

“Confess to and Pray for One Another”

1 John 1:5-10

If we claim to have fellowship with him and yet walk in the darkness, we lie and do not live out the truth. But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin. *1 John 1:6-7*

Getting on the Same Page

Jesus died in our place for our sins. Paul calls Jesus the ‘one mediator’ between God and man. That means that we don’t have to go through anyone else to have our sins forgiven. However, the authors of Scripture knew how important it was for believers to confess their sins to one another. James tells us to confess our sins to and pray for one another that we might be healed, whether spiritually, physically or both. John tells us that, when we walk in the light, or in the ways of Jesus, we have fellowship with one another.

Although Jesus is fully capable of forgiving us on his own, by ourselves we get lost and twist the Gospel. Some of us confess sins to Jesus, but purposely hide these sins from others. Others of us don’t even confess our sins to Jesus when we are alone, because we are full of shame. So we hide.

As believers, we need to find trusted people to confess our sins to. We need accountability. But we really need a fellow Christian to remind us of the truth of the Gospel: That if we confess our sins, Jesus will forgive our sins. Every time.

If we are regularly confessing our sins to each other, this will enliven our prayer lives. Praying for our brother or sister in Christ will feel more crucial, as we are hearing their real struggles. May we be a church that confesses to and prays for one another.

Discussion Questions

Getting Started

- Discuss a time in your life when you shared a secret with someone, or they shared a secret with you.
- Is it harder to confess your sins directly to Jesus or to others? Why?

Study 1 John 1:5-10

- Respond: It isn’t enough to only confess our sins to Jesus. Even though he is the only one who actually forgives sins, he never intended for it to be this way.

- Discuss the reasons we might choose NOT to be honest with other believers about our sin.
- Respond: If we don't find trusted Christian friends to be honest with and confess to, we will twist and distort the Gospel in our own heads.
- Respond: If we are regularly confessing our sins to one another, it will enliven our prayer lives.

Apply

- Discuss what steps you could take as a family, or with friends, or steps we could take as a church, to develop a 'fellowship of sinners.'