

## CONFESSON OF SIN

- I. Biblical statements.
  - A. General.
    - Lev. 5:5 - "he shall confess that in which he has sinned"
    - Numb. 5:7 - "he shall confess his sins..., make restitution..."
    - Prov. 28:13 - "he who confesses and forsakes his transgressions will find compassion."
    - Acts 19:18 - "many kept coming and confessing and disclosing their practices."
    - James 5:16 - "confess your sins to one another"
    - I John 1:9 - "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins."
  - B. Examples.
    - Ps. 32:5 - "I acknowledge my sin to Thee...I will confess my transgressions to the Lord."
    - Ps. 38:18 - "I confess my iniquity"
    - Isa. 6:5 - "Woe is me...I am a man of unclean lips"
    - Luke 15:21 - "I have sinned against heaven and in your sight"
    - Luke 18:13 - "God, be merciful to me, the sinner!"
- II. Defining confession.
  - A. Greek word *homologeo* means "to say the same thing," to agree, concur.
  - B. What confession of sin is NOT:
    - 1. Informing a human priest in the confession booth.
    - 2. Giving God information. "God, You won't believe what I've done."
    - 3. Speculating. "IF...I have sinned..."    "I have...."
    - 4. Saying "I'm sorry..."    "...just a joke!"
    - 5. Asking/pleading to God for forgiveness for our sins. Forgiveness already available in Christ's death.
    - 6. Plea-bargaining for a lesser charge. "Yes...but...."
    - 7. Emotional groveling; mental contortions.
    - 8. Psychological catharsis. "Feel good when you get it off your chest"
    - 9. Superficial or flippant incantation. (Sin was reason for Jesus' death).
    - 10. "Confessionalism" - (Excessive sin-consciousness; wallowing in weakness; focusing on 'flesh'; navel-gazing introspection; "Worm-theology"; Pride of sinfulness; back-handed basis of spirituality; exhibitionism; revel in relating sinfulness in testimony; Who was the worst?)
    - 11. Based on false established attitudes which create false-guilt and false-confession. Some try to agree with God that something is wrong, when God never said it is sin. But, if not done in faith, it is sin. (Rom. 14:23).
  - C. Confession is...
    - 1. Ceasing to deceive ourselves - I John 1:8
    - 2. Ceasing to continue the defense mechanisms of denial, avoidance, distortion, cover-up.
    - 3. Calling sin "sin." Calling a spade a spade!
    - 4. To recognize, admit, acknowledge, concede and declare our guilt of sin.

5. Part of repentance. A change of mental attitude leading to changed behavioral action.
6. Inclusive of asking forgiveness for wronging another person.
7. Inclusive of restitution - Numb. 5:7; Lk. 19:8

**III. Defining sin.**

- A. Anything contrary to character of God.
- B. Any activity not done in faith (Rom. 14:23), and thus not derived from God.
- C. May include hidden, secret, unknown sins
  - Ps. 19:12,13 - "hidden faults"
  - Ps. 90:8 - "our secret sins"
  - Eccl. 12:14 - "everything which is hidden"
- D. May include besetting sins; habituated, life-dominating sins (Heb. 12:1,2)

**IV. Practical concerns of confession of sin.**

- A. To whom do we confess our sin?
  1. To those wronged by our sin. Sphere of confession only as broad as context of sin.
    - a. Intrapersonal sin confessed to God alone. (Ps. 32:5; Prov. 28:13; I John 1:9)
    - b. Private interpersonal sin confessed to God and the one sinned against. (Matt. 5:23,24; James 5:16).
    - c. Public interpersonal sin confessed to God and those affected. (II Cor. 2:6; James 5:16).
- B. How long should we go before confessing sin?
  1. Unconfessed sin in past needs to be dealt with.  
(Eccl. 3:15; Phil. 3:13)
  2. Is God keeping ledger book of our sins? Those who encourage keeping "short sin accounts" seem to imply such.
  3. Confessing sin is like reacting to a stumbling on sidewalk.  
(Quick down; quick up!)
  4. Confessing sin is like rebounding a missed basketball shot.
- C. What happens if our sins is not confessed?
  1. Does unconfessed sin affect...
    - a. Our redemption? (Isa. 59:2; Rom. 8:39)
    - b. Our salvation? (Prov. 28:13)
    - c. Our sanctification?
    - d. Our eternal destiny?
    - e. Our physical well-being? (Ps. 32:3)
    - f. Our psychological well-being? (Ps. 32:4)
    - g. Our prayer-life? (Isa. 59:2; 66:18)
  2. Confession of sin is not a "work" that has any merit before God.
- D. What if a person doesn't feel forgiven after he confesses his sin?
  1. We do not live by feelings, but by faith.
  2. God is faithful - I John 1:9
  3. When you still feel guilty of sin
    - a. Examine the motives of your confession.
    - b. Remember that Satan is the "accuser of the brethren" (Rev. 12:10).
    - c. Have you forgiven others or asked for their forgiveness?
    - d. Have you made necessary restitution?
    3. Have you forgiven yourself? "Who will bring a charge against God's elect?" (Rom. 8:33).