



SERIES: November – December – Walking with Jesus

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Scripture: Matthew 6:12

TITLE: Freedom in Confession

A few years ago, I spent four days in the black hills with my family. And like any good pastor, after four days of camping and hiking, I got into a fight with my wife. I was resistant to apologizing, and it created distance in our relationship. I tried to ignore the problem and just carried on. She would not have it. She would not hear because of the sin between us.

But thanks to my son, Landon, who said, “Dad, you always tell us, say you’re sorry. Go tell mom you’re sorry. Confess.” I felt both ashamed of myself and proud of my son. He was right. I had to go confess my sin to Tiff before we could reconnect.

Did you know that this is true for God and us? It is. Here is what Jesus said about forgiveness and prayer in Matthew 6:12 (CSB).

“And forgive us our debts, as we also have forgiven our debtors.”

This is a request for our spiritual needs. Verse 12 has caused some confusion for many Christians. Because some believe that our forgiveness from God appears to be conditional on our own forgiveness of others. In other words, if we don’t forgive others, we won’t be forgiven? Is this what Jesus is implying?

I don’t think this is at all what Jesus is saying. If it was, Jesus would be contradicting His own teaching. Jesus said in John 3:36, “The one who believes in the Son has eternal life. The one who rejects the Son will not see life, but God’s wrath remains on him.” What does eternal mean? Temporary? Conditional? No, it means forever. Once you are saved, you are always saved.

Okay, so what is Jesus saying here? How are we to use this as a model for prayer. First is that you and I, as Christians, are to be daily and continually confessing our sins to God. “forgive us our debts.” This implies a moral debt – a sin debt to God. So we are to be confessing our sins to God. Confession isn’t about being “re-forgiven” for your sins. Christ’s death paid for all your sins. Your sins in the past. Your sins in the present. And your sins in the future.

Confession is all about agreeing with God that the sin you’ve committed is wrong, offensive, and it grieves you too. You mourn the fact you’ve sinned against your heavenly father.

A friend and I were looking back at our 20’s. We laughed about certain things we had done. And then I saw the difference in our worldviews. I began to mourn some of my poor decisions. It

grieved me how much I had sinned. I confessed this. He said, “not me. Those crazy times were what made me what I am today. No regrets.” No regrets. No confession. No need for God.

But friend, we do need God. We need God’s mercy and grace. We need to come with repentance for the sin we’ve committed. True confession is agreeing with God that we were wrong, and we recognize that.

So here’s my challenge for you today: reconnect to God through confession.

You don’t need to go to a priest or a pastor to confess. Confess to the one you’ve offended: God. He loves you unconditionally. Your sins are forgiven. And you still need to confess. So take time and confess specifically and sincerely. And then thank Him for His scandalous love.

When we pursue a right relationship with God, we will in the day.