

Series Theme: *Confession and Absolution – Part 1 of 6*

“Divine Service 1”

Based on Various Passages

2nd Wednesday of Lent – 2011

March 16 → 11:00 & 7:00

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, last week Jesus instructed us on the topics of ♦giving, ♦praying, ♦fasting, and ♦treasuring; today – *and in the coming weeks* – we will focus on the topic of **confession and absolution**:

- **To confess our sins** is to say they are *true*, be sad that we have done them, and *desire to stop* them.
- **Absolution** is *God’s forgiveness*; God speaks through His called servants to assure *repentant sinners* that *they are forgiven!*

Today, we focus on the words of confession and absolution from Divine Service 1 in the Lutheran Service Book:

1. **Confession:**

- a. **1 John 1:8** – If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. God’s Word of truth tells us that “*all have sinned*” (*Romans 3:23*); therefore, *if we say we have no sin*, we are communicating two things: **(1)** we do not think we are sinners, *even though the Bible says we are*, and **(2)** we do not know God’s Word of Truth *through which He wants to work to free us from our sins!* Therefore, we begin the confession by being honest: **WE ARE SINNERS!**

- b. **1 John 1:9** – But if we confess our sins, God, who is **faithful** and just, will forgive our sins and cleanse us from all unrighteousness. Again, *regarding our sins*, God is calling and enabling us to → SAY they are true, → be SAD we have done them, and → desire to STOP! Then God – *who keeps all of His promises* – will wash us completely clean! Now, *knowing of God’s goodness and desire*, WE ARE READY TO MAKE AN OPEN AND HONEST CONFESSION!
- c. **Let us then confess our sins to God our Father.** Yes, *the one to whom we confess is our true father!* The Bible says: ^{NAU} **1 John 3:1** “See how great a love the Father has bestowed on us, that we would be called children of God; and such we are.” Now, *knowing of our blessed relationship with the almighty God*, WE ARE FURTHER READY TO CONFESS OUR SINS!
- d. **Most merciful God, we confess that we are by nature sinful and unclean.** God is merciful, *not wanting to punish but forgive*, so we admit that by nature – *by inheritance, generation-after-generation* – we are sinners. The Bible says: ^{NAU} **Romans 5:12** “...just as through one man sin entered into the world, and death through sin, and so death spread to all men, because all sinned...” We have all inherited the ORIGINAL sin committed in the garden; *since then we have added many of our own ACTUAL sins!*
- e. **We have sinned against You in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done [thought, word, and deed] and by what we have left undone.**

- i. Thought – ^{NAU} **Matthew 5:28** “...everyone who looks at a woman with lust for her has already committed adultery with her in his heart.”
 - ii. Word – ^{NAU} **Ephesians 5:4** “...there must be no filthiness and silly talk, or coarse jesting...”
 - iii. Deed – For example: You shall not *dishonor parents, murder, commit adultery, or steal!*
 - iv. Left undone – ^{NAU} **James 4:17** “...to one who knows the right thing to do and does not do it, to him it is sin.”
- f. **We have not loved You with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.**
- i. God – ^{NAS} **Mark 12:30** “...you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart, and with all your soul, and with all your mind, and with all your strength.”
 - ii. Neighbors – We are supposed to love them *as we love ourselves!* As we take action to provide our needs – physical, spiritual, etc, *so we are called to take the same action toward our neighbors!*
Sometimes we *have*, oftentimes we *have not!*
- g. **We justly deserve Your present and eternal punishment.**
- i. Present – Pain in childbirth, thorns and thistles, illness, broken relationships, pain, and death!
 - ii. Eternal – We could argue that we are not that bad, *that we do not deserve eternal punishment*; nevertheless, Jesus identifies only two eternal places: ^{NAU} **Matthew 25:46** “These ’, who have rejected me as their Savior will go away into

eternal punishment, but the righteous [those who have received me as Savior] into eternal life.”

- h. **For the sake of Your Son, Jesus Christ, have mercy on us.** We deserve God’s punishment, but we are asking Him to hold it back solely because of Jesus’ saving work – *living in our place and taking our sins!*
- i. **Forgive us, renew us, and lead us, so that we may delight in Your will and walk in Your ways to the glory of Your holy name.** We ask God to ♦take away our sins, ♦put us back on the path of His will, and ♦lead us to glorify Him in all our ways!

2. **Absolution:** Now a brief absolution explanation; *more will follow in the weeks ahead!*

- a. **Almighty God in His mercy has given His Son to die for you and for His sake forgives you all your sins.** You have made a huge request, *but the Almighty God is willing and able to answer for Jesus’ sake!*
- b. **As a called and ordained servant of Christ, and by His authority, I therefore forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit.** Jesus said to His disciples: ^{NAU} **John 20:23** “If you forgive the sins of any, *their sins have been forgiven them...*” Therefore, ♦assuming you have made an honest confession and ♦authorized by Jesus to pronounce His forgiveness, *I gladly do so!*

Conclusion: Now, *having a better understanding of the Divine Service 1 Confession and Absolution*, let us †confess our sins and †be certain of God’s forgiveness! *Amen!*

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