

The Ancient Paths: Confession

Psalm 51:1-17 ❖ Luke 18:9-14

“Sin of the future appears beautiful;
the same sin, once past, looks so ugly.
Holiness is best served by honest memory.”
(Gary Thomas)

“Just As I Am”

Charlotte Elliott (1789-1871) was a gifted _____ painter until illness and _____ left her weak and bedridden in her early thirties. Her father invited a well-known Swiss _____ named Henri Malan to visit Charlotte in their home in Brighton, England. She told Dr. Malan that she did not know _____ to find Christ. He told her: “Come _____ as you are.”

Those encouraging words led Charlotte to make a profession of _____ in Jesus. Every year on that date she celebrated what she called her _____ birthday, the anniversary of the day she heeded Dr. Malan’s simple advice. (“Hymns of Faith and Inspiration,” Pamala Kennedy, p. 84) Fourteen years later, she incorporated his words into a _____ we still sing today:

“ _____ as I am, without one plea,
But that Thy _____ was shed for me,
And that Thou bidd’st me _____ to Thee,
O Lamb of God, I _____! I _____!”

Confession 101

“The Pharisee stood up and prayed about _____ ..., but the tax collector stood at a _____. He would not even look _____ to heaven, but beat his breast and said, ‘God, have mercy on me, a _____’” (Luke 18:11, 13).

When we confess our sins, we are telling God something He _____ knows, but confession is the _____ God has constructed to lead us to _____.

A church is not a country club; it is a _____ for sinners.

The first membership question is: Do you _____ yourself to be a sinner in the sight of God, justly deserving His displeasure and without _____ save in His sovereign mercy?

Types of Confession

1. Private - “Have _____ on me, O God, according to Your unfailing love” (Psalm 51:1).
2. Christian to Christian - “Confess your sins to _____ other” (James 5:16).
3. Corporate - “Many of those who believed in Jesus now came and _____ confessed their evil deeds” (Acts 19:18).

Making a Confession

When confessing to God and to others, be _____ and be _____.

“Forgiveness is essential in a community of _____ and _____ persons.” (“Study Guide for Celebration of Discipline,” Richard Foster, p. 59)

Be _____ and not just sorry that you got _____.

Receiving a Confession

Don’t act _____.

Be _____, realizing you, too, are a sinner.

Be _____ and accept the apology.

Practical Advice on Confession

“We are thirsty for a _____ conscience. We crave a _____ slate. We yearn for a _____ start.” (“The Applause of Heaven,” Max Lucado)

Two of the most important words in our religious vocabulary are “ _____.”

“ _____ we confess our sins, God is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and _____ us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9).

Just _____ it.

