

Confession: *Cleansing from sin & a guilty conscience through prayers of Confession and Repentance*

PROCESS: THE ALTAR PRAYER GUIDE

1. Preparation

Begin in a spirit of sonship and faith. Delight in dealing with sin. Remember:

- The Lord only chastises those He loves. Because of His love for you, He is raising you up as a son in His own image. That includes maturing your character and godliness
- The Lord loves you too much to leave you in bondage to sin. Dealing with sin increases the Lord's Presence in your life, freedom, joy, peace, and fulfillment. Sin is a curse to you – it is stealing and destroying in your life, and the lives of those you love. Continuing in sin is like keeping as a constant companion a buffoon who constantly robs and beats those you love, and you. It is stupid and we only do it if deceived.
- Sin includes all that is contrary to God's nature (love and holiness), and contrary to our true nature (sons and servants of God, dependent on Him for our every breath, for guidance and for power to accomplish His will). That begins with the knowledge of good and evil (choosing for ourselves what is right, regardless of what God thinks), prideful independent living (choosing our own pursuits and life-purpose, regardless of Father's call on our lives), and selfish motives (primarily directed by what brings me greater comfort and pleasure, beyond wisely laboring to provide for basic needs).
- Your sins have already been dealt with on the cross. The price has been paid. Forgiveness is already yours for any sins you are genuinely repentant of.

2. Prayers of Forgiveness

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal any people you have not yet forgiven
2. When feeling convicted of any person you have not yet forgiven for hurting you:
 - Confess the sin of not forgiving this person to the Lord. Acknowledge it is evil and destructive
 - If you are having trouble forgiving your offender, strengthen your spirit to forgive by:
 1. Reading Mathew Ch 6:9-15, and Mt 18:21-35.
 2. Thanking the Lord for His forgiveness of your sins, and for sparing you the fires of hell which would be your just condemnation for your many sins
 - Out loud, declare (to heavenly witnesses) that you choose to fully forgive your offender
 - Pray for Father to bless your offender. Try pray for at least 3 specific needs you know them to have
 - Commit, by faith in the empowerment of His Spirit in you, to respond in love to your offender in future



- Ask Father to release freedom in your heart from all bitterness, resentment, or ill-will of any sort towards your offender

3. Prayers of Confession & Repentance

1. Ask the Holy Spirit to search your heart and reveal any sins
2. Spend time “listening” for conviction – the Holy Spirit will reveal any areas where the Lord is not pleased. Some useful tools include:
 - Reading a suitable passage of scripture, e.g. the Sermon on the Mount, Rom Ch 12-16; or a short Epistle like 1 John, Colossians, or Ephesians
 - Reflecting on your day, or week, and especially relational conflict
3. When feeling convicted of any particular sin
 - Confess this sin to the Lord. Acknowledge it is evil and destructive
 - Out loud, renounce this sin, declare that you break agreement with this sinful practice
 - Commit to the Lord to stop committing this sin, by His power
 - Thank the Lord for His forgiveness
 - Ask the Lord to show you the sort of response to similar temptations He wants to empower in you by His Spirit
 - Thank the Lord for His New Covenant commitment to write His ways on your heart, and to empower you by His Spirit to live righteously (Ezek 36:27-29; Jer 31:31)
 - Commit, by faith in the empowerment of His Spirit in you, to respond as He has shown you in future to similar temptations
 - If you still feel conviction, ask the Lord to reveal if there remains any lack in repentance. If not, simply praise God, proclaim “I am forgiven in Jesus name”, quoting 1 John 1:9
 - *If we confess our sins, **he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.** (1 Jn 1:9)*



TOOL: THE BIBLE'S EXAMINATION GLASS: SERMON ON THE MOUNT SUMMARY (THE BELIEVERS' RULE OF LIFE)

The beatitudes

- a. Mt 5:1-12 - Have the right heart attitudes
(poor in spirit; mourn over sin; meek; hunger for righteousness; merciful; pure in heart; peace-makers; willing to endure persecution for righteousness' sake)
- b. Mt 5:11-12 - Rejoice in persecution for association with Jesus
- c. Mt 5:13-16 - Be salt and light to the world. Let your light be seen (I.e. let your faith in Jesus be evident to all around you)

Doing the Law

- d. Mt 5:17-20 - **Do and teach the mosaic law, until all is fulfilled**
- e. Mt 5:21-26 - Do not be angry without a cause, and settle quickly with anyone you have offended
- f. Mt 5:27-30 - Do not lust, and fully and finally cut off / uproot all causes of sin in your life
- g. Mt 5:31-32 - Do not divorce, or marry someone divorced
(note: this is a new covenant instruction)
- h. Mt 5:33-37 - Do not make oaths; let your yes and no be simply yes and no
- i. Mt 5:38-42 - Do not retaliate, do not resist evil against you, give to anyone who begs from you, or asks for a loan
- j. Mt 5:43-48 - Love and pray for your enemies
- k. Mt 6:1-4 - Give to the needy in secret, not before men
- l. Mt 6:5-15 - Pray in secret, pray simply, according to the pattern of the Lord's prayer; and forgive others
- m. Mt 6:16-18 - Fast in secret
- n. Mt 6:19-34 - Seek treasures in heaven, not on earth. Do not serve money. Seek first the Kingdom of God
- o. Mt 7:1-5 - Do not judge others. First judge yourself, then with humility help correct your brothers
- p. Mt 7:6 - Don't cast precious truths to those motivated by their appetites
- q. Mt 7:7-11 - Ask, seek, knock
- r. Mt 7:12 - "So: ..." Do unto others as you would have them do to you **"for this is the Law and the Prophets"**

Closing:

- s. Mt 7:13-14 - Enter the way to Life by the narrow gate
- t. Mt 7:15-20 - Beware of false prophets. Recognise them by their fruits
- u. Mt 7:21-23 - Not all who say "Lord, Lord", will enter the Kingdom
- v. Mt 7:24-27 - Build your life on these words, and you will stand in the day of tribulation

Response of the crowds:

- w. Mt 7:28-29 - Crowds marveled, for Jesus taught with authority

