

The Ancient Path of Confession

Ancient Paths (Pt. 4)

March 18, 2018

Jeremiah 6:16 Thus says the Lord: “Stand by the roads, and look, and ask for the ancient paths, where the good way is; and walk in it, and find rest for your souls. But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’

Premise of Series: God has given us these ‘ancient paths’ in life to travel on, so that we might encounter Him and be enchanted by Him, instead of the things in our personal land.

“...But they said, ‘We will not walk in it.’

NOTE: People seem to have their own reasons for why they will not walk on ancient paths...

Psalm 32 ...a Psalm of David (the man after God’s own heart)

...The description of: a Blessed Condition ...an Unblessed Condition ...and the Means of Changing that

v. 1-2 [A Blessed Condition] ...These verses Introduce us to this wonderful experience and status called ‘Forgiveness’—

v. 3-4 [An Unblessed Condition] ...These verses describe life’s experience when confession is not taking place and sin is allowed to remain present, even if it is present in a hidden or covered up or ignored way. ...*At face value—this is a man whose life contains the choice, pursuit, momentary indiscretion or practice of sin—and he is then faced with the question of **What Do I Do Now?***

— Well, **there are only 2 Options:** “Cover Up my Sin” or “Expose/Reveal my Sin” ...and for some reason it made more sense to cover it up.

- v. 5 [The Means of Experiencing the Blessed Condition]** ...This is the hinge of the Psalm. There is a before condition and an after condition that this verse highlights the remedy for!

...Like the day we observed for our Psalmist in Ps. 73 ...

"The main point is in verses 1 and 2, namely, to be forgiven is a very happy condition. Verses 3—5 tell us how to attain that happy state: first, negatively, don't try to conceal your sin from God (verses 3 and 4), then, positively, acknowledge your sin and confess it to God (verse 5). So the point of verses 1—5 is: the person who does not conceal his sins but confesses them to God will find the tremendous happiness of a clean conscience and peace with God." **John Piper**

Scenery Along the Ancient Path of Confession

v. 6-11 ...describes the 'scenery' along the ancient path of confession.

- v. 7** ...highlights an awakened awareness of God's protection and covering and deliverance

"...the man who prays and confesses his sin to God is blessed not only because of what God does not do—namely, impute iniquity to him—but he is also blessed by what God does do—namely, preserve him from trouble and surround him with songs of deliverance. God is not only not against him, he is mightily for him." **John Piper**

v. 8-9 ...Instruction and teaching and counsel becomes clear and accessible to him

- v. 10** ...the experience of actively TRUSTING the Lord is the sense of being surrounded by His Love! ...**Here the actions of confession are seen as an act of "Trusting" the Lord—which implies that when we retain sin or cover sin or hold on to sin, we are not TRUSTING in the Lord!**

v. 11 ...Uprightness of heart is experienced by our confession—and when the heart is postured that way, we can experience gladness, joy, and rejoicing.

Other Encounters Along the Ancient Path of Confession:

- **The Path of Confession allows us to Encounter an Accurate Self-awareness**

For our achievement culture at its core, powered by the rise of therapy as a kind of secular religion, has elevated feelings as the peak of human flourishing. The greatest good is to feel good. ...The contemporary life script of the achievement culture is to arrange a life that delivers constant pleasurable feelings, to keep the social and psychic borders up, to keep negative feelings outside. When positive emotions become the pinnacle of personal growth, a tyranny of feelings is quickly established.” Mark Sayers, Strange Days: Life in the Spirit in a Time of Upheaval (pp. 159-160). Kindle Edition.

Php 3:3-10

Php 3:9 “...and be found in him, not having a righteousness of my own that comes from the law, but that which comes through faith in Christ, the righteousness from God that depends on faith—

- **Are you aware of WHERE you are seeking to mine out your righteousness —‘your sense of rightness’??
...What is it that will make you feel ‘right’ about yourself, about your life, about how you are doing and who you are?**

...It is very easy to make our own achievement or uniqueness or success or discipline or avoidance of vices or superior comparison the BASIS for our personal sense of ‘Rightness’!!

When I do the theological homework of ‘not seeking a righteousness of my own, derived from the Law’... then I find the freedom to ‘Self-Explore!’...a Sure sign that we are ‘theologically uninformed and unequipped’ to live this Christian life—is that we lack the freedom and courage to look at ourselves honestly!

...This creates an undercurrent of ‘resistance to biblical teaching and biblical passages that feature ‘instruction and correction’—but remember 2Tim 3:16. If I have an aversion to receiving ‘instruction or correction’ because it makes me feel ‘guilty’ or like a ‘failure’—it is because it highlights my lack of ‘personally achieved righteousness’! ...But the great JOY & LIBERTY of the Christian life is that all our righteousness is IMPUTED Righteousness. It is ‘Received Not Achieved’!!!

- ***The Path of Confession allows us to Encounter Humility***

Php 2:2-7

...Php 2 highlights humility as the ingredient that brings about unity! ...It is this quality that is like RELATIONAL GLUE that helps us to stick together!

...In a Marriage ...In a Family ...In a Church ...In the Work Place

- ***The Path of Confession allows us to Encounter a Fresh Awareness of Grace***

*"Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered."
Beloved, you must know the bitterness of sin before you can know the blessedness of forgiveness! And you must have such a sight of sin as shall break your heart before you can understand the blessedness of the Divine covering, that sacred cover which hides sin effectually, blots it out, and even makes it cease to be. "Blessed is he whose transgression is forgiven, whose sin is covered." Charles Spurgeon (Expository Thoughts from Ps. 32)*

- ***The Path of Confession Launches us into the Adventure of Transformation!***

The Mechanics of 'Confession'

1. The Abandonment of My SELF-Rightness Project
2. Holy Spirit Led Awareness and Acknowledgment and Agreement with God
3. Ownership & Responsibility ...Not seeking to explain away or create an excuse or transfer blame to others
4. A Posture that is Prepared for Repentance