



30/10/2022

Pray First: Prayer our First Response not our Last Resort

Prayers of
Confession

READING Matthew 18:21-35

The Parable of the Unforgiving (or unmerciful) Servant (or debtor)

Overview

Jesus came to bring forgiveness to those who confess, but He also linked it strongly with a requirement to forgive others when they forgive you. How do we know we are truly forgiven if we feel bad about something? How are we to extend forgiveness to others? Is confession something we do enough, as a one off, or on a regular basis?

Summary

Confession and Forgiveness are two sides of the same coin. We are forgiven when we confess, and we are commanded to forgive others as we have been forgiven. A real prayer of confession needs to be without excuse, explanation or mitigation. God simply wants to know we admit we were wrong, we regret it and we repent.

Sins (“trespasses”) involve missing the target (falling short), stepping across the line, slipping from grace, breaking the law, leaving debts unpaid and not forgiving enough. Forgiving is total when we don’t tell anyone, don’t seek retribution, help the person to save face, wish them well and continue to forgive whenever we remember the event.

The route to peace for both sinner and sinned against is confession and forgiveness. The world needs more and both and we can set an example as Jesus commands.

Questions:

Conversation Starters

1. When did you last forgive someone for something significant? How did you feel?
2. When did you last take the initiative confess to something you felt ashamed of?

Start thinking and sharing

3. How often to you use prayers of confession in your daily devotions?
4. Do you feel we should have more prayers of confession in services?
5. Do you agree that we should forgive everybody for everything?
6. Do you still feel guilty and ashamed and unforgiven for anything in your life?

Start praying

7. Begin by silently confessing the sins you commit which you are most aware of.



Start doing

8. Consider including a prayer of personal confession in your daily devotions.