

Unending Love

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

Admitting the exact nature of our wrongs to God is the first phase of Step 5. We confess to God all that we have worked so hard to conceal. We do not blame God for what has happened to us. We begin to accept our history for exactly what it is. We acknowledge that whether we felt God's presence, God has been with us through all of our struggles and pain.

We may be sorely aware of the deep shame, trouble and pain we inflicted on our family when we were controlled by our addiction. We may be afraid to admit the exact nature of our wrongs because we don't understand how God could love someone who is so bad.

Hosea was a prophet to the rebellious nation of Israel. God used Hosea's life to demonstrate his unconditional love for us and His people. The Lord told Hosea to marry a prostitute. Hosea married her, loved her, and devoted himself to her. But later his wife relapsed into her old ways, broke Hosea's heart, and brought shame on their family. She fell into slavery. God then baffled Hosea by telling him, ***"Go and get your wife again. Bring her back to you and love her, even though she loves adultery. For the Lord still loves Israel even though the people have turned to other gods"*** (Hosea 3:1).

We may be asking, How could God (or anyone) still love me? But God asks, ***"Oh, how can I give you up...? How can I let you go? How can I destroy you...? My heart is torn within Me, and my compassion overflows...For I am God and not a mere mortal. I am the Holy One living among you, and I will not come to destroy"*** (Hosea 11:8-9).

God has lived with us every day of our lives. God has seen everything we've said and done. God has also seen secret thoughts and secret actions. God knows it all already. There is absolutely nothing we can do or confess to God that would cause Him to stop loving us.

"Can anything ever separate us from Christ's love? Does it mean He no longer loves us if we have trouble or calamity...? No, despite all these things, overwhelming victory is ours through Christ, who loved us" (Roman 8:35-37).

"Nothing can ever separate us from His love. Death can't, and life can't. The angels can't, and the demons can't. Our fears for today, our worries about tomorrow, and even the powers of hell can't keep God's love away. Whether we are high above the sky or in the deepest ocean, nothing in all creation will ever be able to separate us from the love of God that is revealed in Christ Jesus our Lord" (Romans 8:38-39).

God's ongoing desire is for us to live in His love and acceptance every day of our life. Shame and false guilt keep us from being open to receive what God is offering. Blame and misplaced responsibility ("It's his/her fault because...") keeps us from receiving God's forgiveness for our actions and reactions. Knowing and living in the truth is healing and renewing. Our confession helps us receive God's love and accept ourselves unconditionally. No matter what we have done, it is important to remember that we are all children of God and will never be rejected. At the same time, confession that is complete and filled with responsibility-taking and repentance is the key to the freedom for which our hearts long.

Questions for Reflection and Discussion

1. In what ways do I blame God for what has happened to me?
2. How does this affect the way I feel about Him?
3. How do I think God feels about me?
4. What things have I done that I feel could influence the way He feels about me?
5. What does "overwhelming victory" mean to me?
6. How will my confession help me to receive God's love?