

Week 9: Confession

“The Discipline of confession brings an end to pretense. God is calling into being a Church that can openly confess its frail humanity and know the forgiving and empowering graces of Christ. Honesty leads to confession, and confession leads to change” Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, pg 157.

“Every time we confess how we have missed the mark of God’s love and truth, we open ourselves up to the mending work of the cross. Jesus’ wounds hold true life-changing power. This is the shocking reality that confession can open up to us. Through confession and forgiveness we live into the truth of being God’s new creation!” Calhoun, *Spiritual Disciplines Handbook*, pg 103.

Try one or more of these (taken/adapted from Foster and Calhoun):

Foster includes some valuable guides for both confessing to others and receiving the confessions of others in his chapter on confession.

Confession through Scripture

Turn to Psalm 32 or Psalm 51. Use the psalm as a way of bringing your own sins before God. How does God meet you in these confessions of David?

Self-Examination

Set aside some time for confession and self-examination. In the presence of God ask for light to pierce your defenses. Then ask yourself, *Who have I injured recently through thoughtlessness, neglect, anger and so on?* As the Holy Spirit brings people to mind, confess your feelings about these people to God. Ask God to forgive you and if need be to give you grace to forgive them. Write an apology, make a phone call or confess out loud in an attempt to put the relationship back on track.

Uncover Blind Spots

Ask some of your family and close friends to help you see your blind spots. Ask questions like, What do I do that hurts you? How could I better love you? What is it like to be with me? Do I show interest in others or talk mostly about myself? Let their answers guide you in a time of confession.

Accountability

Enter into an accountability group where you cannot hide. Tell the truth about who you are and ask your partners to pray for you and help you change.

If you’d like to learn more about spiritual transformation and various ways to invite Holy Spirit to work in and through you, these are great places to start:

[*Sacred Pathways: Nine Ways to Connect with God*](#) by Gary Thomas

[*Sacred Rhythms: Arranging Our Lives for Spiritual Transformation*](#) by Ruth Haley Barton

[*Celebration of Discipline: The Path to Spiritual Growth*](#) by Richard J. Foster

[*Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us*](#) by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

[*Practicing the Way: Be with Jesus, Become Like Him, Do as He Did*](#) by John Mark Comer