



Making Room

Journeying together
through Lent

Part 4: Personal confession

Songs

[Amazing Grace](#)

[When God's in Charge - Bryan Moyer Suderman](#)

[River of Grace - Christy Nockels](#)

Memorization (1 John 1:9)

If we confess our sins, God is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

Bible Stories

Jesus' Resurrection (Matthew 26:31, John 20:17)

We probably won't use this story during morning time, but will instead talk about it with our kids after church, because they'll have just studied it in Sunday School. So given this week's emphasis on confession and forgiveness, I plan to draw my kids' attention to the way Jesus calls his disciples "brothers," even after they all deserted and denied him.

Jesus' gift of the Holy Spirit (John 14:15-27; 16:8)

We'll begin this conversation by referencing last week's memorization, that the enemy comes to steal, kill and destroy, but that Jesus came that we might have life. Thus, we are so thankful for God's gift of conviction through the Holy Spirit, so that we don't have to continue being separated from God and walking on a path that only leads to pain and destruction. The Holy Spirit convicts us of sin so that we can come into the light and be healed.

Jesus is anointed/ Doctors heal the sick (Luke 7:36-40, 1 John 1:6-9)

Here I'll ask, "So, the Pharisees thought they were righteous and spiritually healthy. Were they?" We'll then bring in 1 John and how the issue isn't whether or not we need a doctor, but our recognition of our need for a doctor. With very young children I'll talk more about this principle for all people, and in my own life, as opposed to trying to help them understand their own sinfulness. The growing awareness of shame is a developmental stage that shouldn't be rushed. It will happen naturally, and I believe God's word helps us understand and find redemption for our sin, as opposed to being what initially convinces us of our own shame. So since my kids are 2 and 4, I'll mostly talk about this from my own experience. But I might also probe a bit deeper when I have my 4 year old by himself, at bedtime.

Jesus chooses imperfect people

[The calling of Matthew (Luke 5:27-32), **restoration of Peter** (John 21:15-19), **and conversion of Paul** (Acts 9:1-22)]

Here, we'll highlight the fact that three of Jesus' 12 apostles made major mistakes. Matthew (also called Levi) was a tax collector, seen by his fellow Jews as both a traitor (for serving the Romans) and a thief (for being allowed to collect more than what was owed). Yet Jesus called him to follow him! Peter had promised to follow Jesus to death, but then disowned him, only to be reinvited to follow after Jesus' death and resurrection. Paul had been present—even giving his approval—to the martyrdom of Stephan. He was on his way to arrest more of Jesus' followers in the city of Damascus, when Jesus appeared to him and commissioned him as the apostle to the Gentiles.

The Greatest 2 Commandments (Matthew 22:34-40)

Here we'll talk about what it means that "on these two commandments hang all the law and the prophets." We'll probably look at each of the 10 Commandments in Exodus 20 and articulate whether it pertains to loving God or loving others. We might then think about some examples of things that happen frequently in our house and evaluate them through "the love lens."

Jesus is the Vine/ A New Commandment (John 15:1-12; 13:12-15, 34-35)

We'll begin by talking about Jesus' statement that he is the vine and we're the branches. It's pruning season, here at the Mezsicks', so I'll get to actually ask my kids about the fate and potential of the branches that they've been cutting off and gathering with Daddy, these last 2 weeks. But then we'll transition to talking about how our own efforts to love well fall short unless we're connected to the vine.

Activities

- Practice / emphasize apologizing to and forgiving one another, this week. When you are impatient with your kids, tell them and ask for forgiveness.
- Invite family members to confess areas of weakness and sin to one another, and then practice encouraging and affirming one another. I think this can be a model of the way Jesus welcomed normal, sinful men onto his team of disciples.
- Practice sharing Jesus' love with others, this week. This could be a specific bigger project (like bringing in #10 cans to Summit) or just being aware of opportunities throughout your days.
- Watch the 2007 movie about the transatlantic slave trade and author of our beloved hymn, [Amazing Grace](#) (Common Sense Media recommends this for those over 11 years old).
- Pray with the physical "palms down, palms up" prayer posture described in Richard Foster's [Celebration of Discipline](#). He describes, "Begin by placing your palms down as a symbolic indication of your desire to turn over any concerns you may have. Inwardly you may pray, 'Lord, I give you my anger toward John. I release my fear of my dentist appointment this morning...' After several minutes of surrender, turn your palms up as a symbol of your desire to receive from the Lord. Perhaps you will pray silently: 'Lord, I would like to receive your divine love for John, your peace about the dentist appointment, your patience, your joy...' " Posture is important! Try physically turning over your burdens of sin to the Lord and then physically open your hands to receive God's forgiveness and love.