

## **ELEMENT OF WORSHIP:**

### **Confession of Sin**

*We acknowledge our need of forgiveness and renewal through the cleansing blood of Jesus.*

#### **DEFINITION**

The Confession of Sin is the portion of liturgy in which we verbally acknowledge that we are a sinful people in need of forgiveness and rescue. In our Confession, we simultaneously acknowledge who God is and who we are.

*"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 (ESV)

#### **DEVOTIONAL**

What words do you most associate with confession? Shame? Emptiness? Fear? Often, our confessions can feel empty and motivated by shame or fear. This was certainly the case as a child when you got caught with your hand in the cookie jar! In our Confession of Sin, however, we are motivated not by shame or fear, but by covenant. By covenant, we mean God's declaration, promise, and

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faithfulness in initiating and sustaining a relationship with his people. This relationship is one of family - God declares us his children! We've already celebrated his initiation of relationship in the Call to Worship. In our Confession of Sin, then, we are not participating in a trite admission of guilt or a mere formality. Instead, we come to God the Father through God the Son by the power of God the Holy Spirit as his people. In this, we see that all of God is involved in claiming all of us. And because our relationship with God is already secure in the covenant, our confession becomes a sign of the security that is ours in Christ. The more secure we feel in Jesus, the more honest we can be in confession.

## **APPLICATION**

Confession is a daily reality of the Christian life. It does not require elegant language or extended time. The Confession of Sin that we recite on Sundays can be used in your personal devotions. Consider writing the Confession used in the service in your journal or somewhere easily accessible. Supplement the written prayer with your personal confession. Try incorporating

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this time of confession into your end-of-day routine. While you brush your teeth or get into bed, bring your day before the Lord and acknowledge where you've fallen short using the words from the Confession from the service. Keep 1 John 1:9 and Lamentations 3:22-23 in view during your prayer.

*Most merciful God, we confess that we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed, by what we have done, and by what we have left undone. We have not loved you with our whole heart; we have not loved our neighbors as ourselves. We are truly sorry, and we humbly repent. For the sake of your Son Jesus Christ, have mercy on us and forgive us, that we may delight in your will and walk in your ways, to the glory of your holy name. Amen.*

(From the Book of Common Prayer)

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