

Series Theme: *Confession and Absolution – Part 5 of 6*

“Divine Service 3, Option 2”

Based on Various Passages

6th Wednesday of Lent – 2011

April 13 → 11:00 & 7:00

Introduction: Dear friends in Christ, we return again to the topic of **confession and absolution**:

- To **confess** our sins is to say they are *true*, be sorry that we have done them, and *desire to stop* them.
- **Absolution** is *God’s gift of forgiveness!*

Today, we focus on the words of confession and absolution from Divine Service 3, option 2 (usually a non-communion service):

1. **Pre-Confession Statements:** These are the same as Divine Service 3, option 1; *they encourage us to confess!*
 - a. (Based on Hebrews 10:22) **Beloved in the Lord! Let us draw near with a true heart and confess our sins unto God, our Father, beseeching** (begging) **Him in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ to grant us forgiveness.** Knowing that God is our loving Father, *we beg Him to forgive us for Jesus’ sake!*
 - b. (Psalm 124:8) **Our help is in the name of the Lord. Who made heaven and earth.** Knowing that God is the creator, *He can certainly forgive our sins!*
 - c. (Psalm 32:5) **I said, I will confess my transgressions** (sins) **unto the Lord. And You forgave the iniquity** (wickedness) **of my sin.** As David confessed and was forgiven, *so we are encouraged to do the same!*

2. **Confession:**

- a. **Almighty God, our Maker and Redeemer** [we are calling upon the One who made us, but also upon the One who ♦saw us fall into sin and ♦gave His only Son to be our Savior], **we poor sinners confess unto You** [we are poor *because we do not have the means to fix our dreadful problem of sin*; therefore, we confess to God in order to seek His Divine intervention]:
- i. **we are by nature sinful and unclean** – Ever since the fall of the woman and the man, *sin has been inherited generation-after-generation* (Romans 5:12; Psalm 51:5).
 - ii. **we have sinned against You by thought, word, and deed** – As we honestly compare between ♦the Bible – *God’s Holy Word of Truth* – and ♦our own thoughts, words, and deeds, we will see the huge difference and should admit our sins!
- b. **Wherefore** [for this purpose] **we flee for refuge** [protection] **to Your infinite** [immeasurable] **mercy, seeking and imploring** (urgently praying for) **Your grace** [Your love, *not because we deserve it* but] **for the sake of our Lord Jesus Christ**. Think about what Jesus did for us and all: ^{NIV} **2 Corinthians 8:9** “For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sakes he became poor, so that you through his poverty might become rich.”
- c. (We pray together) **O most merciful God, who has given Your only begotten Son to die for us:** We are calling upon God, *our Father*, who ♦is very merciful and ♦has already given His Son to die for us!

- i. **have mercy upon us** – Hold back the punishment that our sins have earned for us!
- ii. **for His sake grant us remission** (forgiveness) **of all our sins** – Because of Jesus, *who came, lived, suffered, and died to cleanse us from our sins*, for His sake – *and His sake alone* – we ask You, our dear Father, to forgive us!
- iii. **by Your Holy Spirit increase in us:** Through what means does the H. S. work? *Through the Word!* Therefore, *along with our commitment to faithfully use the Word*, we are asking God to grant us these blessings:
 1. **true knowledge of You and of Your will** – Since our heavenly Father has saved us through Jesus, we should desire to know more about ♦Him and ♦His will for our lives!
 2. **true obedience to Your Word** – Then the new nature – *which we received along with Christ* – has a sincere desire to obey the Word! The Bible says: ^{NAU} **1 Corinthians 10:31** “*Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.*” He is glorified when – *from faith* – we live His Word!
- iv. **to the end that by Your grace we may come to everlasting life; through Jesus Christ, our Lord.** So – *forgiven through Jesus and increasing by the H. S. in our knowledge and obedience* – we ask our dear Father to CONTINUE US IN SUCH THINGS until we are finally with Him forevermore!

3. **Absolution:** *This is the good news!*
- a. **Almighty God, our heavenly Father, has had mercy upon us** [held back our punishment from us] **and has given His only Son to die for us** [to pour out our punishment upon Him] **and for His sake forgives us all our sins.** So now, THROUGH JESUS, we are clean! ^{NAU} **Isaiah 1:18** “Come now, and let us reason together,” Says the LORD, “Though your sins are as scarlet, They will be as white as snow; Though they are red like crimson, They will be like wool.”
 - b. (based on John 1:12) **To those who believe on His name He gives power to become the children of God and has promised them His Holy Spirit.** *The eternal blessings of God are being offered to everyone!* They belong to all who have been **born of God** (John 1:12-13; 3:1-8)! In other words, God the Father – *working by the Spirit through the Word* – is making dead sinners into living saints through Jesus!
 - c. (Mark 16:16a) **He that believes and is baptized shall be saved.** People are saved *by grace through faith in Jesus!* GOD imparts the gift of faith through baptism (Mt. 28:19; Gal. 3:27) and His Word (Jam. 1:18; 1 Pet. 1:23)!
 - d. **Grant this, Lord, unto us all.** Understanding *our great need for God’s great blessings*, we make our request!

Conclusion: Now, *having a better understanding of the Divine Service 3, Option 2 Confession and Absolution*, let us †confess our sins and †be certain of God’s forgiveness! And all God’s people said: *Amen!*