

WOUNDED

Forgiveness needs more than a



Wounded: Part 5

Small Group Material

Leader Guide

The Way We Receive

April 3rd, 2016

Bottom Line: *Confession requires submission.*

Study Verses: *Isaiah 53:6, Proverbs 28:13, Hebrews 10:1-4,8-14, Ephesians 5:21, 1 John 1:5-10*

Define The Win: *Participants would understand the difference between confession, submission and repentance. In situations where they need forgiveness, participants would identify what drives their behavior rather than focusing on the action itself.*

Key Points

- When we come to God we often bring our case rather than a confession.
- Repentance is the way we receive forgiveness.
- When we identify where we have confession without submission, we find the places where our buttons are likely to be pushed.
- We live in a culture where we are taught to conceal our mistakes.
- Our system is not God's system.
- Confession precedes repentance.
- The gift of forgiveness allows us to understand grace in ways that go undetected in our old system of checks and balances.
- Driving to the WHY enables us to find WHAT truly needs to be confessed.
- If we conceal our sin, we rot from the inside.

ENCOUNTER

- When you think of sin and confession, what comes to mind? Does your mind tend to gravitate towards behavior or heart issues?
- How do we receive forgiveness without manipulating and abusing it? How do we use confession to alleviate our guilt?

FORMATION

"If you had a perfect excuse, you would not need to be forgiven... If we forget this, we shall go away imagining that we have repented and been forgiven when all that has really happened is that we have satisfied ourselves with our own excuses."

-CS Lewis

- Read the quote from C.S. Lewis and Isaiah 53:6. How do we justify the reasons we have "gone astray"? How can you tell when you are justifying rather than truly confessing?
- Read Hebrews 10:1-4,8-14. Our system is not God's system. According to this passage, what were some of the shortcomings of the old system? What was it incapable of doing? Even though Christ made a way for us to be whole, in what ways do we continue to live under the old system of forgiveness?
- Read Ephesians 5:21. What does it mean to be submissive in the context of a relationship? What role does submission play in forgiveness?
- Read 1 John 1:5-10. How is confession simply an agreement that something is broken between us and God? What does confession do? How are we positioning ourselves before God when we confess?

EXPRESSION

- Read Proverbs 28:13. What situations are you stating your case before God rather than offering a confession?
- In this situation, you've identified the WHAT (behavior). But, what is driving the WHY (underling motivator)?
- Where do you have confession without submission? What causes you to hesitate to submit in this area?

LEADER INSIGHT

We live in a culture that teaches us to conceal our mistakes. We're told to admit nothing unless absolutely necessary. After all, we have the right to remain silent. We act this way in order to avoid incriminating ourselves. This concealment erodes our relationships, driving a wedge between both parties. It undermines our vulnerability, transparency and trust.

Eventually things get to a point where we can no longer avoid the elephant in the room. But, even with our backs up against the wall we offer up our case rather than our confession. We begin to list off excuse after excuse. We might have gone astray but we have a perfectly justifiable reason for doing so. "God, I know I have lost my temper but its been a long day." "I might have spoken harshly to others but... my wife hasn't been responsive...my husband hasn't been understanding... my kids haven't behaved..." We might have gone our own way but if others were in our shoes they would have gone the same route as well. We offer these justifications to relieve our guilty conscience but instead it leaves us rotting from inside.

We know that forgiveness leads to life but we are looking for it in all the wrong places. We attempt to construct a system of checks and balances that deals with our mistakes, transgressions and shortcomings. For every sin, there must be a confession. Without even realizing it, we're living under the weight of the old system. The old system focused on perfection and performance. It was all about us doing things to position ourselves acceptable to God. This system of sacrifice was incomplete at best. Our sin had caused relational separation that no amount of effort on our part could fix.

Fortunately, our system is not God's system. God set aside the first covenant in order to establish the second. The second system erases the first. We must remind ourselves of this truth or we will continue to make sacrifices disguised as promises. When we make promises (God if you forgive me, I will _____), we are unwittingly making an offering. Relationships and systems are two fundamentally different things. Christ died in order to repair our relationship.

God doesn't shy away from our sin. He wants us to be honest about it. Confession is to admit that something is broken. When we confess, we are opening up and availing ourselves to God. This confession allows us to delve deeper into what drives our behavior. When it comes to the issue of forgiveness, we can't remain on the surface where our behavior resides. We must pay attention to the heart issues

that lie beneath. We must resist our default to justify our actions. As we approach the table, we must not bring any excuses with us.

When we find out the WHY our eyes are open to what is really going on. We see that anger wasn't really the sin, it was our entitlement in feeling more important than others. Confession isn't just about identifying something, its identifying something and making a judgment about it. Confession requires submission. Submission provides the highest form of fellowship, connection and intimacy because, in doing so, we are laying down our will.

Repentance is the way we receive forgiveness. This requires us to not only identify our way but turn from that direction. The gift of forgiveness allows us to understand grace in ways that go undetected in our old system. Forgiveness is an overall orientation. It frames the way we see things. God's mercy towards us influences our posture towards one another. We've been invited to forgive in the way we have been forgiven. Forgiveness isn't meant to alleviate our conscience but to heal our soul.