

FREEDOM - Part 1

Confession

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Part of FreedomConfession & Forgiveness

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This necessity to know where we really are is true in so many areas of our lives.

A lot of what God will do in our lives as Christians depends on us starting from a place of honesty and truth about what we're struggling with.

Jesus: "And you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."

—John 8:32 (NLT)

Until I face the truth, until I confess what my real situation is, my situation is not going to get noticeably better, and I won't find freedom.

Many times, honesty starts with myself, because not only can I deceive *you*, but I can easily deceive *myself* and fail to face what's really working against me.

A roadmap doesn't work unless you *know* your starting point.

Confession is identifying where I am.

When you are guilty, you must confess the sin.

—Leviticus 5:5 (TEV)

O LORD, you have examined my heart and know everything about me. You know when I sit down or stand up. You know my thoughts even when I'm far away. You see me when I travel and when I rest at home. You know everything I do. You know what I am going to say even before I say it, LORD. You go before me and follow me. You place your hand of blessing on my head. Such knowledge is too wonderful for me, too great for me to understand! I can never escape from your Spirit! I can never get away from your presence! If I go up to heaven, you are there; if I go down to the grave, you are there. If I ride the wings of the morning, if I dwell by the farthest oceans, even there your hand will guide me, and your strength will support me. I could ask the darkness to hide me and the light around me to become night— but even in darkness I cannot hide from you....

—Psalms 139:1-12 (NLT)

Confession is acknowledging and taking responsibility for what God already knows.

You saw me before I was born. Every day of my life was recorded in your book. Every moment was laid out before a single day had passed.

—Psalms 139:16 (NLT)

Point out anything in me that offends you, and lead me along the path of everlasting life.

—Psalms 139:24 (NLT)

It is David's desire that God help him see and recognize all his sins.

We need to not only confess the sins we know but also ask God to show us the ones we don't see.

What Happens If We Don't Confess?

- 1. God often chooses not to act in our lives when there is unconfessed sin.**

For I cried out to (God) for help, praising him as I spoke. If I had not confessed the sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened.

—Psalms 66:17-18 (NLT)

- 2. Unconfessed sin affects our relationships and even our health.**

When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long.

—Psalms 32:3 (NLT)

- 3. There's no real release from guilt.**

My guilt overwhelms me—it is a burden too heavy to bear.

—Psalms 38:4 (NLT)

Oh, what joy for those whose disobedience is forgiven, whose sin is put out of sight! Yes, what joy for those whose record the LORD has cleared of guilt, whose lives are lived in complete honesty! When I refused to confess my sin, my body wasted away, and I groaned all day long. Day and night your hand of discipline was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water in the summer heat. Finally, I confessed all my sins to you and stopped

trying to hide my guilt. I said to myself, 'I will confess my rebellion to the LORD.' And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone. ... The LORD says, 'I will guide you along the best pathway for your life. I will advise you and watch over you. ... Many sorrows come to the wicked, but unfailing love surrounds those who trust the LORD.

—Psalms 32:1-5, 8, 10 (NLT)

Forgiveness is God's answer to our sins, and it's only possible if we confess.

Sometimes we seek forgiveness too quickly.

How Do I Confess?

- 1. In prayer, I admit my own sins, being as specific as I can be.**
- 2. Ask God to reveal to me my sins.**
- 3. In many cases, we need to confess our sins to another.**

Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed. The prayer of a person living right with God is something powerful to be reckoned with.

—James 5:16 (Message)

But if we confess our sins to him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all wickedness.

—1 John 1:9 (NLT)

Confession isn't a one-time event but an ongoing practice

for the Christian who wants to become more and more like Jesus.

What astonishes me... is the prodigious effect a real confession can have. Very often it is not only the decisive religious experience of freedom from guilt, but... the sudden cure of the physical or psychological illness. Sometimes in less than an hour there occurs in a patient I am seeing for the first time and to whom I have spoken but a few words, a release from psychological tension which I should have been proud to obtain after months of therapy

—Dr. Paul Tournier

People who conceal their sins will not prosper, but if they confess and turn from them, they will receive mercy.

—Proverbs 28:13 (NLT)

Next Week - Freedom: Forgiveness