

Life Together

Week 5 - Confession/ Communion

THINK:

Take a second to really think about this statement:

It may be that Christians, even being faithful in attending corporate worship, common prayer, and fellowship in service, may still be left feeling lonely. The final break-through to feeling connected in fellowship does not seem to happen, because, though they have fellowship with one another as believers and as devout people, they do not have fellowship as undevout people, as sinners (110).

Read:

ASK SOMEONE IN THE GROUP TO READ JAMES 5:13-16

- **ASK THE GROUP IF THEY NOTICED THE REPEATED USAGE OF THE PRONOUN "THEM" ?**
- **JAMES IS TELLING US THAT WE SHOULD LET IT BE KNOWN TO FELLOW BELIEVERS (THEM) IN OUR CHURCH WHEN WE ARE IN TROUBLE, HAVE PRAISES, HAVE ILLNESSES.**
- **BUT HE ALSO TELLS THE CHURCH TO CONFESS THEIR SINS TO EACH OTHER, SO THAT THEY MAY BE HEALED - THE PRAYERS OF THE BELIEVERS ARE POWERFUL!**

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ASK

Do you ever think about how hard it is to confess sins that you struggle with to other people? Why do you think that is?

Have you ever thought that the reason we don't confess our sins to one another is because instead of living in the grace and hope of Christ, we spend all our time making others think we don't need his grace and hope. Although we will say we are sinners, we strive to with all our might to make others think we are not.

SAY

**Jesus tells us differently...
Ask someone to read John 20:23**

ASK

Jesus explains to us in this passage that if the Holy Spirit is living in us, then we are a part of the priesthood and therefore should not only confess our sins to one another but FORGIVE one another.

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ASK

Have you ever been taught that as fellow believers we are representatives of Christ to one another and because of this, just as Christ bore our sins on the cross, we should bear with one another's sin?

DISCUSS

Why is it so important that we understand this truth in scripture? When we do NOT bear one another's sins is it really that bad? (READ THE FOLLOWING POINTS AND DISCUSS EACH ONE)

- The more isolated we allow ourselves to be, the more power sin has over us. Satan's greatest strategy is to separate Christians from the fellowship of their church.
- Confessing sin is the last step in overcoming justification of our sin.
- When confession happens with another believer, we are handing over all the difficulty of that sin to this representative of the whole body. NOW we can be a sinner living in the grace of Christ because the representative of the Christ in the church has been included in this struggle.

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- If we have a difficult time confessing our sins to our brothers and sisters, and yet confess our sins to Christ in prayer with no problem, then there is a chance we don't quite understand the holiness of God - if we did, it would be much harder to confess to God rather than our fellow believers.
- Confession is part of the discipleship process: "Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy." Proverbs 28:13



ASK

- **Who should we confess our struggles and sins to?**
- **The entire church? Should we make it a practice to put people on stage on Sunday for a confessional time?**
- **Our Pastors?**
- **This LifeGroup?**

I would say that we all need 1-3 people in our lives that we can be transparent with. People who you can trust and walk through struggles with, so that all of you can TOGETHER live in the grace of Jesus of Christ. I would encourage you to think about who you have in your life that you could do this with. If you do not have this in your life, make it point to do this in your LifeGroups. Find 1-3 people in this group that you can meet with outside of Sunday nights. People that you can grow with in this part of the discipleship process.