated?

5. What is emphasized?

6. Is there anything in these passages that is related to other areas of scripture?

7. Are there things to be noted that are alike or unlike such as similes and metaphors?

🕒 **EXPLORE His Word (Interpretation)**

What does God MEAN?

8. According to 1 John 1:8, 10, who has sins that they need to confess?

9. In 1 John 1:9, what is the result of confessing our sins?

10. Who should we confess our sins to?

11. Do you think confession is something we should all practice? Why or why not?

12. When someone confesses sins to you, how should you respond?

13. Do you know any examples of people in the Bible practicing confession?

③ **EMBRACE His Word (Application)**

Why does this MATTER to me?

14. Dietrich Bonhoeffer writes in his book, *The Cost of Discipleship*, “A man who confesses his sins in the presence of a brother knows that he is no longer alone with himself; he experiences the presence of God in the reality of the other person. As long as I am by myself in the confession of my sins everything remains in the dark, but in the presence of a brother the sin has to be brought into the light.” What parts of this quote do you agree with? Are there parts you disagree with?

15. a. What are some of the reasons that people do not practice confession?

b. How can we overcome these challenges?

Challenge for the week: With someone that you trust, confess the sin that you are struggling with and ask them to pray for you, creating a deeper, more meaningful community.

Summarize your thoughts on the passage:

Write about what God wants you to KNOW, to FEEL, and to DO...

SERMON NOTES