

Coming Clean: Confession is Good for the Soul

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Psalm 51 as the Model

Blunt requests, blunt admissions, recognition of God's purity.

Requests for the way forward: What is the next step?

1. *State sin to God.* David had committed adultery with Bathsheba" (51:1).
David made no excuses: "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" (v. 4).
2. *State thoughts & feelings behind sin*
You need the Spirit's help to teach you this wisdom (51: 6)
The heart is wily and deceitful—who can understand it? (Jeremiah 17:9)
3. *Ask for forgiveness and soak in God's forgiveness* 51:7-11
Soak in God's forgiveness (Zephaniah 3:17, 1 John 3:1)
This is not a fantasy (2 Corinthians 4:18).
4. *Ask God for help in planning next step.*
David teaching rebels God's ways;
David singing anthems to God's life-giving ways;
David "letting loose God's praise" 51:13-15, *The Message*

Create in me a clean heart, renew a steadfast spirit in me, restore to me joy.

Include these elements and take some long pauses to hear God with each one.

Say, Here's what I did. Here's *why* I think I did it. Show me the next step.

Guilt: Repentance is better than guilt. Repentance (*metanoia*) means "think about your thinking." What were you thinking?

Coming Clean to Others (confessing to others)

David forced to confess to Nathan (2 Samuel 11:22-12:14)

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

Choose someone safe, who is full of grace but will pray for you.

Benefits

Sense the love of God more deeply

Helps cure pride

Authenticity and transparency (Luke 12:2-3)

Trajectory of Growth and Change



How Are You Being Invited to Change?

	Because I am:	I will work toward:	I will aim for:
	Resentful	Accepting	Forgiving
	Suspicious	Aware	Trusting God
	Reluctant	Cautious	Willing
	Materialistic	Comfortable	Spiritual
	Selfish	Considerate	Unselfish
	Irritable	Dignified/lighthearted	Tranquil
	Coarse	Courteous	Noble, honoring others
	Gloomy	Happy	Joyful
	Envious	Indifferent	Content
	Bored	Interested	Creative
	Critical	Willing to let go	Encouraging
	Lazy	Motivated	Enthusiastic, achieving
	Judging	Accepting	Compassionate
	Procrastinating	Prioritizing	Prompt
	Despairing	Rational	Hopeful
	Pessimistic	Realistic	Optimistic
	Having false pride	Having self-worth	Humble
	Self-pitying	Self respectful	Grateful
	Rash	Self-confident	Assertive
	Self-deceiving	Self-aware	Transparent
	Egotistical	Sharing	Selfless

	Dishonest	Reticent	Honest
	Impatient	Tolerant	Patient
	Pushy, contentious	Persuasive	Respectful
	Self-focused	Available to others	Others-focused
	Self-indulgent	Self-controlled	Self-sacrificing
	Underachieving	Diligent	Persevering
	Unaware	Focused	Alert
	Ignoring others	Indifferent	Attentive
	People-pleasing	Self-pleasing	God-pleasing
	Apathetic	Open-hearted	Enthusiastic
	Biased	Partial	Fair
	Resistant	Flexible	Compliant
	Stingy	Noticing people's needs	Generous
	Harsh	Reticent	Gentle
	Extravagant	Moderate	Thrifty
	Wasteful	Economical	Resourceful
	Callous	Sensitive	Kindhearted
	Unaware	Too aware/analytical	Discerning
	Foolish	Imprudent	Wise
	Careless	Accountable	Responsible

Prayer from John Baillie, *A Diary of Private Prayer*, Seventeenth Day, Evening

I bless Thee, O most holy God, for the unfathomable love whereby Thou hast ordained that spirit with spirit can meet and that I, a weak and erring mortal, should have this ready access to the heart of Him who moves the stars.

With bitterness and true compunction of heart I acknowledge before Thee the gross and selfish thoughts that I so often allow to enter my mind and to influence my deeds.

I confess, O God –

that often I let my mind wander down unclean and forbidden ways;

that often I deceive myself as to where my plain duty lies:

that often, by concealing my real motives, I pretend to be better than I am:

that often my honesty is only a matter of policy (not of action):

that often my affection for my friends is only a refined form of caring for myself:

that often my sparing of my enemy is due to nothing more than cowardice:

that often I do good deeds only that they may be seen of men, and shun evil ones because I fear they may be found out.

O holy One, let the fire of Thy love enter my heart, and burn up all this coil of meanness and hypocrisy, and make my heart as the heart of a little child.

Give me grace, O God, to pray now with pure and sincere desire for all those with whom I have had to do this day. Let me remember now my friends with love and my enemies with forgiveness, entrusting them all, as I now entrust my own soul and body, to Thy protecting care; through Jesus Christ. Amen.