

“The Key is Confession” Nehemiah

9:1-6

Confession of sin is the key to personal revival. Let's get a clean start in 2019!

1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

1. CONFESSION IS SEPARATION (NEHEMIAH 9:1-2)

A. Separating from a normal life of comfort (Verse 1)

- i. This wasn't just a religious act. They were troubled by their sin, and they were willing to let it affect their normal way of life. They didn't care what people thought, they wanted to change.
- ii. *James 4:8–10 Draw near to God, and he will draw near to you. Cleanse your hands, you sinners, and purify your hearts, you double-minded. 9 Be wretched and mourn and weep. Let your laughter be turned to mourning and your joy to gloom. 10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will exalt you.*

B. Separating from the sins, people, and lifestyle that you're confessing (Verse 2)

- i. *2 Corinthians 6:17–7:1 Therefore go out from their midst, and be separate from them, says the Lord, and touch no unclean thing; then I will welcome you, 18 and I will be a father to you, and you shall be sons and daughters to me, says the Lord Almighty.” 1 Since we have these promises, beloved, let us cleanse ourselves from every defilement of body and spirit, bringing holiness to completion in the fear of God.*

2. CONFESSION IS AFFIRMATION (NEHEMIAH 9:2-3)

A. Admitting we are responsible for our sins. They “confessed” (Verse 2b, 3b, 33)

- i. *Psalm 51:3–4 For I know my transgressions, and my sin is ever before me. 4 Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight...*
- ii. *Psalm 32:5 I acknowledged my sin to you, and I did not cover my iniquity; I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD,” and you forgave the iniquity of my sin...*
- iii. *“Few things accelerate the peace process as much as humbly admitting our own wrongdoing and asking forgiveness.” - Lee Strobel*

3. CONFESSION IS REVELATION (NEHEMIAH 9:3 [AND ALL OF CHAPTER 8])

A. The Bible, God's revelation, shows us what's right and wrong, and instructs us on what we should do now.

- i. Hebrews 4:12–13 For the word of God is living and active, sharper than any two-edged sword, piercing to the division of soul and of spirit, of joints and of marrow, and discerning the thoughts and intentions of the heart. 13 And no creature is hidden from his sight, but all are naked and exposed to the eyes of him to whom we must give account.*

4. CONFESSION IS EXALTATION (NEHEMIAH 9:3, 5-6)

A. Confession isn't self-centered. Put God into the equation, or confession turns into depression.

- i. Psalms 27:13 I would have lost heart, unless I had believed That I would see the goodness of the LORD In the land of the living.*

5. CONFESSION IS IMITATION (NEHEMIAH 9:4-5)

A. Leaders are the example and guides during confession.

- i. 1 Timothy 1:15 The saying is trustworthy and deserving of full acceptance, that Christ Jesus came into the world to save sinners, of whom I am the foremost.*
- ii. Ephesians 3:8 To me, though I am the very least of all the saints, this grace was given, to preach to the Gentiles the unsearchable riches of Christ,*
- iii. Nehemiah 1:6 let your ear be attentive and your eyes open, to hear the prayer of your servant that I now pray before you day and night for the people of Israel your servants, confessing the sins of the people of Israel, which we have sinned against you. Even I and my father's house have sinned.*

B. Healthy Churches encourage honesty and authenticity. Let's stop pretending we are better than we are and confess where we are weak.

- i. "In some churches, nobody admits anything. Confession would be foolhardy, because it would be used as evidence against, rather than for, a person. If not dead already, such a church eventually will be. But God welcomes all of us sinners to confess and get free forever. It's like being born again again." – Ray Ortlund*
- ii. 1 John 1:9 If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*