

MAY 8, 2022 – ONE ANOTHER SERIES

LESSON 15

CONFESS TO ONE ANOTHER/PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER

JAMES 5:16 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

ONCE AGAIN, WE BEGAN THE STUDY WITH A REMINDER OF JESUS COMMAND TO LOVE ONE ANOTHER AND THE RELATIONSHIP OF THE “ONE ANOTHERS” OF OUR STUDY TO THAT COMMAND.

LAST WEEK WE LOOKED AT WHAT IT MEANS TO BE HUMBLE. WE SAW HUMILITY AS THE OPPOSITE OF PRIDE (PROVERBS 11:2), SOMETHING GOD OPPOSES (JAMES 4:10), THE PATHWAY TO EXALTATION BY GOD (I PETER 5:6), AND THE ATTITUDE OF COUNTING OTHERS MORE SIGNIFICANT THAN ONESELF (ROMANS 12:3), BEING SOME EXAMPLES FROM THE SCRIPTURES.

THIS WEEK

WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO CONFESS?

1. TO ADMIT SOMETHING TO SOMEONE; TO ADMIT HAVING DONE SOMETHING TO SOMEONE.
2. TO DISCLOSE ONE’S FAULTS
3. TO ACKNOWLEDGE, ADMIT, AVOW, CONFESS AGAINST ONE’S WILL OR INCLINATION
4. ACKNOWLEDGE IMPLIES THE DISCLOSING OF SOMETHING THAT HAS BEEN CONCEALED
5. CONFESSION MAY APPLY TO AN ADMISSION OF A WEAKNESS, FAILURE, OMISSION, OR GUILT

HOW DID JESUS VIEW CONFESSING TO ONE ANOTHER?

“Therefore, if you are offering your gift at the altar and there remember that your brother or sister has something against you, leave your gift there in front of the altar. First go and be reconciled to them; then come and offer your gift.” Matthew 5:23-24

THE IMPLICATIONS OF JESUS’ TEACHING ARE:

1. TO PARTAKE IN AN “UNWORTHY MANNER” MAY BRING SICKNESS OR EVEN DEATH
2. THE ANSWER IS TO EXAMINE YOURSELF

THE APOSTLE PAUL ECHOES THE SAME PRINCIPLE WITH RESPECT TO THE LORD’S SUPPER

“So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of sinning against the body and blood of the Lord. ²⁸ Everyone ought to examine themselves before they eat of the bread and drink from the cup. ²⁹ For those who eat and drink without discerning the body of Christ eat and drink judgment on themselves.” II Corinthians 11:27-29

AGAIN, WHAT PAUL IS SAYING REGARDING WORSHIP IS:

1. TO PARTAKE IN AN “UNWORTHY MANNER” MAY BRING SICKNESS OR EVEN DEATH
2. THE ANSWER IS TO EXAMINE YOURSELF
3. IT’S ABOUT A PROPER HEART ATTITUDE

JESUS PROVIDES TWO KEY PRINCIPLES

1. RIGHTEOUSNESS IS A MATTER OF THE HEART, NOT SIMPLY ACTIONS
2. FELLOWSHIP WITH GOD IS DEPENDENT ON OUR HEART TOWARD ONE ANOTHER

CONFESSION & HUMILITY

RON BROUGHT A DISCUSSION OF THE RELATIONSHIP OF CONFESSION TO HUMILITY FROM JAMES

JAMES 5:16 “Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.”

CONTEXT

1. WRITTEN BY JAMES THE HALF-BROTHER OF JESUS
2. WRITTEN IN ABOUT AD 45-48
3. FAITH MUST PRODUCE DEEDS
4. ACTIONS MUST DEMONSTRATE FAITH

BUD ASKED RON

1. THERE CLEARLY IS A LINK BETWEEN HUMILITY AND CONFESSION AS SEEN IN JAMES 4:6
EXPLAIN THAT TO US AS YOU SEE IT THERE

James 5:7-8 Talks about patient endurance while suffering in view of the coming of the Lord which is at hand.

Then James moves to his second one another prohibition. But before we look at that, let’s summarize vss. 10-15.

Vss. 10 and 11 are about the example of those who suffered before us.

Vs. 12 is about the importance of your word. It should be reliable without any appeal to special oaths or entities. Let yes be yes and no be no without wavering.

Vss. 13-15 James switches our attention to praying for illness, fatigue and personal sins.

2. AND THEN IN 5:9 MY VERSION TELLS THE PEOPLE NOT TO BLAME YOUR TROUBLES ON ONE ANOTHER
AGAIN THERE SEEMS TO BE A TIE BETWEEN HUMILITY AND CONFESSION (OR OWNING UP)

Now let’s go back to 5:9. James has already said don’t speak against one another. Now he says:

James 5:9 “Brothers, don’t murmur against one another, so that you yourselves may not be judged. Behold the Judge who stands before you.”

To murmur means to vent feelings, to show displeasure with a sigh, to grumble. This is against one another. One commentary I read said this, “It’s easier to blame others than to take responsibility.

Kata means *down from* or *put down*. In the negative sense, it means to take a superior position to.

To be judged, or to have a judgment pronounced against you.

The *judge* here refers back to God as judge

Stands before you are "*at the doors*". He is ready to judge your murmuring.

When something is going wrong in the church, the first question is: Am I a part of the problem? Do I respond with grumbling? If so, am I prepared for God to judge me? This is especially true when we don't know how much time we have left. We used to talk of keeping short accounts when it comes to dealing with sin in our lives through confession. We still need to do that.

3. I KNOW THAT MEANS WE MUST CONFESS OUR SINS. TAKE US TO 5:6

James 5:16 "*Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The strong petition of a righteous man is very effective.*"

Confess here has an added preposition, "out from". This means to confess openly, in front of others. This is a one another group of more than just two people. It does not necessarily mean the whole congregation, but it's more than two.

Remember when we talked about 1 John 1:9? We defined confession as seeing our sin through God's eyes, having His perspective. It is not confession until we see our sin as He sees it and feel toward it the way He feels toward it. When we confess to one another, it begins with seeing our sin first through God's eyes, then seeing our sin through the eyes of one another.

Sin never occurs in isolation. You may think your sin is private, sometimes affecting only you. But that's not true. There are many sins that do directly affect others. But all sin keeps you from being what God planned for you to be at that moment. So, what He planned for you to contribute to someone else did not happen. Our actions always affect others in some way.

Now let's look more closely at this idea of confessing to one another:

THE GOAL OF CONFESSION IS RESTORATION OF RELATIONSHIP:

- 1) WITH GOD**
- 2) WITH ONE ANOTHER**

CONFESSION REQUIRES:

- 1) SELF-EXAMINATION**
- 2) AN ACTION PLAN FOR CHANGE**
- 3) RELATIONSHIP**
- 4) HUMILITY**

CONFESSION CAN:

- 1) DISARM A CONFLICT.**
- 2) REMIND US WE ARE SINNERS, DEPENDENT ON GOD.**
- 3) ALLOW US TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S GRACE**
- 4) ALLOW US TO BE HONEST AND VULNERABLE.**
- 5) HELP US BUILD COMMUNITY.**
- 6) HELP US SEE OUR WEAKNESSES WITHOUT USING THE WEAKNESSES OF OTHERS AS AN EXCUSE.**

TO FEAR BEING KNOWN AS A SINNER IS TO HIDE BEHIND AN IMAGE OF FALSE PIETY. CHRISTIAN LEADERS ARE OFTEN

EXPECTED TO BE MODELS OF PERFECTION AND MANY FALL PREY TO THE PRESSURE TO DEMONSTRATE AN IMPOSSIBLE SINLESSNESS. THIS ONLY INCREASES AN ISOLATION AND VULNERABILITY TO SIN.

CONFESSION CAN:

- 1) REMIND US WE ARE SINNERS, DEPENDENT ON GOD.
- 2) DISARM ANY CONFLICT THAT SIN CREATES.
- 3) ALLOW US TO EXPERIENCE GOD'S GRACE
- 4) ALLOW US TO BE HONEST AND VULNERABLE WITH ONE ANOTHER.
- 5) HELP US BUILD COMMUNITY.
- 6) HELP US SEE OUR WEAKNESSES WITHOUT USING THE WEAKNESSES OF OTHERS AS AN EXCUSE.

JAMES LINKS CONFESSION WITH PRAYER

WE CONFESS TO ONE ANOTHER AND PRAY FOR ONE ANOTHER. THIS KIND OF CONFESSION IS NOT FULLY COMPLETE UNTIL WE HAVE PRAYED FOR ONE ANOTHER. THIS IS PART OF HOW THE GROUP FUNCTIONS AND COHERES. THE TWO BELONG TOGETHER AS ONE MUTUALITY COMMAND. LET'S COMPARE IT THIS WAY:

CONFESSION

EXPOSES SIN.

TAKES RESPONSIBILITY FOR OUR SIN.

ACKNOWLEDGES OUR SIN NATURE.

PRAYER

HEALS

ASKS GOD AND OTHERS TO FORGIVE US.

DRAWS ON GOD'S POWER TO CHANGE OUR LIVES.

TOGETHER, CONFESSION AND PRAYER BRING WHOLENESS TO RELATIONSHIPS.

JAMES ALSO LINKS THIS KIND OF PRAYER TO HEALING THE SICK IN YOUR GROUP. THE CONSEQUENCES OF SIN ARE OFTEN PHYSICAL AS WELL AS SPIRITUAL. THE GUILT OF SIN CAN WEIGH HEAVILY UPON US AND PRODUCE ALL KINDS OF PHYSICAL MALADIES. THIS IS NOT TO SAY THAT ALL PHYSICAL SICKNESS IS THE RESULT OF SIN. WHAT JAMES IS SAYING IS THAT SIN TAKES A TOLL ON BODY, MIND AND SPIRIT.

PRAYER IS ONE OF THE GREATEST SERVICES WE CAN GIVE TO ONE ANOTHER BECAUSE PRAYER LIFTS OTHERS AND OURSELVES INTO GOD'S PRESENCE. WE ALL HAVE NEEDS THAT ONLY GOD CAN FULFILL. WE ALL NEED TO INTERVENE BEFORE GOD ON BEHALF OF ONE ANOTHER. THIS GIVES HIM ACCESS TO CHANGE US.

DO YOU CONFESS EVERYTHING? WHEN AND HOW DO YOU CONFESS? WHAT BALANCE IS NECESSARY?

WHILE WE ARE TO CONFESS, THERE ARE LIMITS TO THE DETAILS OF OUR CONFESSIONS AND DISCRETION WITH WHOM WE CONFESS. ALSO, PRIVATE SINS REQUIRE PRIVATE CONFESSION WHILE PUBLIC SINS MAY REQUIRE A LARGER AUDIENCE.

SO, WHAT PART OF CONFESSION IS BASED ON HUMILITY? I THINK HUMILITY RECOGNIZES JUST HOW MUCH GRACE I NEED. THEN IT RECOGNIZES HOW MUCH GRACE WE MUST GIVE TO OTHERS.

REMEMBER EPHESIANS 4:32. BE KIND TO ONE ANOTHER, FORGIVING EACH OTHER AS GOD IN CHRIST HAS FORGIVEN YOU.

REMEMBER ALSO ROMANS 15:7. ACCEPT ONE ANOTHER AS CHRIST HAS ALSO ACCEPTED YOU.

AND, OF COURSE JOHN 15:12. LOVE ONE ANOTHER AS I HAVE LOVED YOU.

FOR A COMPARISON BETWEEN HUMILITY AND PRIDE, LOOK AT LUKE 18:10-13 NOTE THE DIFFERENT ATTITUDE OF THE PHARISEE AND THE TAX-GATHERER.

HOW THEN SHALL WE LIVE?

- 1. BE AWARE OF ANY RUPTURE IN A RELATIONSHIP**
- 2. CONFESS WITHOUT REGARD FOR FAULT**
- 3. ALWAYS HAVE A CLEAN HEART WHEN SEEKING TO WORSHIP GOD**

NEXT WEEK: BE OF ONE MIND WITH ONE ANOTHER