

Lesson 12

CONFESS

Principle 4: Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

“Happy are the pure in heart.” (Matthew 5:8)

Step 5: We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

Think About It

After writing an inventory, we must deal with what we have written. The first way we do that is to confess our sins to God. Let's review the acrostic for CONFESS.

Confess your shortcomings, resentments, and sins

God wants us to come clean. We need to admit that “what is wrong is wrong. We're guilty as charged.” We need to own up to the sins we discovered in our inventory.

“Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.” (Proverbs 28:13)

Obey God's directions

Principle 4 sums up God's directions for confessing our sins.

1. We confess our sins to God.

*“ ‘As surely as I am the living God, says the Lord, everyone will kneel before me, and everyone will confess that I am God.’
Every one of us, then, will have to give an account to God.” (Romans 14:11 – 12, GNT)*

2. We share them with another person whom we trust:

“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)

No more guilt

This step begins to restore our confidence and our relationships and allows us to move on from our “rearview mirror” living. In Romans 8:1 we are assured that “there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus.”

“All of have sinned; . . . yet now God declares us ‘not guilty’ . . . if we trust in Jesus Christ, who . . . freely takes away our sins.” (Romans 3:23 – 24, TLB)

The “CON” is over! We have followed God's directions on how to confess our wrongs. Four very positive things start to happen after we “FESS” up.

Face the truth

Recovery requires honesty! After we complete this principle we can allow the light of God's truth to heal our hurts, hang-ups, and habits. We stop denying our true feelings.

*“Jesus . . . said, ‘I am the light of the world. Whoever follows me will never walk in darkness, but will have the light of life.’”
(John 8:12)*

“Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.” (John 8:32)

Ease the pain

“We are only as sick as our secrets!” When we share our deepest secrets we divide the pain and the shame. We begin to see a healthy self-worth develop, one that is no longer based on the world's standards, but on those of Jesus Christ.

“There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. . . . My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to you and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, ‘I will confess them to the Lord.’ And you forgave me! All my guilt is gone.” (Psalm 32:3 – 5, TLB)

Stop the blame

We cannot find peace and serenity if we continue to blame ourselves or others. Our secrets have isolated us from each other. They have prevented intimacy in all our relationships.

"Why do you look at the speck of sawdust in your brother's eye and fail to notice the plank in your own? How can you say to your brother, 'Let me get the speck out of your eye,' when there is a plank in your own? . . . Take the plank out of your own eye first, and then you can see clearly enough to remove your brother's speck of dust." (Matthew 7:3, PH)

Start accepting God's forgiveness

Once we accept God's forgiveness we can look others in the eye. We understand ourselves and our past actions in a "new light." We are ready to find the humility to exchange our shortcomings in Principle 5.

"For God was in Christ, restoring the world to himself, no longer counting men's sins against them but blotting them out." (2 Corinthians 5:19, TLB)

"But if we confess our sins, he will forgive our sins, because we can trust God to do what is right. He will cleanse us from all the wrongs we have done." (1 John 1:9, NCV)

Write About It

1. What wrongs, resentments, or secret sins are keeping you awake at night? Wouldn't you like to get rid of them?

[Your Response Here]

2. What value do you see in confessing, in coming clean of the wreckage of your past?

[Your Response Here]

3. As you obey God's directions for confession, what results do you expect God to produce in your life?

[Your Response Here]

4. What freedom do you feel because of the words of Romans 8:1 and Romans 3:23 – 24? What specifically do the phrases "no condemnation" and "not guilty" mean to you?

[Your Response Here]

5. After you complete Principle 4, you will find four areas of your life begin to improve. You will be able to face the truth, ease the pain, stop the blame, and start accepting God's forgiveness. In what areas of your life will each of these four positive changes help your recovery?

I can be more honest with . . .

[Your Response Here]

I can ease my pain by . . .

[Your Response Here]

I can stop blaming. . .

[Your Response Here]

I can accept God's forgiveness because of . . .

[Your Response Here]