

Life Group Guide: “Confession”

Dates: 1/19/20- 1/25/20

Focus: Until we learn to be our full self with God, there will be hard limits on how we can grow, and in our relationships with others. Confession in prayer is not an exercise in heaping shame on ourselves; it’s God’s way of healing us and reconciling us back to him. A life lived without confession allows toxic things to take root in our heart, while blocking the growth of God’s healthy things.

Video:

Show the video. It is about 4 minutes long. It will set up the conversation on confession

Scripture: 1 John 1:5-10

Light and Darkness, Sin and Forgiveness

5 This is the message we have heard from him and declare to you: God is light; in him there is no darkness at all. **6** If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. **7** But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

8 If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. **9** If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. **10** If we claim we have not sinned, we make him out to be a liar and his word is not in us.

Reflection Time

- We recommend taking about 4-5 minutes for people to reflect after the passage. But before you do, say something like:
 - “I encourage you to first take a couple minutes to reflect on this passage and the video, come up with any questions, connections, or what the passage says to you tonight.”

Questions for Discussion:

*Remember to mark the questions that are most pertinent **before** you gather.*

Question: This passage references the theme of “light and darkness” many times to describe a reality about the nature of God. How do you interpret the imagery of light and darkness in this passage?

(LEADERS: *Many people will jump to the idea that light and darkness represents good and evil- there is no evil in God, and he walks in the light. In addition to this, light and darkness also represents honesty and transparency. In God there is no deceit or hidden bad intentions. This passage is encouraging followers of God to walk in the light, which is valuable for understanding the verse about confession at the end of the passage. Interject these thoughts if the conversation allows.*)

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Question: Verse 6 states that if we claim to know God, but still walk in darkness, we are being dishonest with ourselves and do not live out the truth. What do you think this looks like in our everyday lives?

Question: Verse 9 puts a high value on confessing our sins to God. If God knows our every action, why do you think it is important for us to still share this information with Him?

(LEADERS: *In order for healing and reconciliation to happen in any relationship, honesty has to be present. We have to be honest with ourselves, and honest with God. Coming clean opens a door that a heart of denial never can.*)

Question: Verse 7 tells us that walking in the light (transparency and righteousness) of God brings many benefits, including fellowship. Do you see a connection between confessing our sins to God, and the health of our community with others? Why or why not?

Question: What do you think verse 9 tells us about the character of God? Do you think that most people in the church view God that way? Does our culture view God that way?

Observation: We can see from this passage that sin creates a rift between us and God, us and our community, and even a rift within ourselves. Sometimes it can be very difficult to confront the consequences of what we have done, and we save ourselves pain by pretending nothing has happened.

Question: What are ways that you personally tend to “hide” from God when you have messed up? (eg- get really busy, withdraw from spiritual community, stop praying, medicate with distractions)

Question: Verse 9 says that God is both faithful and just when responding to our sin, and that he will be the one who “purifies.” What are the hard parts about being purified? How have you experienced this in your own life?

Question: Have you ever had an experience of finding freedom through confessing something (either to God or to someone you have wronged)?

Prayer:

(LIFE GROUP LEADERS): *Take this opportunity to facilitate a time of prayer for your group. Read the room- maybe you feel there might be an openness to some silent time of responding to the content of tonight’s discussion. If not, ask if there are any prayer requests for the week, and find group members who are willing to pray for them in a large group setting.*