

REPENTANCE AND CONFESSION

Ac.8:22; 1Jno.1:9

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I. INTRODUCTION

1. The two terms comprising our topic are often referred to pertaining to Scriptural matters and one's salvation, but often not fully understood as to what they mean in their biblical context and what is involved in their application to the one required to repent and confess.
2. Also, when we speak of repentance and confession in this lesson we have reference to repenting of sin or sins committed and confession of that sin or those sins.
3. Therefore, the repentance and confession of which we speak are a part of God's 2nd law of pardon, and have reference to what God requires of his erring children – those who have sinned after having by faith obeyed the gospel of Christ to become Christians or children of God. See Ac.8:12-24; 2Cor.7:9; Jas.5:16,19,20; 1Jno.1:9; Rev.2:4,5,16,21,22; 3:19.
4. The burden of our study is to define and discuss the two terms in their biblical context and make application of them as needed in developing the subject.
5. In the first part of our study we shall deal with repentance. In the 2nd, confession.

II. DISCUSSION

A. DEFINITION AND APPLICATION OF REPENTANCE AS PERTAINING TO THE ERRING CHILD OF GOD.

1. Negatively, what repentance is not.
 - a. Repentance is not fear, even though some often confuse the two.
 - (1) Some think they are preaching repentance when they use "fear psychology."
 - (a) They first take you to the sick room, then to the death chamber, the undertaker's parlor, the cemetery, and finally even to the land of ghostdom.
 - (b) These creepy stories may have a tendency to make your hair stand on end, your blood to run cold, as it were, and make all sorts of creepy feeling play up

and down your spine, but that's not preaching repentance.

- (c) Perhaps a better word for it would be "preaching nightmares"!
- (2) Some seem to think they have to be alarmed and even mortally terrified; and they continue to wait for some kind of terrible fear to come upon them.
- (3) There are numerous examples of multitudes who became, but who did not really repent.
 - (a) There have been sailors at sea during a terrible storm or a massive sea battle who:
 - (1) Before the storm or the battle were full of cursing and vileness.
 - (2) During the storm or battle because of great fear grew quiet and prayed to God for mercy.
 - (3) When the storm or battle ended returned to their same cursing and vileness.
 - (b) There was Pharaoh, king of Egypt, when God sent the terrible plagues; but the moment God's hand was removed, his heart was harder than ever.
 - (c) There are sick people who are, or who think they may be at the point of death, who because of fear pray and make many promises to God to do this or that if he will heal, raise them from their sick bed, but who forget all of it once they are well again.
 - (d) Many are the people who while experiencing intense suffering or a death in the family will engage in a surge of spiritual activity and make promises of still future service to God only to ignore them very soon after the immediate ordeal is over.
- b. Repentance is not regret or remorse.
 - (1) Many regret their sins who never repent in the biblical sense.
 - (2) Some are sorry and suffer remorse for their sins because they have been caught and exposed and must suffer the shame or humiliation of being exposed.
 - (a) Of course, as in Jeremiah's day, there are those of our day who suffer no real shame; they can't even be made to blush!

- (3) Judas Iscariot is a biblical example of one who had terrible remorse because of his sins – in fact, enough to make him go and hang himself; but he didn't repent, Mt.27:3-5.
 - (a) We know he didn't repent and confess his sins and receive forgiveness because of what is said in Ac.1:25.
 - (b) The word "repented" in Mt.27:3 – "repented himself" – is from the Gr. word METAMELOMAI, which "signifies nothing but regret even though amounting to remorse," (Thayer, 405), with no reversal of moral purpose known as repentance.
 - (c) Surely, if he had repented in the biblical sense of true repentance and gone to the Lord confessing his sin, he would have been forgiven.
 - (d) In of doing that, he went to the Jewish priests and then put an end to his own life by suicide.
- c. Repentance is not prayer.
 - (1) Some prayers are an abomination in the sight of God, Prov.28:9; Jno.9:31; Psa.66:18; 1Pet.3:12.
 - (2) Some think that all who pray, or who may ask for the prayers of the church, have repented and will be saved, but not necessarily so, Mt.7:21-23; Lk.6:46; Lk.18:9-14; Tit.1:16; Jude 3.
 - (3) Mere prayer does not define repentance nor satisfy the demands of repentance, though it must accompany repentance in order to gain forgiveness.
- d. Don't confuse conviction of sin with repentance, no matter how miserable the one under conviction may feel.
 - (1) Judas Iscariot is an example in proof, Mt.27:3-5; Ac.1:25.
 - (2) The rich young ruler of Mt.19:22 is another example.
 - (3) Another example is that of those Jews of the synagogue of the Libertines, and Cyrenians, and Alexandrians, and of them of Cilicia and of Asia, disputing with Stephan in Ac.6,7. See Ac.7:54-60.
 - (4) Thus it takes more than conviction to constitute repentance
- e. Breaking off one sin is not repentance, for the whole tree must be cut down.
 - (1) For instance, signing the pledge card, as it were, and stopping drinking or forsaking any one vice is about like

pruning off one limb of a tree, when the whole tree must be cut down.

- (2) A profane person stops swearing or lying, etc.; very good; but if that person does not have a change of heart that cause him or her to break off all forms of evil, or break off from every sinful practice, it is not repentance – it is not the work of God in the soul.
 - (3) Ceasing one sinful practice while continuing in others is like stopping one of several leaks in a row boat, but not the others; the boat still sinks!
 - (4) Securing medical aid for one serious physical affliction or illness while ignoring and neglecting three other serious illnesses is always fatal.
 - (5) No, true repentance is not merely breaking off this or that particular sinful practice, because in true repentance *the whole tree is cut down!*
 - (6) Simply ceasing the practice of any one and/or all sinful practices in one's life is not necessarily repentance that guarantees forgiveness for those sins; for time alone will not bring about forgiveness of past sins!
- f. Contrary to the thinking of some, even godly sorrow – a penitent attitude -- is not repentance.
- (1) Godly sorrow is not repentance because according to 2Cor.7:10 godly sorrow worketh repentance.
 - (2) The word “worketh” means “to work something, produce, perform; to work out; achieve; effect by toil,” Rom.5:3; 7:8,13; 15:18; 2Cor.4:17; 7:10; 12:12; Phil.2:12.
 - (3) Hence, godly sorrow is the cause and repentance is the effect.
 - (4) If and when regret turns into godly sorrow, then godly sorrow works or produces repentance, which brings confession of sin, which in turn brings salvation from that sin.
- g. Also, reformation of life is not repentance.
- (1) Many persons reform for reasons of health, finances, public sentiment, family, etc., with no thought of God and his law.
 - (2) Of course, where there is no reformation of life, there is no repentance. Cf. Mt.3:1,2,5-8; 7:20.

- (3) But when there is true repentance there is always evidence of repentance; for it will always bring forth fruit, which is a reformation of life.
 - (4) Therefore, in repentance and reformation, as in godly sorrow and repentance, there is a cause and effect relationship.
2. Positively, what then is repentance? The answer to which we learn by taking note of what Jesus Christ and his inspired apostles and writers preached when they preached repentance.
- a. From Mt.3:1,2,5-8; 12:41 (Jonah 3:4-10); Mt.21:28-30; 2Cor.7:8-11, we learn the Bible definition of repentance, what it is, what produces it, and what follows it or what it demands of the sinner.
 - b. From these passages it is evident that repentance in the true biblical sense is a change of the will of man in reference to God, to sin, and one's previous acts, which is produced by godly sorrow, and which results in a reformation of life.
 - (1) In other words, there is a sorrow for, a grief, wailing or mourning over one's sin (called godly sorrow) that produces this change of mind and a change of life in proof of it. Cf. Mt.3:7-9.
 - (2) Vine, III, 279,280: It signifies to change one's mind or purpose, in the N.T., involving a change for the better, an amendment, of repentance from sin...and this change of mind involves both a turning from sin and a turning to God.
 - (a) The parable of the prodigal son is an outstanding illustration of this, Lk.15:17-24.
 - (3) Thayer, 405: "to change one's mind for the better, heartily to amend with abhorrence of one's past sins."
 - (4) Before repentance the will of the erring child of God is in rebellion to God's will in the practice and guilt of one or more sins. (Cf. Jas.2:10.
 - (5) After repentance, the will of the child of God is in total submission to God's will. Cf. Mt.16:24,25.
 - (6) Which means that whatever you thought, said, or did before repentance that was sinful, you will cease to think, say, or do after repentance.
 - (7) Thus there are sever links in the chain of causation: **Faith, conviction of sin, godly sorrow (mourning spirit because of sn), change of mind, and reformation of life.**

- c. From this we learn that one cannot repent:
 - (1) Of sin of which one is unaware, or does not know he is guilty.
 - (2) If one has not changed his mind about the sin of which that one is guilty.
 - (3) If that one continues to practice sin, whether knowingly or unknowingly!
- d. From this we learn that without repentance one can't be forgiven of past or present sin as an erring child! And if that one never repent there is no hope of heaven!
- 3. One other element we must not overlook, which, of necessity, is involved in repentance – that's the principle of **restitution**.
 - a. Restitution which extends as far as it is humanly possible to go is a part of the "fruit" of repentance.
 - b. For example: In vain would one be repenting of slandering when refusing to correct his false statement about an individual.
 - c. There is no evidence or fruit of repentance when one continues to use stolen property with no effort to restore it to its rightful owners.
 - d. No one who wrongs another and refuses, when it is within his power, to make restitution, should expect no mercy at the hand of God.
 - e. The principle of restitution is taught under the O.T. from times of old, Exo.22:1; Lev.6:1-7; Num.5:5-8; See 1Sam.12:2; 2Sam.12:5,6; Lk.19:8,9.
 - f. Also in the N.T., because you cannot apply Mt.7:12 without recognizing the principle of restitution.

B. THE CONFESSION OF OUR SINS COMMITTED AFTER WE BECOME A CHILD OF GOD IS ALSO ABSOLUTELY NECESSARY.

- 1. It was necessary in the O.T.
 - a. From Lev.4 and Lev.5 it is evident that under the O.T. both knowledge of and confession of the sin committed were required of the person who was guilty and a sin-offering was required.
 - b. Note Lev.4:1,2,13,22,27; Lev.5:14-19. Where the KJV renders it "ignorance", the NKJV renders it "unintentionally". It means "sins committed thoughtlessly, carelessly," rather than "presumptuously".

- c. According to Prov.28:13 it is foolish for one to try to cover rather than confess and forsake his sins: “He that covereth his sin shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”
 - d. How can one do this if they are not known?
2. It is also absolutely necessary under the N.T.
- a. For in the N.T. God requires any and every erring child to repent, confess and pray for forgiveness of sins committed, Ac.8:18-24; 1Jno.1:9; Jas.5:16.
 - (1) Notice that these passages say:
 - (a) “This thy wickedness,” not just general wickedness, v.22.
 - (b) “Confess your faults,” not just that you have faults.
 - (c) “Confess our sins,” not just that we have sinned, nor our SINFULNESS, or that we MAY have sinned.
 - (2) Does anyone deny that ALL three of these – repentance, confession, and prayer for forgiveness – are absolutely necessary in order to be forgiven of any sin committed? If so, why? Bk, Ch, & Verse?
 - (3) Does anyone know of any scripture or scriptural principal which teaches any other way to be forgiven when a Christian sins?
 - b. All three of these are not only absolutely necessary, but each must be in its proper order. (More on this later.)
 - c. Since none deny the necessity of all three and yet there is controversy among brethren over the Christian and his forgiveness, the issue involves a study of all three. *But at this time we are only dealing with confession.*

C. NOW WE ARE READY TO DISCUSS WHAT CONFESSION MEANS, REQUIRES AND INVOLVES.

(But doesn't everyone know and understand this? Unfortunately, No!)

1. W.E. Vine, Expository Dict. of N.T. Words, Vol. I, p.224 defines confession to mean:
 - a. “To confess, declare, admit, Jno.1:19,20; Ac.24:14 (vv.12-16); Heb.11:13.” I.e., what one believes, his convictions, etc.
 - b. “To confess by way of admitting oneself guilty of what one is accused of, the result of inward conviction, 1Jno.1:9.”
 - c. “To declare openly by way of speaking out freely, such being the deep conviction of facts, Mt.7:23; 10:32.” (All emp. mine, ejd)

- d. Naturally, the definition of the word is understood to govern the word wherever it appears. Cf. the definition and purpose of baptism once established, even though the defined purpose is not always stated.
2. Understanding the full definition of “confess,” we are forced to conclude that the forgiveness offered in 1Jno.1:9 is on the basis of and demands that one concede and “speak out freely” from “deep conviction,” the “inward conviction,” of guilt as a result of sin.
 - a. Obviously, this “speaking out” (confession) is not the mere fact of some supposed guilt of sin of some kind, or of some continual, continuous sinfulness of some kind, or of some kind of inherent, innate, inborn sinful nature, but rather the thing of which one knows he is guilty as a result of having violated God’s law.
 - b. Where does the Bible teach that acceptable confession can be made and forgiveness received in ignorance of the sin or sins committed for which one is seeking forgiveness? How can one confess and seek forgiveness for sin or sins he doesn’t even know he has committed?
 - c. It doesn’t! Therefore, it logically follows that one must have knowledge of and admit with personal conviction the sin and guilt confessed!
3. Both the definition of repentance and confession excludes from consideration sins committed in ignorance being repented of and confessed in ignorance of their having been committed and with no true conviction of personal guilt because of them.
4. It excludes one repenting and confessing in a general way something like, “Lord, I know I am a sinner guilty of sin. I don’t know what they are, but forgive me of them anyway, because I know they must be there.”
5. This definition of necessity requires confession of **SPECIFIC** sins rather than some **VAGUE** generality!
 - a. In fact, is there any logic or scriptural precedent in making a confession at all if it does not involve specific wrongs?
6. According to the definition of both repentance and confession, ceasing the sin (any sin) does not remove the necessity of confessing it.
 - a. For example: Subsequent liberal giving will not dispose of the need of confession of sin committed.

(The Lord can’t be bribed by man with money or by subsequent zealous service in the absence of confessing one’s sin

- b. Position and prestige (whether great or small) avail nothing as substitutes for confession of sin.
 - c. Nor does it allow forgiveness while continuing in some sin, either with knowledge of it or while being ignorant of it.
7. In no place does the Bible teach confession of unknown sin as some are teaching based on a perversion of Psa.19:12.
- a. Cf. Vv.7-11. Also 2Sam.12:12; Lev.4,5, NKJV.
 - b. Also, Psa.119:11,104,105,130; Rom.3:20; 7:7,13.
 - c. To pray and seek forgiveness under the Law of Moses without knowledge of the sin, confessing the sin, and making a sin-offering, would have been like an alien sinner today seeking forgiveness without baptism in the name of Jesus Christ.
 - (1) The law simply would not allow it then.
 - (2) Neither does the Gospel of Christ allow it today!
 - d. Again, how can one truly repent of and “openly” with “inward conviction” confess unknown sins?
 - e. Both repentance and confession are acts of faith, not just attitudes of heart.
 - (1) They are actions based upon heartfelt feelings of guilt produced by godly sorrow, Mt.3:8; 2Cor.7:10,11.
 - f. How can one feel guilty of something he doesn’t know he has committed?
 - g. How can there be any godly sorrow for something of which one is totally ignorant?
 - h. In view of the Bible definition of both repentance and confession, one simply cannot either repent of or confess sins and receive forgiveness without knowing what they are!
 - (1) This would include the case of the publican in Lk.18:13.
 - (2) It would also include the case of the prodigal son of Lk.15:11-21,30.
 - (3) It would also include the erroneous claim of some that this is proof of a “general confession” rather than confession of specific sin of some kind.
8. For comparison note Daniel’s confession in Dan.9:1-12.
- a. Here he confesses that God’s people, Israel, had “sinned,” had “committed iniquity,” had “done wickedly,” and had “rebelled...by departing from thy precepts and from thy judgment: neither have we hearkened unto thy servants the prophets, which spake in thy name to our kings, our princes, and our fathers, and to all the people of the land.”

- b. This is no “general confession” of sins committed in ignorance of having committed them.
 - c. Daniel’s language necessarily implies that both he and they were well aware of what sinful Israel had done and why they needed forgiveness.
9. Furthermore, this does not mean that we either believe or are guilty of teaching the absurd idea of “total recall,” with which some falsely charge us, and which they try to use in their arguments for justification of “a penitent attitude” resulting in general repentance and general confession.
- a. Our opposition’s idea of “total recall” falsely charged to us is not of necessity what is meant by or involved in specific confession as opposed to general confession.
 - b. To illustrate:
 - (1) Must the harlot acknowledge her adulteries or merely acknowledge that in some impersonal way she is a sinner?
 - (2) Must the thief acknowledge his thievery?
 - (3) Must the liar acknowledge his lying?
 - (4) Must the murderer acknowledge his killing?
 - (5) Must the evil speaker acknowledge his cursing and swearing?
 - (6) Must the dishonest business man acknowledge his dishonesty in business?
 - (7) Use Gal.5:19-21 and 1Cor.6:9,10 and apply this. Must the guilty one acknowledge these?
 - (8) Must the wholesale apostate acknowledge his riotous living (the prodigal son), etc.?
 - c. Such people may not remember *all the details* as to date, time, place, number of times, etc., *nor would such be necessary*.
 - d. But they know of their whoredom, thievery, dishonesty, lying, murder, cursing and other works of the flesh, which must be repented of and confessed to both God and man.
 - e. And they must cease the practice of any and all sin when repenting of and confessing it in order to get forgiveness for it.
 - f. There is a difference between repenting of and confessing what one is guilty of and in enumerating specifically every instance of that guilt.
 - (1) The latter is not of necessity a part of the former.

D. TO WHOM IS CONFESSION TO BE MADE?

1. First of all **TO SELF**.
 - a. Lk.15:11-21 and the prodigal son teach this.
 - (1) First of all, he confessed to himself that he was wrong, that he had sinned and must correct his ways and acknowledge his sin to those whom he had sinned against, both his father and his God, Vv.17-19.
 - (a) This harmonizes with our definition of confession and with 1Jno.1:8-10.
2. Confession must also be made **TO ONE ANOTHER** – to the one or ones sinned against. Again Lk.15 and the prodigal son teach this.
 - a. Secondly, he confessed to those he had sinned against – that he had betrayed the love and trust of his father, Vv.20,21.
 - (1) He had wasted what the father had worked to provide for him, V.30.
 - (2) He had violated the training and teaching of the father by being immoral, V.30.
 - (3) These he acknowledged without offering even one excuse, Vv.18-21. Cf. Rom.1:20b.
 - (4) This harmonizes with Mt.5:23,24; Jas.5:16.
3. Confession must also be made **TO GOD**, also taught in Lk.15.
 - a. Thirdly, the prodigal confessed to the God of heaven: “I have sinned against heaven,” Vv.18,21.
 - b. Every sin we commit is against God and therefore must be confessed to God.
 - (1) Gen.39:9: “How then can I do this great wickedness, and sin against God?”
 - (2) 2Sam.12:13: “I have sinned against the Lord.”
 - (3) Psa.32:5: “I acknowledge my sin unto thee...”
 - (4) Psa.51:4: “Against thee...have I sinned...”
 - (5) 1Cor.8:11,12: “But when ye sin so against the brethren... ye sin against Christ” (v.12).
 - (6) Ac.5:3,4: “...thou hast not lied unto men, but unto God”
 - c. None of these involve simply “a penitent attitude” nor a “general confession” of sin or sinfulness!
 - d. Nor confession in ignorance of the fact of sin.

E. WHAT IS THE MODE OR MANNER OF CONFESSING SIN?

1. It is made sincerely with inward conviction of guilt.

- a. Confession is made with the mouth “admitting oneself guilty... by way of speaking out freely...from inward conviction.”
 - b. Thus it is made openly with the mouth in view of one’s own conviction of guilt.
2. It is something that is sometimes made privately and sometimes publicly – depending on the circumstances as to whether the sin is private or public, Mt.5:23,24; 18:15-17; Ac.8:20-24; 1Cor.5:1-13; 2Cor.2:6-11; Jas.5:16; 1Jno.1:9.
- a. The general rule governing confession of sin is: Make the confession as public as the sin.
 - b. Private sins to be confessed privately; public sins, publicly.
 - c. Sometimes one is demanded; sometimes the other.
 - d. We would defend no abuse of either private or public confession, where public confession may be turned into a meaningless ritual and or made to resemble a denominational “altar call” for the purpose of a general confession such as to simply “ask for the prayers of the church,” or to say, “If I have said or done anything...,” or “I feel that I have not lived as I should.”
 - e. Until one needs to and is willing to publicly name his sin, or sins, he has no business “responding” to the public invitation.
 - (1) Example at 65th in L.R. with L.S. and parents of young woman.
 - (2) Example: Suppose I said to you, “I have sinned, please forgive me?” But I don’t tell you what sin I have committed or what it is you are asked to forgive.
 - (3) What is the difference in this and the one before the church in L.R.?

F. WHAT ABOUT THE PLACE OR ORDER AND PURPOSE OF CONFESSION OF SIN?

- 1. It must come **AFTER REPENTANCE.**
 - a. Not only is confession of sin necessary, but it must be in its proper order or place and for the proper purpose.
 - b. Confession of sin must come **AFTER** repentance.
 - c. For it to be sincere and acceptable, confession of sin would have to be preceded by sincere and honest repentance.
 - (1) This in itself rules out “general confession” in ignorance of the sin committed and being confessed!
 - (2) For one is confessing sin of which he has repented!

- d. Otherwise, it would be hollow mockery, the act of a hypocrite.
2. Furthermore, it must be **BEFORE** forgiveness, just as repentance and baptism must be, and **FOR** forgiveness.
 - a. This is true, because its very purpose is to obtain forgiveness.
 - b. In Psa.25:11, the Psalmist not only unashamedly confessed that “mine iniquity...is great,” but implored forgiveness at God’s had when he said, “O Lord, pardon mine iniquity.”
 - c. He felt and confessed that his iniquities were intolerable because they were “as an heavy burden...to heavy for me,” Psa.38:4 (vv.1-8,17,18).
 - d. No words can express the misery of one who truly feels the guilt of his sins upon him; for he has no peace with God, and no peace in his own conscience, Heb.10:1-4.
 - e. But no sincere person will feel any need to, nor will he, confess any sin until he feels the burden and guilt of sin and desires forgiveness for it.
3. According to Prov.28:13 it is foolish for one to pretend to be virtuous when he knows he is guilty: “He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy.”
 - a. That man’s life is a lie.
 - b. To do so is to preclude forgiveness; for God will only pardon the repentant, and repentance is impossible without a sincere admission (confession to one’s self) of guilt, which is God way of covering sin.
 - c. Either denying or refusing to confess one’s sins only serves to harden the heart in wickedness.
4. Sincere confession of one’s sin springs from an earnest desire to be free from it and its guilt.
 - a. Consider the case of David at one time with Bathsheba, 2Sam.12:1-12; Psa.32:1-5.
 - b. The man who conceals his sin keeps it while he covers it, and holds it tight even when he is denying it!
 - c. But one who sincerely confesses his sin hates it though he admits it.
 - d. In such confession at least three things are implied:
 - (1) He owns his guilt.
 - (a) Confession includes an admission both of the fact and of its evil character.
 - (b) He who confesses a sin must own that he did the deed or thought the evil thought, and that it is bad.

- (2) He forsakes the sin.
 - (a) Any sincere confession of sin is accompanied by repentance.
 - (b) It is the very opposite of the brazen-faced guilt that glories in its shame, because it abhors what still it cannot but own.
 - (3) He fears to sin again.
 - (a) He has learned a valuable lesson.
 - (b) He looks back in owning his guilt, and then forward in fear of repeating it.
5. Sincere confession of sin will always be **FOLLOWED BY GOD'S FORGIVENESS** and a **NEW JOY** to the repentant confessing one.
- a. God has promised to forgive the repentant confessing one, who will then, and only then, experience a new joy. Cf. Psa.32:1-11; 51:1-17; Mt.11:28-30.
 - b. According to 1Jno.9, it is "**IF**" and only "**IF WE CONFESS OUR SINS**".
 - c. We must not only acknowledge them, but acknowledge them openly before God if private; before both God and man if public.
 - d. This is the condition: "If we confess our sins," not "if we confess our sinfulness," nor "If we confess that we have sinned." **There is a vast difference!**
 - e. Then and only then can there be forgiveness and cleansing by the blood of Jesus Christ for the erring child of God.
 - f. But these are guaranteed to the erring servant of God who does this, for "he is faithful and just to forgive us...and to cleanse us..."

G. SOME OTHER TRUTHS ABOUT PUBLIC CONFESSION OF SIN.

- 1. When public confession of sin is necessary, what must precede it?
 - a. Faith, personal conviction of wrong, and repentance.
- 2. Who must do the confessing?
 - a. The guilty person.
 - b. One person cannot scripturally confess another's sins, or confess for another.
 - c. One friend cannot confess a friend's sins.
 - d. One person cannot confess his enemy's sins.
 - e. One spouse cannot confess for the other spouse – each one must do their own confessing of sins.

III. CONCLUSION

1. Forgiveness is the guaranteed result if confession is preceded by repentance.
 - a. "...except ye repent, ye shall all likewise perish," Lk.13:3,5.
 - b. "If we confess our sins..." 1Jno.1:9.
 - c. For "whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy," Prov.28:13.
2. But where does the Bible promise either explicitly or implicitly that even one sin of the child of God can be or will be forgiven while he is still committing it? In ignorance or otherwise?
 - a. It doesn't! No more so than promising salvation to the alien sinner before and without his obeying the gospel of Christ!
 - b. How can an erring child of God be sincerely repenting, confessing and forsaking sin (any sin) while he is still committing it in ignorance of it?
3. According to the argument of some in defending the need for some sort of general confession of sin, a confession of one's sinfulness, or sin committed without knowledge of having committed it:
 - a. Sin would have to be so vaguely defined in the Bible that responsible men would not always have the ability to recognize and avoid it, which would certainly reflect on God Almighty!
 - (1) At least one preacher I know so claims this about sin being vaguely defined in the Bible.
 - b. Or sin would have to be something the Christian does all the time, "sins every hour of every day," "can't drive across town without sinning," which the Bible denies, 1Jno.1:6-9; 2:1; 3:3-9; 1Cor.15:34; 10:13; Jas.1:12.
 - c. Or sin would have to be something the Christian so seldom confesses that the time is so long between the time he committed it and finally confessed it that he has already forgotten about it, which doesn't sound like a Christian described in the Bible who is walking in the light and seeking to imitate the example of Jesus Christ!!
4. I deny that sin is of such nature that the Christian who sins so easily forgets the sin or sins he has committed. What erring child of God ever forgot that he had committed the sin of :
 - a. Adultery? Fornication? Lying? Stealing? Cheating? Slander?
 - b. Doing a brother in Christ wrong? Drunkenness? Hatred? Backbiting?
 - c. Homosexuality? Idolatry? Forsaking assembling? False teaching?
 - d. Murder? Fraud? Using corrupt speech? Et.al.?