

ActNow! (Applying Christ's Teaching NOW) follows the weekly sermon series of TPMC, and challenges us to apply and put into practice the biblical truths we hear each week. It is the recommended Bible discussion material for TPMC's Connect Groups, and leader's notes are available to all Connect Group Leaders and at the Information Counter.

Sermon Series: Spiritual Disciplines Part 2: Confession

1 John 1:5-9

Rev. Benjamin Lee

SERMON SYNOPSIS

- **Confession is vital for the soul to draw close to God.** Confession restores our relationship, fellowship & communion with God because Jesus paid the penalty for our sins in His death on the Cross and His resurrection and the Gift of the Holy Spirit assures us of the promise of living life abundantly.
- **Why do we confess? We confess our sins because...**
 - ✓ **Wrongdoing creates a distance in a relationship.** Isaiah 59:2 explicitly teaches us that our sins separate us from God, but this does not stop God from loving us; God continues to love us despite our sin! God desires and delights to forgive. It is a myth to think that God is reluctant & stingy to forgive. Scripture tells us that the Cross is the *supreme demonstration* of God's love. God the Father's heart is eager to restore us, as seen in the parable of the prodigal son, where the father runs to embrace his wayward son who repented (Luke 15:20–24). True confession propels us to work towards not sinning again willingly and resolutely!
 - ✓ **Confession helps us to live & grow in holiness.** When we reflect about situations we are in, relationships &/or events we have in our lives *in God's presence* and *through His Holy Word*, we will be convicted by the Holy Spirit of sins – *sins of commission* (the wrongs we commit) and *sins of omission* (the good we fail to do). And when we confess our sins, we choose to repent and ask God to sanctify us anew. And the Holy Spirit will shape us into Christ's likeness. Hence, humility is vital for confession. But if a person says that he/she has no sin, he/she is living in self-deception (1 John 1:8 & Isaiah 53:6). Conversely, when one confesses his/her sins, he/she is walking in God's Truth. Ultimately, confession is God's gift for growth, leading us into holiness and deeper fellowship with Him.
 - ✓ **Confession is taught by Jesus!** This teaching is recorded for us in Matthew 6:12 as part of the Lord's Prayer, "*Forgive us our debts*" (NKJV), showing that confession is a *regular aspect* in our communing with God the Father who is holy. Confession is thus *not* optional, but essential. So, if we think we no longer need to confess since Jesus has died and has forgiven our sins once-and-for-all, this is not true. In fact, when we confess our sins, we are obeying Christ and this is evidence of our love for Him (John 14:15).
- **How to practice confession in daily life.** Confession is an essential practice, both personally and within the church. At the Lord's Table, we repent, remembering Christ's sacrifice and receiving His grace. Daily devotionals like Lectio 365 and the Lord's Prayer help us recognize sin and realign our hearts. Apostle James encourages us to "confess *your* trespasses to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed" (cf. James 5:16 NKJV). Confessing our sins to a pastor or trusted friends keeps us honest, strengthens our faith and cultivates healthy accountability. Confession is God's gift to us to restore us into fellowship & intimacy with Him.

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DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

RELATE

1. What are some obstacles or hesitations you have personally faced when considering confessing a wrongdoing to a spiritual leader or trusted friends? How have you tried to overcome those challenges, or what do you think would help?

REFLECT

2. Read 1 John 1:9 & the heartfelt confessions of Daniel & David in Daniel 9:4-5 and Psalm 51:1-4.
 - (a) How does the promise of God's forgiveness in these Scripture passages shape your own willingness to confess your sin?
 - (b) What do these Scripture passages reveal about the character of God and His readiness to restore us and His fellowship with us and us with Him?

RESPOND

3. Reflecting on John Wesley's accountability questions mentioned during the sermon, which one speaks most directly to your personal walk with Christ today? What is one small, intentional step you can take this week to grow in that area?

John Wesley's Accountability Questions:

- (1) What known sins have you committed since our last meeting?
- (2) What temptations have you met with?
- (3) How were you delivered?
- (4) What have you thought, said, or done, of which you doubt whether it be sin or not?
- (5) Is there anything you desire to keep secret?

PRAYER POINTERS

- Praise the Lord who is faithful and just to forgive our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness through Jesus Christ our Lord.
- Ask God to grant us His grace that we will confess our sins to Him & to individuals whom we trust in obedience to Christ's teaching showing our love for Him.

SCRIPTURE TO MEDITATE ON

"If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us *our* sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

[1 John 1:8-9 NKJV]