

Discussion Guide



Summer 2010 Sermon Series
<http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>

“Transformed by Confession”

Week # 5, July 31/Aug 1, 2010

- 1. Scriptures:** *James 5:13-16, Romans 12:1-3.* free mobile Bible apps available:
 - iphone: visit App Store, *ibible* or *Bible: Life Church YouVersion*
 - blackberry/droid: visit App World, *Bible: Life Church YouVersion*
- 2. Sermon:** *“Transformed by Confession”* Pastor Bruce Humphrey,
www.rbcpc.org/about-us/sermons/

Practicing the Spiritual Apps: www.rbcpc.org/small-groups/
- 3. Study resources:** www.amazon.com/
 - John Ortberg, *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch. 8 *“Life Beyond Regret”*
 - Richard Foster, *Celebration of Discipline*, Ch. 10 *“Confession”*
- 4. Study Guide** <http://www.rbcpc.org/spiritual-apps/>
- 5. Blog** <http://spiritualapps.blogspot.com/>

Next week: Aug 7/8: **Sermon:** *“Transformed by Faith”*
Study: *The Life You’ve Always Wanted*, Ch. *Celebration of Discipline*, pg.

“Transformed by Confession”

Scripture References

Read and reflect on the following scriptures. What do they say to you about the practice of *confession*?

James 5:13-16

Are any among you suffering? They should pray. Are any cheerful? They should sing songs of praise. ¹⁴ Are any among you sick? They should call for the elders of the church and have them pray over them, anointing them with oil in the name of the Lord. ¹⁵ The prayer of faith will save the sick, and the Lord will raise them up; and anyone who has committed sins will be forgiven. ¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another, so that you may be healed. The prayer of the righteous is powerful and effective.

Notes:

Romans 12:1-3

I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. ² Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God-- what is good and acceptable and perfect. ³ For by the grace given to me I say to everyone among you not to think of yourself more highly than you ought to think, but to think with sober judgment, each according to the measure of faith that God has assigned.

Notes:

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Sermon

Key Words: ***Joy - Truth - Feedback - Narnia***

“For Jesus, confession happens in public. James reinforces this idea that confession is a public act when he calls followers of Jesus to confess their sins to each other. James makes confession a spiritual app of community rather than a spiritual app of solitude.” Bruce Humphrey

1. What does this say to you about the value of community?
2. Why do you think Jesus' *confession* was accompanied by joy? What does this tell you about His relationship with His Father?
3. How does this change your thinking about the sin accompanied by guilt?
4. Pastor Bruce describes a *confession* exercise in which he participated. How might an exercise like this be helpful in your relationship with Jesus? With each other?

Scripture

5. Read the James 5:13-16 scripture. Why does James want us to *confess* our sins to each other?
6. How does *confessing* help us to be healed? Where does the healing power come from?
7. Read the Romans 12:1-3 scripture. How does *confession* allow us to present our bodies as holy and acceptable to God?
8. Who is the judge of what is acceptable?

Study Resource

9. When you hear the phrase “*confess* your sins to God,” what comes to mind?
10. Why do we have to *confess*?
11. What is it about *confession* that makes it an essential spiritual app (discipline)?
12. What is it about confession, repentance and forgiveness that enables us to face life with hope?
13. John Ortberg encourages us to find someone with whom we can talk about the “stains we have put on the sofa.” What experience have you had with doing this? What encourages you? What holds you back?

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Life Applications SPIRITUAL APP: Confession

Think about what you are trying to achieve through the discipline of *confession* - keep that in mind as you go through this section.

Remember that not all spiritual apps/disciplines will work for everyone. Celebrate that fact! Spiritual disciplines are a lot like spiritual gifts in that the Holy Spirit uses each one of us in a unique way. If this one does not work for you, don't give up, try the next one!

Personal:

- Think of a time you shared a burden with a trusted friend. How did you feel afterward? Did this bring you closer in your relationship?
- Share a burden with Jesus. Reflect on your relationship with Him and rest in His presence.
- Practice the 6 steps for Spiritual Stain Removal that Ortberg describes: 1) Preparation, 2) Self-examination, 3) Perception, 4) Ask why and what happened, 5) make a new promise, 6) healing grace. Reflect on the positive difference this will make in your life.

Small Group:

- Go around the room and share one positive gift that the person sitting on your right brings to the group.
- Keeping the word “joy” in the sentence, *confess* one thing that you experienced this week.

Pray:

Personal: Thank Jesus for hearing your prayers, and know that He is answering before you even speak.

Group: Pray for honest conversations within your group. Invite the power of the Holy Spirit into the room to help you do this.

Kingdom: Pray that as we practice the spiritual app of *confession*, the deep levels of God's truth will be revealed to each one of us so that we will be free to bless others with the unique gifts He has given each one of us.