

Celebration of Discipline 10: CONFESSION

In our morning service, we focused on confessing our sins to God. In this study, we direct our attention to confessing our sins to others.

1. **REMEMBERING** On a scale of 1-10, 1 being difficult and 10 being easy, how comfortable do you find being transparent and vulnerable with people?
2. **REFLECTING** What are some of the barriers hindering you from sharing openly and honestly?
3. **DISCOVERING** Read [James 5:16](#) below.

Therefore, confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

- Honestly, how do you feel about this command?
- What could be some possible benefits of obeying it?
- Read these selections from Dietrich Bonhoeffer's *Life Together*. What are some potential benefits of confessing your sins to others?

The pious fellowship permits no one to be a sinner. So, everybody must conceal his sin from himself and from the fellowship. We dare not be sinners. Many Christians are unthinkably horrified when a real sinner is suddenly discovered among the righteous. So, we remain alone with our sin, living in lies and hypocrisy. (110)

The more isolated a person is, the more destructive will be the power of sin over him, and the more deeply he becomes involved in it, the more disastrous is his isolation. Sin wants to remain unknown. It shuns the light. In the darkness of the unexpressed it poisons the whole being of a person. (112)

Expressed, acknowledged sin has lost all its power. It has been revealed and judged as sin. It can no longer tear the fellowship asunder. Now the fellowship bears the sin of the brother. He is no longer alone with his evil for he has cast off his sin in confession and handed it over to God. It has been taken away from him. Now he stands in the fellowship of sinners who live by the grace of God in the Cross of Jesus Christ. Now he can be a sinner and still enjoy the grace of God He can confess his sins and in this very act find fellowship for the first time. (113)

A man who confesses his sins in the presence of a brother knows that he is no longer alone with himself; he experiences the presence of God in the reality of the other person. As long as I am by myself in the confession of my sins everything remains in the dark, but in the presence of a brother the sin has to be brought into the light. (116)

4. **CONNECTING** What would need to happen before you'd even consider confessing to another?
5. **RESPONDING** What is something you will do this week to overcome the barriers and move you closer to confessing your sins to another?

If there is ever to be true healing and helping, a true sheltering and clothing for any of us, it is with our nakedness and helplessness that it has to start.

- Frederick Buechner, *Telling the Truth*