

Confess and Pray

Scripture Reading — James 5:13-20

Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.
—James 5:16 —

I remember a day when I jumped to a faulty conclusion and yelled at our six-year-old daughter for something she did not do. I needed to apologize. Following our family pattern, I found myself saying I was sorry and then sitting on the time-out bench! Apologizing to my child was surprisingly awkward, but it helped establish a trust we still enjoy today as adults. Our relationships will be closer if we can share our brokenness—there is an intimacy that comes from confession.

No one enjoys admitting they are wrong. We hope our spouse or kids or friends will overlook our shortcomings and not call us out for our inconsistencies. We want to preserve the illusion of having our life pulled together. No one wants to say, “I was wrong, and I’m sorry!”

But by avoiding those painful words, we miss the blessing that follows. When a wound is cleaned, the healing can begin. If we live with sin festering in our life, we miss the healing and wholeness that God has made available to us.

James tells us the next step after confession is also important for healing—we must also pray for each other. It’s hard to be angry with someone for whom we are honestly praying. By asking God to work through each other to advance his kingdom, we might find we can forgive as we have been forgiven.

Prayer

Gracious Lord, grant us the courage to admit our failings and to confess them to one another. Help us to forgive each other and to pray for those whom you have placed in our lives. Amen.

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