

## Being Sorry, Asking Forgiveness, or CONFESSING?

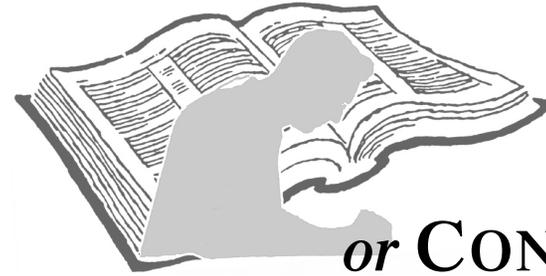
*1 John 1:1-10*

God has given to His children only one requirement in order to restore a fellowship that has been broken by sin. That requirement is confession: “If we **confess** our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (*1 John 1:9*). Some think we should come to God and just say, “Lord, I’m sorry.” Sorrow for sin certainly has its place, but being sorry is not **confession**. Even with human relationships, it is much easier to say “I’m sorry” than it is to tell the offended person exactly what we have done and to acknowledge how wrong it was. God demands more than “I’m sorry.”

Others, burdened by sin, come to God saying, “Lord, forgive me.” Yet, asking forgiveness is not exactly the same as **confessing** sin. God has promised to forgive us if we **confess** our sins. We do the **confessing** and God will do the forgiving. Of course, we are speaking here of fellowship forgiveness, not salvation forgiveness, the latter having been already accomplished once for all, forever. In the family of God we often need to get things right with our Heavenly Father, but this has nothing to do with our eternal salvation. True **confession** involves an honest acknowledgment of the wrongs we have done and the sins we have committed. Sorry for what? Forgiveness for what? With an open heart, God wants you to spell it out.

**Confession** may be summarized in four words: “Lord, I have sinned.” God wants us to tell Him what we have done and agree with Him that what we have done is sinful in His sight. David gives a good example of true and contrite **confession**: “For I acknowledge my transgressions....Against Thee, Thee only have I sinned, and done this evil in Thy sight” (*Psalms 51:3-4*).

~George Zeller: [www.middletonbiblechurch.org](http://www.middletonbiblechurch.org)



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