

# DISCIPLINES OF THE SPIRITUAL LIFE

May 23, 2021  
Week 6: Confession  
Scripture: Psalm 32

When we discipline our heart, soul, and mind, we grow in God's grace. This transformational process takes practice. When we work at these spiritual disciplines, we can experience peace, joy, and freedom through Christ. This week, Lead Pastor Christian Andrews talked about the spiritual discipline of confession.

## Definitions:

This week, Lead Pastor Christian Andrews taught on **the spiritual discipline of confession**, which is the practice of being completely unguarded and sincere in acknowledging your failures before God. Confession can be incredibly hard, because it involves baring our imperfections to God and those around us. But, as we practice confession, the objective reality of God's forgiveness of us will become our subjective experience—we will truly *know* the freedom God's forgiveness brings.

## Introduction Questions

1. Silly Question: If you could be a professional criminal, what would you want to be notorious for?
2. Follow-up from last week: Did you experience worship in a new way this last week? Where was a "God moment" that made you want to worship him?
3. What did your family of origin do when mistakes were made? Did you hide? Deflect? Own it? Lie? Blame?
4. When you hear the word "confession" what comes to mind? What is your experience with confession?

## Scripture Study Questions: Someone read Psalm 32

1. What comes to mind when you read this?
2. According to David, what is life like when we fail to confess?
3. What does David think the benefits of confession are?
4. What does God promise when we confess our sins? What does God's forgiveness do for us?

## Confession Questions

1. What is the value of confessing to someone out loud?
2. Does confession always need to be about sin or transgressions?
3. Have you ever confessed your sins to someone else or had someone confess to you? What was that like?
4. Share about a friend that you have who you feel comfortable being totally yourself around. What makes you feel free to share your faults and weaknesses with them?
5. Is your family or your church a place where you feel like you have to have it all together? Or do you feel free to be imperfect?

## Challenge:

1. Spend 15 minutes in silence. Ask God to reveal anything in you that you need to confess. Review those things. Allow yourselves to feel regret. Repent from them, intentionally turn away from them. And then if you have a trusted friend, tell them those things you need to confess and feel freedom from.
2. Ask some of your family and close friends to help you see your blind spots. Ask questions like, "What do I do that hurts you? How could I better love you? What is it like to be with me? Do I show interest in others or talk mostly about myself? Let their answers guide you in a time of confession.
3. Imagine the kind of person you would like to become in your old age. Then look at your life and assess whether or not the way you live now is preparing you to become this person. Confess where you need to change. Ask God and the community of faith for help.

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## RESOURCES FOR FURTHER LEARNING

Below are some curated resources from the Renaissance Church staff that have been helpful in our journey through studying and growing in spiritual disciplines. These are just a few of the resources out there! To find more, check the bibliography and endnotes of each resource. That is where the true gold is found!

### Spiritual Disciplines:

- *Celebration of Discipline*, by Richard J. Foster
- *Sacred Rhythms*, by Ruth Haley Barton
- The Spiritual Disciplines Handbook, by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun

### Prayer:

- *Discovering How to Pray*, by Hope MacDonald
- *Prayer: Finding the Heart's True Home*, by Richard J. Foster

### Study:

- *How to Read the Bible for All Its Worth*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart
- *How to Read the Bible Book-by-Book*, by Gordon Fee and Douglas Stuart
- The BibleProject: This has great scripture study resources and is produced by a great scholar and pastor in Portland, OR. Helpful for setting the context, diving into specific passages, and providing personal encouragement.  
[bibleproject.com](http://bibleproject.com)

### Solitude:

- *The Ruthless Elimination of Hurry*, by John Mark Comer
- *Silence and Solitude* by Ruth Haley Barton

### Guidance:

- *Soul Friend*, Kenneth Leech— provides a great overview of Spiritual Direction and the links to psychology
- *The Dark Night of the Soul*, St. John of the Cross—a classic on the spiritual life showing God's guidance and teaching in the experience of stillness and quiet

### Worship

- *Wholeness in Worship*, Thomas and Sharon Neuffer Emswiler
- *A Long Obedience in the Same Direction*, Eugene H. Peterson presents the core tenants of a life of a Christian disciple.

### Confession

- *Celebration of Discipline*, chapter 10, by Richard Foster
- *The Enneagram: A Christian Perspective* by Richard Rohr and Andreas Ebert.