

Prayer - Week 2

Confession and Thanksgiving



If we say that we share in life with God and keep on living in the dark, we are lying and are not living by the truth. But if we live in the light, as God does, we share in life with each other. And the blood of his Son Jesus washes all our sins away. If we say that we have not sinned, we are fooling ourselves, and the truth isn't in our hearts. But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away. If we say that we have not sinned, we make God a liar, and his message isn't in our hearts.

(1 John 1:6-10)

Say, 'sorry'

Do, you live a perfect life? In his first letter John reiterates what Paul wrote to the Romans (chapter 3 verse 23), that all have sinned and fall short of God's glory. I often think life is like a football match. There are rules but the rules are impossible to keep; there are always fouls, off-sides etc. So, it is with life. The prime reason Jesus came to earth and died upon a cross was that our sinfulness can be forgiven. So, as John says, if we claim that we've never sinned, we make God a liar.

God promises us that in the New Covenant, inaugurated on the cross by Jesus, "I will write my laws on their hearts and minds. I will be their God, and they will be my people. ... I will forgive their sins and forget the evil things they have done." (Jeremiah 31:33-34)

So, although we are forgiven by faith in Jesus Christ and by his atoning sacrifice upon the cross, it is important that we acknowledge to God when we have failed to love him wholeheartedly and to love others as Jesus loves us.

Remember our relationship with God is a Father - child relationship. So, although the father loves the child and forgives because of that love, the relationship is marred if the child does not recognise its disobedience. Prayers of confession help us to consciously address our breaking God's commands and that breaking those commands results in breaking our relationship with God. In asking for forgiveness we are 'repenting', that is turning away from our old ways and turning back towards God. His forgiveness gives us renewal and enables us to be in a right relationship with him.

The examples given for you to use below are generic. You can adapt them to be more specific to your own needs.

Examples for you to use

A prayer of confession

Merciful God, I confess that I have sinned in thought, word and deed, deliberately, through negligence and weakness. I have not loved you with all my heart. I have not loved my neighbour as myself. In your mercy forgive me. Help me to change, directing what I shall be; that I may walk humbly with you, my God. Amen.

(From *New Patterns for Worship*, Church House Publishing. 2002. Amended)

A prayer of confession

Loving God, I have been careless in my thoughts, cruel in my words, shameful in my actions. I am indifferent to a world made sad by want and wastefulness; I pass by on the other side when I see my neighbour in need; I wander from the path that leads to peace and walk along paths of my own pleasing. Merciful God, forgive and renew me. Amen.

(From *Common Order St Andrew Press*. 1994. Amended)

Thanksgiving

In his first letter, John explicitly confirms that when we confess our sin God forgives us. That is central to the New Covenant. In promising a New Covenant God said; "I will put my law within them, and I will write it on their hearts. And I will be their God, and they shall be my people. ... I will forgive their wickedness and will remember their sins no more." (Jeremiah 31:33 & 34)

Being forgiven by God naturally leads us thanksgiving.

When you meet together, sing psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs, as you praise the Lord with all your heart. Always use the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to thank God the Father for everything.

(Ephesians 5:19-20)



Rejoice always, pray continually, give thanks in all circumstances; for this is God's will for you in Christ Jesus.

(1 Thessalonians 5:16-18)

Say, 'thank you'

There are all sorts of things for which we should thank God. In his first letter to the Thessalonians, the Apostle Paul urges us to thank God for everything; it's as simple as that. This includes personal benefits we may enjoy like, good health, love from others, safety etc, the wonder of creation, God's love, Christ's sacrifice, the Church, family and friends, the list is endless.

A prayer of thanksgiving

Loving God, thank you for your love and kindness to me. Thank you for my family and friends and all they mean to me; for all the activities that make life fulfilling. Thank you for my health, food, shelter and security and all who care for me when life is challenging. Thank you for Jesus and all he has done for me, even dying for me. Thank you for placing your Holy Spirit within me. Thank you, Lord, for all you do for me. Amen.

For reflection

Think back over the past week and identify those times when your words or actions, your silence or inaction have been unworthy of the name 'child of God'.

Psalm 136:1 "Give thanks to the Lord, for he is good."

For doing

Click on these links and use them as a prayer of thanksgiving.

[Give thanks with a grateful heart](#)

[Thank you performed by Petula Clark](#)

[Thank you, Lord](#)

Make a list of all the things for which you are thankful to God. Doing so is a prayer.

Write your own prayer of confession.

Use this after your prayer of praise each day this week and keep adding to your list of thanks.