

KEY SCRIPTURE: *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*
1 John 1:9 ESV

The one who conceals his sins will not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them will find mercy. **Proverb 28:13 CSB**

From then on Jesus began to preach, *'Repent of your sins and turn to God,* for the Kingdom of Heaven is near.' **Matthew 4:17 NLT**

11 *When the king heard what was written in the Book of the Law, he tore his clothes in despair.* **12** Then he gave these orders.....**13** "Go to the Temple and speak to the Lord for me and for the people and for all Judah. Inquire about the words written in this scroll that has been found. For the Lord's great anger is burning against us *because our ancestors have not obeyed the words in this scroll. We have not been doing everything it says we must do.*" **2 Kings 22:11 & 13**

"But the Lord God called to the man and said to him, "Where are you?" And he said, "I heard the sound of you in the garden, and I was afraid, because I was naked, and I hid myself." He said, "Who told you that you were naked? Have you eaten of the tree of which I commanded you not to eat?" The man said, "The woman whom you gave to be with me, she gave me fruit of the tree, and I ate." Then the Lord God said to the woman, "What is this that you have done?" *The woman said, "The serpent deceived me, and I ate."* **Genesis 3:9-13 ESV**

"Have mercy on me, O God, according to your steadfast love; according to your abundant mercy blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin! Create in me a clean heart, O God, and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from your presence, and take not your Holy Spirit from me. Restore to me the joy of your salvation, and uphold me with a willing spirit." **Psalms 51:1-2, 10-12 ESV**

"Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person has great power as it is working."
James 5:16 ESV

Even if I caused you sorrow by my letter, I do not regret it. Though I did regret it—I see that my letter hurt you, but only for a little while— 9 yet now I am happy, not because you were made sorry, but because your sorrow led you to repentance. For you became sorrowful as God intended and so were not harmed in any way by us. 10 Godly sorrow brings repentance that leads to salvation and leaves no regret, but worldly sorrow brings death.
2 Corinthians 7:8-10 ESV

"Wounds from a sincere friend are better than many kisses from an enemy."
Proverbs 27:6 NLT

Start Reading: Pick a few of the key scriptures provided and go over them with your group. You will build off of several key Scriptures for this week's conversations.

Start Talking. Find a conversation starter for your group.

- What were some of the first changes you saw God leading you to after you got saved?

Start Thinking. Ask a question to get your group thinking.

- Read some of the prescriptive passages about confession. Based on the doctrine of confession shown in Scripture, what is the connection between confession and repentance?
- Can you think of some Biblical (good and healthy) AND unbiblical (bad and inappropriate) ways confession can be handled?
- In your own words, explain your understanding of:
 - Confessing sins to God for forgiveness
 - Confessing sins to others for healing
 - Leaving room for rebuke.

Start Sharing. Choose a question to create openness.

- In this Bible Study, we looked at several stories from Scripture that illustrate confession and freedom from sin. Which one was your favorite? How can you use that scripture to empower yourself to battle sin?
- Has your perspective on confession changed after experiencing Sunday's Bible Study, yes or no? If so, how?
- What confession barrier from this Bible Study (ignorance or pride) do you see most often in your life or the lives of others?
- As a group come up with a list of ideas to help build healthy patterns of repentant confession to God.
- How can your "community" help you be accountable to having patterns of confession?

Start Praying. Pray this prayer in your own words with your group.

Father in Heaven, we praise you for your forgiveness! Thank you for forgiving us and allowing us to go so boldly before you with our confession, knowing that you welcome us with forgiveness through Christ instead of the wrath we deserve. Against you have we sinned. Purify us of these sinful desires! Change our desires from sin to righteousness!

Start Doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week.

- **Think of the sin you wrote down after Sunday's message.** Take an inventory of your attitude towards it.
 - Is the devil trying to make you feel guilty for something Jesus has forgiven you for
 - Are you indulging in that sin you said you were giving to Jesus?
 - Are you making yourself feel guilty about something that was nailed to the cross?
 - **Replace those thoughts of guilt with one of Sunday's passages of forgiveness! Remember that Jesus has forgiven them!**

