

PRACTICING FAITH

CONFESSION AND REPENTANCE

GRIEVING

Sometimes we grieve for what we have done or failed to do. Many religious traditions have opportunities for confession to a priest, rabbi, or other spiritual guide. Twelve-step programs are also well known to implement open confession. You are encouraged to confess in community. Also, be assured that God desires to spend time with you individually as you confess shortcomings and your accompanying grief. Allow the experience of confession and repentance to guide your journey to healing.

Begin this practice by sitting somewhere comfortable. Find a place which will afford you minimal disruption or distraction and put your phone on silent mode or add some quiet worship music to the background. Now, take a few deep breaths and invite God into this space. Notice the Holy Spirit's work already happening and acknowledge God's companionship in every aspect of your life.

As you come into God's presence, worship. This can be done in song, by reading a Psalm, or by simply listing attributes of God which evoke a response of worship for you.

Now, it is time to do what you have come here for: confess. Make it up as you go, or use this guide for Christian confession if you are struggling to find the right words.

Forgiving God,

I come before you today grateful that you are a kind and merciful God, and that Jesus, as the light of the world, invites me into his light, even the parts of me I may be ashamed of. Thank you for your Holy Spirit working in me to reveal my truest self. I am grateful that my true self is your image in me and that you will work in me and through me to move me closer to you.

I am sorry for my thoughts, words, and actions which do not align with the reality of your image in me. For the ways that I have hurt you, others, and myself. I now intentionally enter the light of Jesus so that we can see them clearly.

Pause.

Lord, I confess that I _____. When I _____ I know it grieved the Spirit and that it was not reflective of your desire for my life. I repent of this sin and ask for your forgiveness.

Repeat this until you have confessed everything you would like to,

In light of my heart of repentance, I ask, God, for your guidance in how next time I can respond differently. Lord, please give me creative eyes to reimagine a new way.

(Take a moment to jot down anything that comes to mind.)

Thank you, Lord, that you are a kind and forgiving God. Help me to accept your forgiveness for the sins I have confessed. Thank you for the blood of Jesus which atones for the sins of humanity, May I reject the shame that may desire to follow me as I commit to continuing to walk in your light.

Amen