

Hey Team,

This is a difficult topic to discuss. However, as we are trying to go deeper and richer in our relationships, transparency and vulnerability are needed. This means that we, as leaders, get to 'go first.' Let's aim at being real with our family.

WHY IS IT SO HARD TO APOLOGIZE?

Apologies are hard. Right?

Why is this so?

What all is involved?

Who has modeled apologies or confession for you?

The opening discussion point is designed to help us listen to God's Word together and move toward application.

LEARN FROM GOD'S WORD, THE BIBLE

This chapter will be studied for two successive weeks. Daniel knew, that according to Jeremiah's prophecy (Jeremiah 25), the end of the 70 years of captivity and exile was near. He also knew, that this exile was God's discipline for their own sin, rebellion, and transgression. They had ignored God's warnings through His prophets and were now a small remnant in Persia.

Read through Daniel's response to their discipline and situation in 9:1-19 and consider the following questions.

What was Daniel's posture toward God?

Humble, honest, owning up, emotional, and trusting God with his deepest thoughts and feelings

Why were the Jews in this situation? What brought this about?

Repeatedly, Daniel attributes the blame and shame on themselves – their sin, rebellion, etc.

This is first step toward repentance

From what Daniel wrote, what did he know about the character of God?

1- Notice that Daniel assumes that forgiveness is possible, but not required of God.

2- Righteousness

3- Listening to prayer, attentive to His people, near

4- Requiring / desiring obedience

5- Knowing all things, omniscient

6- Caring, compassionate, loving

What words and phrases did Daniel use to describe sin by the Jewish people? (be specific)

This is a long list. It shows that Daniel understood and owned their sin.

Rebellion, iniquity, wickedness, transgression, ignoring prophets / God's messengers, done wrong, brought shame, disobeyed, turned away, (dishonored) your name.

What does Daniel fear will happen without repentance?

Face God's wrath, continue in desolation & shame & scorn.

What do we learn from the Old Testament about repentance? (See 2 Chronicles 7:14; Isaiah 55:7; Jeremiah 3:12-14; Ezekiel 33:11; Joel 2:12-14)

Look up each selected passage. Each contains a nugget of knowledge about repentance.

Read 1 John 1:9. Does this encourage you to go to God when you have sinned?

(1) If we know the character of God and His desire to bring us to Himself and live in His joy and love

(2) If we know that true confession and repentance opens the door for God to forgive and cleanse

(3) Then we should live encouraged to go to God when we have sinned.

By the way, mercy is not required of God. It is a gift.

DISCUSS TOGETHER

What stands out to you in this passage? What do learn from Daniel's confession?

Looking for personal thoughts and feelings here.

Why should one man confess sin for the whole nation? Does it matter?

Hmmm – good question.

In Mark 1:15, Jesus spoke to our need for "repentance." What is the role of repentance in our relationship with God and others? How is confession connected with repentance? Why? How is this important in our covenant with God?

Jesus' initial and following calls included "repent and believe."

Is confession a first step toward repentance or the action that follows?

Why is this important to God? He knows that we need it, that He wants nothing between us, that He wants us to trust Him in His character of compassion and grace, He wants us to know Him, and sin hinders this.

Should we confess sin for our people? For our church? For ourselves? Why?

I know that there have been times when we have (for example, in our National Day of Prayer) and recently at "Gather25."

Why should we do this?

APPLY IT THIS WEEK

Confession is hard, very hard. It is an acknowledgement of the truth our life – we have a deep rooted problem of sin, pride, and selfishness. But it is the starting place of a right relationship with God. King David wrote to God, "Against you, you only, have I sinned and done what is evil in your sight" (Psalm 51:4). Confession and repentance are essential to every relationship, especially with God. If we know the truth about God, then we know that He wants us to come to Him when we have sinned. He has repeatedly shown Himself to be forgiving. If we understand and own that, it encourages us to 'run to and not from' our forgiving Father. For He promises that, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9) God wants us to live with Him in peace, joy, and love.

PLEASE PRAY

- Please pray for our teams going to Greece and Poland to serve global partners
- Please pray for our Young Adults on retreat this coming weekend (3/21-23)
- Please pray for our team of 35 heading to build a loft-house in Mexico