

Confession  
[written in oral form]

Psalm 32:1-8  
Part of fall theme

October 23, 2022  
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Today's focus is Confession / Confessing.

Knowing what confession means is important.

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Not long ago, I was standing in line to see the Blarney castle. A woman came around the corner and ran into me.

I immediately said, "Sorry" to her. 😊

That "sorry" was not a confession. It was my cultural reflex to a social disruption.

Confession is also **not** an attempt to bandage a situation.

We tend to easily apologize, saying "I am sorry" to avoid pain and consequences from an error or mistake we have made.

Okay, some may be slow to admit their blunder or transgression.

Regardless, showing regret, making amends, and simply saying "I'm sorry" can be signs of confession, but alone, they are NOT a confession.

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Confession is open, honest, authentic self disclosure.

However, sincere confession will not happen unless the person/ the being receiving it is safe, loving, accepting, and non-judgmental.

A fear of rejection or mockery inhibits confession.

We can confess if we know our vulnerable revelations will be tenderly received.

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The saying "Confession is good for the soul" is true.

And there are other wonderful benefits, too.

Confession unburdens / releases stress, and it claims ownership for one's character and actions.

To confess is to admit / acknowledge who we are. Confession exposes our values and character.

To be sure, confession requires self-awareness, accurate information, and truth.

This is the role the community / the church plays—presenting truth and insight.

We give and receive counsel, and that is important.

Honesty and trust are essential.

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Confession needs truth and it invites truth.  
Honest confession relieves the pressure to “cover-up”, to pretend / to deceive.  
Confession basks in truth.

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Moreover, confession strengthens one’s sense of empowerment.  
One feels less helpless, less hopeless, and less negative about oneself after confession.

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Confession is the foundation for healthy relationships, and this includes beyond our personal associations.

Confession allows reconciliation.

We cannot have reconciliation with the indigenous peoples without confession. There cannot be peace without it.

We the keepers and benefactors of our settler heritage must confess what we did, and this has nothing to do with bloodline.

We took their land. We arrogantly rationalized our brutal deeds.

We lied to them; broke treaties.

We cruelly tried to terminate their culture and dignity.

We abused them, AND we dismissed / did not include in our history books the numerous benefits we learned from them.

Indigenous people taught the settlers democracy.

They are now teaching us how to care for creation.

We must confess / we must own our transgressions.

And yes, confession leads to change.

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Sadly, there are many other things we need to confess.

Such as how we condemned and dismissed those in the LGBTQ+ community.

The pushback to Critical Race Theory comes from a racist fear of change / the fear of losing power and privilege.

Confession brings change, good and wonderful change.

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From today’s text, the Psalmist begins with overflowing joy for his relationship with God. The Psalmist, thought to be David, celebrates being accepted by God. He rejoices in the atonement.

Atonement is the condition of being At One with.

Then, David shares how the relationship was before.  
He was in a broken relationship with God, and it deeply hurt.

We all know that condition.  
We have had fights / breakdowns in our personal relationships.  
It's terrible.  
There are cold stars, avoidance, and painful silence.  
Destructive things happened, maybe with anger.

In the brokenness there is deep sorrow and pain, and it greatly affects the body too.  
David shared that his body ached / was wasting away.

Frequently, during and after a divorce, people get seriously ill.

Our bodies reveal the condition of our spirit / our soul.  
We understand what David described.

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This begs the questions, why did he wait to confess?  
Why did he endure such suffering?  
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I think we know the answer.

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Stubbornly, wallowing in a broken relationship can come from a Hubristic, delusional, self-deception.

A person can convince themselves that they are right, regardless of the impact of their actions.  
Winning can be expensive.

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Also, fear and shame are weights that hold us down, hindering confession.  
Self-depreciation, self-loathing, shame, and dread are all very toxic. They declare "there is no reason to confess because I am not worthy of acceptance and love."

I think David's opening of joyous celebration is an attempt to help those stuck in despair.  
He was saying, "See, I was accepted. I was forgiven. Please try it."

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Also, as I mentioned before, we will not confess if we sense we will be rejected, belittled, or dismissed.

If that is the condition, if the other party is not compassionately receptive, then confession will not / cannot happen.  
And that is a terribly sad state.

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In verse 5, David proclaims, "At last, I stopped concealing my errors. I confessed my sins to God."

God forgave him.

God forgave all his sins as if they never happened.

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Keep in mind that sin is whatever hurts our relationship with God. The definition is that simple. Sin hurts relationships.

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The following verses confirm God's trustworthiness.

God graciously accepted his confession and forgave David, and the wonderful, whole relationship was restored.

God was there for David and David for God.

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Confession is transformative, powerful, and effective.

Confession led to restoring David's relationship with God.

And a healthy, honest relationship is wonderful.

*I shared that Leslie and I went to Ireland. We enjoyed our time there, what we did and saw. However, the best part was being together for ten days.*

*We were free to explore and "just" be together without stressors.*

*Well, driving there was stressful.*

*Aside from that, we celebrated and enjoyed our relationship.*

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A good relationship, including with God and creation is joyous and lifegiving.

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David arrived at this jubilant condition because of confession **and** forgiveness.

Forgiveness.

How and why did God forgive him?

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How.

God forgave David.

No payment, NO sacrifice was demanded or required.

God just did it.

Sins do not need to be covered / paid for.

Love is gracious and forgiving.

Think about that. .... Recall Micah 6 and other passages where God rejects the notion of sacrifice.

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This means Jesus did not die to save us. He was murdered.

Jesus lived to show us salvation.

Jesus lived to save us.

A sacrifice was not needed.

*If one of my daughters sinned against me / did something to hurt the relationship, I would NOT demand a payment. I would NOT say, "Well, before I forgive you, I will need a finger or something significant to erase your transgression."*

NO.

Love is gracious and forgiving.

God is love. God receives our **honest** presentation—which is who we are, revealed in our confession and God forgives.

The why.

We are in a relationship with others, creation, and God.

This relationship can be good / constructive...or... it can be bad / destructive.

A broken, destructive relationship hurts and is damaging.

God is love. God creates, restores, and desires atonement.

BUT why bother with us when we sin / when we damage the relationship?

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Simple:

God believes in you and me.

God believes in you and me.

Let that set in for a moment.

God believes in you and me.

There is no reason to hide..... no reason for disguise or deception....

No reason for shame.

Obviously, God assumes the best in us.

God believes in you and me.

Take that in.

That awareness will bring great illumination... and joy!