



CONFESSION+ SELF-EXAMINATION

Desire: *To surrender my weaknesses and faults to the forgiving love of Jesus and intentionally desire and embrace practices that lead to transformation.*

Definition: *Self-examination is a process whereby the Holy Spirit opens my heart to what is true about me. This is not the same thing as a neurotic shame-inducing inventory. Instead it is a way of opening myself to God within the safety of divine love so I can authentically seek transformation. Confession embraces Jesus' gift of forgiveness and restoration while setting us on the path to renewal and change.*

Scripture: *"Make this your common practice: Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you can live together whole and healed." (James 5:16 MSG)*

God-given fruit:

- *thinking of yourself with sober judgment, awareness of your blind spots*
- *seeing yourself as God's loved and forgiven child no matter what you have done*

Reflection Questions:

1. *Does your confession tend to be along the lines of "Forgive my sins, dear Lord" than specifically naming your sins one by one before the face of God? What does the lack of specific confession do to self-awareness?*
2. *Which of your sins hurts those closest to you?*

Spiritual Exercises:

1. *Set aside some time for confession and self-examination. In the presence of God ask for your defenses to go down. Then ask yourself, Who have I injured recently through thoughtlessness, neglect, anger and so on? As the Holy Spirit brings people to mind, confess your specific sins in relation to harming these people. Ask God to forgive you and if need be to give you grace to forgive them. Write an apology, make a phone call or confess out loud in an attempt to put the relationship back on track.*
2. *Ask some of your family and close friends to help you see your blind spots. Ask questions like, what do I do that hurts you? How could I better love you? What is it like to be with me? Do I show interest in others or talk mostly about myself? Let their answers and the Holy Spirit guide you in a time of confession.*