

Prayer, Conversations with
God

Pray To
Confess

Lesson Ten

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Pray To Confess

Scriptures: Ezra 9:6-10; Psalm 33; 51; I John 1:8-10

Lesson Goal: To encourage learners to confess their sins to God.

Memory Verse: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

In the previous lesson, we said doing the wrong thing is just human. We are children of Adam and Eve who took the forbidden step. They sinned. We find ourselves doing what they did. We do things that are against God’s will. We do things that hurt us and/or others. Any time we sin, we sin against God, and we harm our relationship with God.

Think about it. Let’s say that when you were a child, you did something that not only is bad, but it is something that your parents had specifically told you not to do. You have done wrong, but you have also disobeyed your parents. You may hurt yourself or someone else in the process, but you definitely disappoint your father and mother. So, it is not enough to correct the result of your bad act, but to set everything right, you must also ask your parents to forgive you for disappointing them.

The Bible tells us that we must ask forgiveness for our sin. Central to Jesus’ model prayer are the words, “Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.” As previously indicated, this confession is not necessarily a listing of all the sins we have ever committed. It is recognizing the fact that God knows our sin, and in light of that, asking His forgiveness. James 5:16

It is, however, healthy and good for us to list sins that we remember. There are some sins that are so significant in our lives that confessing them is necessary. It is not so much that some sins are greater than others...sin is sin. However, some have more significance in our lives. There are sins that affect our ability to relate to God as we should. Some sins make it difficult to relate to other humans and those limit our ability to witness effectively. Some sins make our spiritual growth unhealthy. We might list some of those sins as neglecting to read God’s Word, neglecting our prayer life, lack of participation in congregational worship, and other sins of neglect.

Another aspect of confession is talking to God about that which embarrasses us. Ezra prayed, “O my God, I am too ashamed and disgraced to lift up my face to you, my God, because our sins are higher than our

Pray, Always:

To God
Through Jesus
By God’s Holy Spirit

In Thanksgiving
With Joy
For Others

For Forgiveness
For Salvation
To Confess

For Necessities
For Ability

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heads and our guilt has reached to the heavens.” Ezra was humiliated by sin and he wanted God to hear him admit it. Our sin-guilt is real. God forgives sin and relieves us of our guilt.

God is right to be angry with sin. Our sin is of our own choosing. That means that we deliberately enter into those things that are displeasing to God. Confession is admitting to God that we understand that and fully accept His gracious willingness to forgive us.

Confession is also something that we do together. The prayer of Ezra motivated others to pray. Ezra 10:1 says that a large crowd gathered around Ezra and wept bitterly. They were confessing their sins.

Sometimes this kind of public confession can become evil. When people begin to brag about their sins, insist on confessing something that seems worse than the last speaker, it is wrong. When people participate in such confession, motivated by the gathering of gossip, it is wrong. Public confession should, in the mind of this writer, be confession of public sins...sins committed by groups of people, not individuals. In other words, it is not your responsibility to confess my sins to God, nor is it my responsibility to confess your sins to God.

It is wonderful to know that God wants to hear our confession and truly wants to forgive us of our sins.

*Underlined sentences in the Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

Pray, like Jesus:

When Jesus was preaching the Sermon on the Mount, He said, “This, then is how you should pray: ‘Our Father in Heaven, hallowed be your name, your kingdom come, your will be done on earth as it is in Heaven. Give us today our daily bread. Forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from the evil one.’” Matthew 6:9-13

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Student Worksheet

Pray To Confess

Memory Verse: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” I John 1:9

>Any time we sin, we sin _____ God, and we _____ our relationship with God.

>It is not enough to _____ the result of your bad act (sin), but to set everything _____, you must also ask your parents to _____ you for disappointing them.

>Confessing to God is recognizing the fact that God _____ our sin, and in light of that, _____ His forgiveness. James 5:16

>It is healthy and good for us to list _____ that we remember when we pray.

>There are sins that affect our ability to _____ to God as we should. Some sins make it difficult to relate to other humans and those limit our ability to _____ effectively. Some sins make our spiritual _____ unhealthy.

>God _____ sin and relieves us of our _____.

>Confession is admitting to God that we _____ that sin is of our own choosing and fully accept His gracious willingness to _____ us.

>Confession is also something that we do _____.

>Public confession should be confession of _____ sins...sins committed by _____ of people, not _____.

How to begin a Personal Relationship with God:

First, believe that there is a God.

Second, believe that Jesus, God’s Son, was sent to earth to die so that you can have a relationship with God.

Third, ask God to forgive your sins in Jesus’ name. Jesus’ death on the cross paid the price of every sin you commit.

Fourth, ask Jesus to be your Savior and the Lord of your life.

Fifth, believe that He has answered your prayer and be ready to live for him all the rest of your life.