

Do I Have To Make A Public Confession?

By Paul R. Blake

Introduction: 1Tim 5:20-25

- A. Exegete text.
- B. What should a Christian do regarding his unconfessed sins?
 - 1. Will time and fading memory wash away the sin?
 - 2. He or she remains in a lost condition until the day they die, unless that sin is confessed.
 - 3. Even if everyone forgets the sin; even if they are accepted back into fellowship by the church without a confession.
- C. What is the church's duty in this matter?
 - 1. If it receives the erring back into fellowship without a confession, it is guilty of:
 - a. Weakness - "they that are weak fall into a snare."
 - b. Indifference - "I will spew thee out of my mouth."
 - c. Fearful of doing duty - "Fearful... will have their part in the lake that burneth with fire and brimstone."
 - d. Endorsing sin - "Do not... share in other people's sins."
 - e. Failing to obey God - "Them that sin, rebuke before all."
 - 2. Can a church call itself sound when they receive the erring back into fellowship without a confession of sin?
- D. "Paul, why preach hard things like this?"
 - 1. Acts 20:20,27 - I am accountable to God to declare the whole counsel.
 - 2. 1Cor. 5:6-8 - Desire to maintain purity of the church by purging out the old leaven of unrighteousness.
 - a. Gal. 5:7; 1Tim. 5:21
 - 3. James 5:19-20 - because I love those souls in danger.
 - a. Gal. 6:1,10 - We do not love, nor or we being kind to, nor are we doing a favor for the erring when we receive them back into fellowship without a confession of sin; not with eternity coming and hellfire waiting.
 - b. Time and fading memory will not wash away their sins.
- E. Five questions...

I. WHY MUST I MAKE A CONFESSION?

- A. God said to; that's enough! - 1John 1:8-10
 - 1. Confession, not cover-up, rids us of our sins.
 - 2. Proverbs 28:13 - "He that covereth his sins shall not prosper, but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."

II. HOW SHOULD I CONFESS?

- A. 2Cor. 7:9-11
 - 1. Paul was happy that sorrow led them to change and repent.
 - 2. Vs 10 - Is the one seeking to avoid making a confession truly sorrowing after a godly sort?

3. Godly sorrow made them take action.
- B. Acts 8:18-24
1. Simon knew; later on, the Eunuch knew.
 2. Well Peter, I think the Lord will understand; it's not really your business; leave me alone for a while; I may make my confession later."
 3. Some develop elaborate plans and campaign hard to avoid confessing their sins.
 4. Luke 3:8 - "Bring forth fruits worthy of repentance."
- C. How should I confess? WILLINGLY!
1. Hoping to just drop back in and gradually be absorbed back in fellowship won't cleanse away the unconfessed sins.
 2. "Sitting in a hen house won't make you a chicken."
 3. Sitting in this building for a few months won't make an unfaithful Christian into a faithful one until he confesses his sins.

III. MUST I CONFESS MY SINS PUBLICLY?

- A. Luke 17:3-4
1. "Rebuke him"
 - a. Why is the brother rebuking made out to be the bad guy?
 - b. If I don't rebuke him, I am in danger of losing two souls: his and mine.
 - c. This text says rebuke him, not beg him to start attending again.
 - d. REBUKE - "to blame or scold in a sharp way; reprimand" (Webster's New World Dictionary).
 2. "If he turn to thee and SAY..."
 - a. Rom. 10:9-10
 - b. What if a prospect for baptism said upon being asked to make the good confession, "I'm confessing Christ by my actions."
- B. James 5:16
1. Confession is to be made to one another.
 - a. God made it a part of His law of pardon.
 2. Confession comes before forgiveness.
 - a. Just like baptism comes before remission of sins.
 - b. Is the sinner forgiven before baptism?
- C. To whom must the sin be confessed?
1. Those who have suffered by it.
 2. The whole church suffers over the sins of the unfaithful.
 3. Matt. 18:17 - because the church is spoken of as a group, it must be addressed in that capacity.
 4. The sorrow for sin and confession thereof must broadcast as fully as the scope of the sin itself.

IV. WHAT SINS SHOULD BE CONFESSED PUBLICLY?

- A. Any sin that has marred the good name of the Lord's church and has set a bad example for others.
1. Not gathering with the saints when we assemble.

2. Dishonesty in business, lying to the world and brethren, public immodesty, foul speech, social drinking, etc.
- B. Matt. 5:16; Eph. 3:20 - 4:1, 20 - 5:5.

V. WHAT IS THE CHURCH'S DUTY TOWARD THOSE WHO WILL NOT REPENT?

- A. Matt. 18:17
1. Would you allow an alien sinner to lead prayer or wait on the table?
 2. The erring Christian is in the same spiritual condition; he is lost.
- B. If he persists in unconfessed sin, don't be squeamish, tell him to do right.
1. If he gets mad and leaves altogether, he was never intending to do the right thing anyway.
 2. The Lord said to admonish him, in season and out of season; it is the right thing to do whether or not we think so.
- C. Matt. 18:19 - pray that they will repent and confess their sins.
- D. Do not disobey God and corrupt the church Christ died for by receiving them back into fellowship before they repent and confess their sins.

Conclusion:

- A. The doctor doesn't hate the patient he has to tell of his cancer and surgery.
- B. The weather man doesn't hate the audience he must tell of a coming tornado.
- C. The preacher does not hate the erring when he warns them of the coming judgment and their current lost condition.
 1. 1John 1:9, 2:1-2
 2. Do the right thing.