

# Freedom Through Confession

**STEP 5 - We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.**

All of us struggle with our conscience, trying to make peace within our own heart. We may deny what we have done, find excuses or try to squirm out from beneath the full weight of our conduct. We may work hard to be "good," trying to counteract our wrongs. We do everything we can to even out the internal score. In order to put the past to rest, we must stop rationalizing and admit the truth.

We are all born with a built-in buzzer that alerts us to what is wrong. God holds everyone accountable because *"in their hearts they know right from wrong. They demonstrate that God's law is written within them, for their own consciences either accuse them or tell them they are doing what is right"* (Romans 2:14,15).

Part of Step Five is to stop this internal struggle and admit that wrong is wrong. It's a time to agree with God and our own conscience about our cover-up and the exact nature of our wrongs. We're like people who have been accused of crimes which they actually committed. We may have spent years constructing alibis, coming up with excuses, and trying to plea bargain. It's time to come clean. It's time to admit that we know deep down inside to be true: "Yes, I'm guilty as charged."

There is no real freedom without confession. What a relief it is to finally give up the weight of our lies and excuses. When we do confess, we will find the internal peace that we lost so long ago. God longs to flood us with forgiveness. In the Bible, He says: *"I - yes, I alone - am the one who blots out your sins for my own sake and will never think of them again"* (Isaiah 43:25).

It is human nature to want to cover our shameful deeds and to hide from God. But we can't hide from God. He saw it all. When we are forced to face the reality of the situation, it is helpful to recall God's nature, which is full of love, kindness and mercy. No sin is too great to be forgiven. We do not have to earn forgiveness. We just have to receive it.

The Bible tells us that *"if we confess our sins to Him, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from every wrong"* (1 John 1:9)

We may feel that we have done such horrible things or hurt people so badly that there is no way our sins could be blotted out entirely. The Bible tells us that God *"does not deal with us as we deserve"* (Psalm 103:19). God tells us: *"No matter how deep the stain of your sins, I can remove it. I can make you as clean as freshly fallen snow. Even if you are stained as red as crimson, I can make you as white as wool"* (Isaiah 1:8).

Part of the recovery process is accepting complete forgiveness from God. We may keep track of all our failures but in God's eyes we are clean. Confession of our wrongs brings us one step closer to full recovery.

## Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. What scares me about making a confession of my wrongs to God?
2. Which of my faults will be the most difficult to acknowledge?
3. How do I feel about having another person present while I make my confession?
4. Which part of Step 5 is most threatening - revealing wrongs to myself, to another person or to God?
5. How do I understand God's mercy and forgiveness?
6. What do I hope to gain from doing Step 5?