

CHOOSE YOUR ATTITUDE, CHANGE YOUR LIFE

6 – Choose Confession over Guilt

**"People who cover over their sins will not prosper. But if they confess and forsake them, they will receive mercy. Blessed are those who have a tender conscience, but the stubborn are headed for serious trouble."
- Proverbs 28:13-14, NCV**

**"But if we confess our sins to God, he can always be trusted to forgive us and take our sins away."
- 1 John 1:9, CEV**

Everyone has known the misery of living with a guilty conscience. As you read Psalm 32, you'll find a identifiable process that must occur in our hearts as we deal effectively with the guilt, shame, and consequences of our sin. But keep in mind that the process is not the solution to your problems—*God* is the solution.

Welcome

What's the story behind the longest time you've gone without sleep?

Word

Read Psalm 32

1. If the cliché is true, "*Confession is good for the soul*," why do we find it so difficult? List as many reasons you can for why we fear "coming clean." How does secrecy only accentuate these fears?
2. Read verses 3-4 once again. Share a time when you experienced what those words describe.
3. What happened when David finally acknowledged his sin? How have you seen God's mercy when you owned up to your sin?
4. What does David realize about God (verses 6-7)? How does his understanding of God differ from the caricature often depicted of a God who "keeps books" on people for the expressed purpose of condemning them? Notice a similar affirmation in Psalm 130:3-4. Does this mean that God isn't concerned about sin?
5. What kind of "trouble" does verse 7 include? What did it include for David? Often, when we've sinned badly, we are tempted to run away from God and/or people, or to simply just give up. In Psalm 51:10 David asks that God renew "*a steadfast spirit*" so that he could find the courage and strength to deal with the consequences of his sin. Have you ever prayed a similar prayer?

Worship

When it comes to dealing with sin, don't be like a mule or any other stubborn beast (verse 9)! Take your choice—there are only two paths (verse 10). The path of the wicked (which brings many sorrows), or the path of trust (throwing yourself upon God's *steadfast love* and *compassion*). Spend time praising God for these two qualities.

Works

We are all "trophy of God's grace." How has God used (or how could God use) your own sin as a testimony of His grace? As Paul put it, "*But since I was worse than anyone else, God had mercy on me and let me be an example of the endless patience of Christ Jesus. He did this so that others would put their faith in Christ and have eternal life.*" (1 Timothy 1:16). **The way in which you handle your own failures says a lot about whether you are more concerned about *impressing* people, or *influencing* people.**