

## **Should we confess our sins publicly? No!**

There is a popular practice among Christians to confess their sins to each other or before the congregation. We have seen this or heard about it in autobiographies, charismatic "revival" meetings, walks to Emmaus, and fundamental churches. Undoubtedly, people are confessing their sins to each other in other forums, as well, like group counseling sessions and A.A. meetings. No matter the circumstances, this practice is ungodly and should be avoided like a plague.

The root of this practice is sensuality and a quest for greater and deeper spirituality. Unloading your trash on others gives you the sensation of "lifted burdens" and the appearance of being a very spiritual and humble Christian. The feeling is nothing more than a counterfeit of the freedom you already have in Christ (John 8:32, 36; Matthew 11: 28-30). The humility you hope to demonstrate by the experience is actually pride and results in reviving the old man. It is simply an opportunity for the old man to become comfortable with or deal with the sins of his past.

The reason people are even prompted to do this in the first place is that they fail to believe God's words concerning their sins and His forgiveness. When you come to Christ, all of your sins are gone: past, present and future. The Bible tells you where they are. They are:

- Taken away, John 1: 29
- Under the blood, Colossians 1: 14
- Behind God's back, Isaiah 38:17
- In the depths of the sea, Micah 7: 19
- As far as the East is from the West, Psalm 103:12
- Forgotten, Hebrews 10:17

And when God removes your sins and forgives you, he fixes you up as a "new man" (Eph. 4:23-24). You are a "new creature" in Christ (2 Cor. 5:17) who no longer depends upon your own righteousness (Rom. 10: 3; Isaiah 64: 6) because you now have God's righteousness (2 Cor. 5:21). As such, you are, among other things:

- Washed, 1 Cor. 6:11; Titus 3:5
- Sanctified, 1 Cor. 6:11; 1 Peter 1: 2
- Justified, 1 Cor. 6:11; Rom. 5: 9
- Forgiven, Eph. 1: 7
- Purged, Hebrews 9: 14
- Free, John 8:32-36; Rom. 6:14

The wisdom behind telling others your sins is, according to James 3:14-16 "earthly, sensual, [and] devilish." And the result is bitterness, envy, strife, confusion and evil works!

Listen, if God has washed, sanctified, justified, forgiven, purged, and freed you, then what benefit could possibly be derived from telling somebody else what God has already forgiven, forgotten and cleared? Nothing can come from it but a feeling and eventually embarrassment. That's right! The people who hear about your sins will not forget them like God has. And at a

convenient time they will gladly tell anybody and every body what you've done if they see that as an opportunity to justify themselves.

Some would say, "But confessing your sins to each other is biblical." No it's not! Here are the verses:

- Leviticus 5:5; 26:40; etc. are sins affecting the congregation of Israel that had to be confessed before a Levitical priest so that he could offer the sacrifice God required for forgiveness. Our sacrifice is Jesus Christ and he already knows our sins!
- Neh. 9: 2 are sins of Israel against God that were confessed in order to get right with God (Neh. 1: 6; Ezra 10: 1, 11). We are right with God the moment we get saved. Transgressions against God thereafter are taken up privately between God and the individual (1 John 1: 9; Proverbs 28: 13; Daniel 9: 20).
- James 5:16 says, "Confess your faults one to another." It doesn't say confess your sins. The context is a prayer of faith to heal a fellow. The confession of faults merely demonstrates that no man involved in the healing had the individual ability or power to heal the man because they all had faults.

So you see there is no scriptural authority for confessing your sins to each other. This was something cooked up by psychologists or the devil as a "feel good" gimmick. It has no place in Christianity. Now, if you have a transgression against someone, go to him alone and get it straightened out with him alone! Other than that, keep this stuff to yourself and God!