

Sunday, March 14, 2010
“The Cleansing of Confession”
The Lenten Series



Ever been caught?

Has there ever been a truly memorable time in your life when you got caught doing something wrong? What kind of emotions ran through you as you realized that you were going to have to face the consequences? Did you try to lie your way out of it, or did you just “fess up”?

The story behind the story

*This week we are going to study one of the greatest “psalms of confession” ever written. But to truly understand the psalm, we need to understand the event that birthed this psalm. **Read 2 Samuel 11:1-12:25.** This is the “story behind the story”.*



Time in the Word

Two of David’s psalms seem to flow from the “Bathsheba story”—Psalm 32 and Psalm 51. The first kind of prepares us for the second. It was a time of intense and heartfelt confession. We will see both the negative and the positive sides of coming clean with God.

1. **The word—“confess”:** *comes from the Hebrew word “yadah”, which interestingly means “to agree”. It was used to agree that God is glorious (“praise”) and to agree that we are sinners (“confess”). That the word could be used in two such different ways might seem strange to us, but for Israel the praise of God is linked to our need for a savior.*
2. **Psalm 32 (read and answer)**
 - a. The beginning:
 - i. The first two verses of the Psalm proclaim a blessing—what is it? What does it mean to have one’s sins “covered”?
 - ii. What kind of person has no deceit in his spirit?
 - b. The dark moments (vs. 3-4):
 - i. Describe what is going on inside David as he tries to keep his sin silent (hidden) from God?
 - ii. Have you ever personally felt the “heavy hand of God” on you when you tried to live with hidden sin?

- c. Freedom (vs. 5)
 - i. What did David do to get free from the heavy hand of God’s judgment?
 - ii. The statement is simple—“and you forgave the guilt of my sin”. How did David know he was forgiven, and how did things change in his spirit?

3. **Psalm 51** (read and answer)

- a. Confession (vs. 3-6)

If confession is all about being honest with God and agreeing to the truth of who we really are, what things does David confess to the Lord in these verses:

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____

- b. The great request (1-2 & 7-12)

What does David ask God to do for him?

1. _____
2. _____
3. _____
4. _____
5. _____



A Call to Action

For many Christians, confession seems to be a hard thing—something we run from and not towards. Maybe it’s the shame of admitting our sins. Maybe it is a belief that our sins are too big to be forgiven. Whatever holds us back, now is the time to turn that around. Confession is the most cleansing of practices.

A Verse to meditate on every day:

1 John 1:9: “if we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness”

Personal confession: every day take some time to confess—let the Holy Spirit reveal to you the sins in your soul that should be brought to God for forgiveness. And close every session with the promise above in 1 John 1:9.

At Small Group this Week:

Here’s a little exercise you can do together. Spend some time in corporate confession. Scary?? Sure. It isn’t a time to vomit out the nitty, gritty detail of sin; but simply a time to agree with God that we need cleansed. You’ll be surprised what this will do for your group when you start getting honest on this level.

*“Seek first His kingdom and His righteousness, and all these things will be given to you as well”
(Matthew 6:33)*