

Repentance & Confession

The Means of Reconciling with God

The Lord Jesus Christ

"From that time Jesus began to preach and to say, Repent, for the kingdom of heaven is at hand." Mt 4:17

"...unless you repent you will all likewise perish."
Lk 13:3





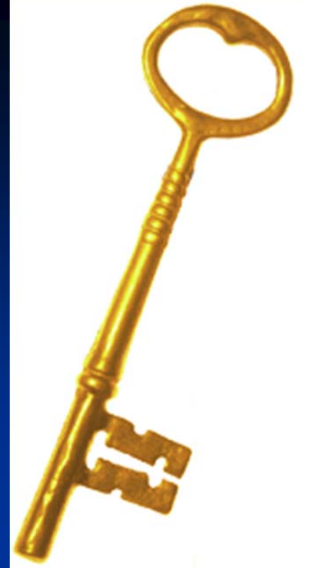
St. Paul the Apostle

“Now then, we are ambassadors for Christ, as though God were pleading through us: we implore you on Christ's behalf, be reconciled to God.”

2 Cor 5:20

Repentance

- Key to my renewal
- Key to my return to God
- Key to the washing of my sins
- Key to the Kingdom of God



St. Ignatius of Antioch

"Repentance is
...finding our
way back to
God"



"Cry out, O sinner,
with all your
might, and spare
not your throat;
for your Lord is
merciful and loves
those who repent.
As soon as you
return, your
Father will come
out to meet you
and rejoice..."

St. Ephraim the Syrian



Origen the Scholar

- "Through repentance... the sinner bathes his bed in tears and his tears become his bread by day and night... not ashamed to show his sin to the priest of the Lord and ask for the remedy"



Shepherd of Hermas

- "Do you not realize that repentance is understanding? "To repent is to understand...
...because the sinner understands that he has done wickedly before the Lord"

St. John Chrysostom



"Repentance consists of no longer doing the same things...For he who returns to the same sins is like a person who pours water into a container full of wholes."

St. John Saba



- "Repentance saves and releases those whom the devil captured..."
- "Many years of the devil's hard work is lost in one moment of repentance"
- "Repentance makes adulterers into virgins..."
- "Who does not love you O Repentance... you who carry all the blessings.... O Mother of forgiveness... intercessor for the sinners... and key to the Kingdom"

St. Isaac the Syrian

- "Repentance is the door of mercy, opened to those who seek it."



HH Pope Shenouda III

"Repentance is
the return of
the person to
himself... the
return of the
heart to God"
(Life of Repentance and Purity)



Parable of the Prodigal Son

- "But when he came to himself..." Luke 15:17







"...Bring out the best robe and put it on him, and put a ring on his hand and sandals on his feet. And bring the fattened calf here and kill it, and let us eat and be merry; for this my son was dead and is alive again; he was lost and is found." Lk 15:22-24

Parable of the Prodigal Son

First Step : Came to his senses and reflected on the state of his life (Repentance)



Second Step: Went back to his Father and admitted his sin (Confession)



Questions to Think About :

1. Why must I confess?
2. To Whom do I confess?
3. How do I confess?
4. What do I get out of confession?
5. How often do I need to confess?





Why must I confess?

1. It is a divine commandment

- "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" I JN 1:9
- "Confess your trespasses to one another, and pray for one another, that you may be healed" James 5:16

To Whom do I confess?



1. To the one who has authority to forgive my sins...

- God
- Priest



"He breathed on them, and said to them, Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained." Jn 20:22-23

"...whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" Mt 16:19

How do I confess?



1. Must examine 3 areas of my life
 - My relationship with God
 - My relationship with Others
 - My relationship with Myself

Other things to examine

- 10 Commandments
 - Sins of thought, body, and senses
 - Must be HONEST
- "Regard the priest as a spiritual father for you... reveal to him your secrets openly, just as a patient reveals his hidden wounds to the physician and so is healed" - St. Gregory of Nyssa

What do I get out of confession?



1. Forgiveness of my sins
2. Relief from my Guilt
(psychology of confession)
3. Advice and Guidance

How often should I Confess?



1. At least once /month or as otherwise directed by your spiritual father

2. Why?

Accountability

Minimize spiritual negligence

Not to forget my sins

Continue my spiritual growth





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Tertullian

- "Is it better to be damned...than to confess and be absolved?"

















St. John Chrysostom

- : " Just as a man is enlightened by the Holy Spirit when he is baptized by a priest, so he who confesses his sins with a repentant heart obtains remission (forgiveness) from the priest" .
- "Enter into the Church and wash away your sins, for it is a hospital for sinners..."
- " Do not be ashamed...to confess. Be ashamed when you sin and do not repent"
- "The priests decree below, God confirms above"

