

Sermon Notes

Series: How to Be A Peacemaker

Date: January 3rd, 2010

Title: “Step 6: Confess Your Sins”

Text: Daniel 9:1-19

BIBLICAL CONFESSION...

1) ADDRESSES EVERYONE INVOLVED. (vv.3-4)

a) Who does Daniel address in His confession?

- i) King Darius? No! A priest? No!
- ii) Daniel makes his confession to God – the One that he and Israelites have sinned against.
- iii) Daniel turned to the LORD –which signifies God’s personal name – YHWH.
- iv) He turned to the very God who poured His grace on Israel, who led them out of Egypt, who provided for them in the wilderness, and who brought them into Caanan.
- v) He turned to the very God who established a covenant with Israel.
- vi) So in verses 3-4, Daniel, standing as Israel’s representative, confesses their sin to God.
 - (1) That’s who they offended and so that’s who he confessed to.

b) And our sins are always against God, aren’t they?

- i) God is the one who deserves our trust and love and obedience.
 - (1) And anytime we fall short ... anytime we sin - we sin against Him.
- ii) But at times our sin is also against others.
 - (1) When we use our tongues as weapons or break our word or fail to love our neighbor we sin against them.
 - iii) And as long as our sin directly affects someone, we need to confess that sin to them.
 - (1) So if our sin remains in the confines of our heart, we confess that sin to God.
 - (2) But as soon as that sin moves beyond our heart and affects someone else, we confess that sin first to God and person it affected.
- iv) Cf. James 5:16, Luke 15:18

2) ACKNOWLEDGES OUR GUILT. (vv.5-10)

a) It’s clear from these verses that Daniel has no problem acknowledging Israel’s sin.

- i) He knows they turned aside from God’s commands.
 - (1) He knows they didn’t listen to the prophets and patriarchs before them.
 - (2) And he knows they have not walked in a faithful relationship with God – in fact He calls their sin treachery.
- ii) But Daniel doesn’t just acknowledge their sin... He also acknowledges their guilt.
 - (1) That’s why he keeps saying: “to you O Lord belong righteousness, but to us belongs shame.”

- iii) And at the heart of confessing sin is acknowledging our guilt.
 - (1) In fact, the word “confess” literally means to “say the same things as”
- iv) So when we confess sin, we are saying the same thing about it as God does.
 - (1) When we confess sin we’re acknowledging that our sin creates a debt and we stand guilty and deserving of punishment.

b) There are a couple things you can do when confessing your sin to help acknowledge your guilt.

- i) First, when you confess sin to God and others, be as specific as possible.
 - (1) So for example, when you confess sin to your spouse you could say “Honey I was wrong for what I did.”
 - (a) But it would be much better to say “Honey, I was wrong to be so critical of you earlier. I shouldn’t slander you and tear you down with my speech.”
 - (2) When we’re specific about our sin it forces us to acknowledge our guilt.
 - (a) When we’re specific about our sin it communicates that we are taking ownership for what we’ve done.
- ii) The second thing we can do to acknowledge our guilt is avoid using the words “If, but, and maybe” when we confess sin.
 - (1) I mean.. have you ever heard someone say... “I’m sorry **if** I’ve done something wrong to offend you”?
 - (a) It’s as if they aren’t sure whether they actually did something wrong or not.
 - (2) Or have you ever heard someone say... “I know I was wrong, **but** you shouldn’t have (whatever)...”?
 - (a) If you’re like me, as soon as you hear the word but you disregard anything that was said before it.
- iii) When we use ifs, buts, and maybes we’re usually avoiding responsibility for our sin.
 - (1) When we use ifs, buts, and maybes we’re usually excusing our guilt.
- iv) And if that happens, we’re no longer confessing sin.

3) ACCEPTS THE CONSEQUENCES FOR OUR SIN. (vv. 11-15)

- a) **In the case of Daniel, he recognized that by breaking covenant with God, Israel was under the covenant curses.**
 - i) Daniel accepted the fact that Israel’s sin brought calamity upon themselves, including the exile that they were currently facing.
 - ii) And we see the same thing happening with Zaccheus in the N.T. (cf. Lk 19:8)
 - iii) And when we confess our sin to others, we too need to accept the consequences.
 - iv) So for example...
 - (1) The husband who sinfully rules over his wife may find that she is still timid and fearful even after he has confessed his sin and changed.
 - (2) The woman who spread rumors about her friend may find that her friend doesn’t share her deepest secrets with her anymore even though she has confessed her sin and stopped spreading those rumors...

4) And then finally this morning, in verses 16-19, we see that BIBLICAL CONFESSION ASKS FOR FORGIVENESS.

- a) There is a trend that we as Christians often fall into that I think is unbiblical.**
- i) Instead of asking for forgiveness, we apologize.
 - (1) We say things like “I’m sorry for acting that way” or “I’m sorry for hurting your feelings.”
 - ii) But we have to understand that apologies don’t accomplish the same thing as asking for forgiveness.
 - (1) When we apologize we’re expressing our feelings and regret, but we’re not really asking the person that we offended to cancel our debt.
 - (2) That’s why when we apologize, people say “oh, that’s okay” or “no big deal”.
 - iii) But how do we know they won’t become bitter with us?
 - (1) How do we know they won’t gossip about us or retaliate?
 - iv) Basically, the only way we can know someone is willing to make the promises of forgiveness is if we ask for forgiveness.
- b) And that’s what Daniel was asking for in these verses.**
- i) So Daniel wasn’t just apologizing.
 - (1) He wasn’t just acknowledging his guilt – he already did that.
 - ii) He was asking God to absorb the punishment for their sin and clear their record.
 - (1) Daniel was asking for forgiveness.
 - iii) And Daniel knew they needed God’s forgiveness because Israel couldn’t forgive themselves.
 - (1) Israel’s sinfulness made it impossible for them to wipe away their own debt.
 - (2) As he said in verse 18: “For we do not present our pleas before you because of our righteousness...”
 - iv) Daniel knew that the only reason God would forgive them was out of His mercy.
 - (1) And so Daniel prayed that for the sake of His name... for His own glory, God would mercifully forgive Israel.
 - v) And when we come asking for forgiveness from God or others, we need to follow Daniel’s example.
 - (1) We need to remember that we don’t deserve to be forgiven.
 - (2) And we have no means of clearing our own debt.
 - (3) Instead we need to be forgiven from God and those we’ve directly sinned against.
- c) And praise God because that forgiveness is possible through Jesus. (cf. Eph 2:4-5)**
- i) So because Jesus became a man... because Jesus took our unrighteousness... because Jesus became our sacrifice – we can be forgiven.
 - ii) And if we have experienced this forgiveness, we should be able to forgive each other.
 - (1) Cf. Col 3:12-13
 - iii) So as you go to you brother or sister or spouse to *Confess Your Sin*, make sure it’s a biblical confession.
 - (1) Don’t cut corners and compromise by minimizing your guilt or apologizing.
 - (a) Don’t follow the world’s model or the tradition of any church.
 - (b) Instead follow Daniel’s biblical example.
 - (2) And let your confession of sin to each other mirror you confession of sin to God.
 - (a) And to do that, you need to address everyone involved, acknowledge your guilt, accept the consequences, and ask for forgiveness.