



COLLABORATIVE DISCIPLESHIP

2 Cultivate

How to Confess and Breathe Spiritually

1 Connect

Summary God's unhindered influence on our lives involves continual confession and surrender. Spiritual breathing is a metaphor used to describe this. We "exhale" by confessing our sin. Confession is agreeing with God about our sin and thanking Him for His forgiveness. We then "inhale" by surrendering afresh to God. Surrender is yielding control of our lives to God and relying on the Holy Spirit to lead and empower us.

Those who confess their sins experience God's peace and blessing.

Read Psalm 32:1–11. (*A Psalm of David*)

"Blessed is the one whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the one whose sin the Lord does not count against them and in whose spirit is no deceit. When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. For day and night your hand was heavy on me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, 'I will confess my transgressions to the Lord.' And you forgave the guilt of my sin. Therefore let all the faithful pray to you while you may be found; surely the rising of the mighty waters will not reach them. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you with my loving eye on you. Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Many are the woes of the wicked, but the Lord's unfailing love surrounds the one who trusts in him. Rejoice in the Lord and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart!"

Discuss

Describe David's experience prior to confessing his sins to God.

What was his experience after confessing his sins?

Unconfessed sin blocks our fellowship and hinders our prayers.

Read Psalm 66:18.

"If I had cherished sin in my heart, the Lord would not have listened."

Discuss

Why is it important to God that you desire to give him control of your life?

What are the results of cherishing sin?

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On a scale of one to ten, what level of guilt or shame do you think most Christians feel on a daily basis? Why?

3 Care

Since we last met, what happened as a result of expressing Christ's love to others?

How can you, or we, express Christ's love to others this week?

Here are a few ideas:

Pray God would meet their deepest needs.

Help meet a felt need they have.

Encourage them with a text, note or verbally.

Give them a thoughtful gift or buy them coffee.

Invite them to do something fun or meaningful.

Listen to their story.

Explore their thoughts on the gospel.

We experience God’s forgiveness when we confess our sins.

Read 1 John 1:9.

“If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.”

Discuss

How often do we need to confess our sins?

What is God’s response to our confession?

We experience the Spirit’s power when we surrender afresh to God.

Read Romans 12:1–2.

“Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God’s mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God’s will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.”

Discuss

Why are we to offer our bodies as a living sacrifice?

How and why are we to be transformed?

Apply Take a few minutes to search your heart for any unconfessed sin. Jot these down on a piece of paper and confess them to God. Then, write 1 John 1:9 across the sheet of paper and tear it up, symbolizing God’s forgiveness for all these sins.

Pray In light of what we’ve discussed, how can we pray for each other right now?