

# Forgiven – The Transforming Power of Confession - Keypoints

## Session 1 – Where are you?

1. Guilt isn't a bad thing – something we should ignore or justify – but rather a wake-up call and a step toward reconciliation with God.
2. The many ways we deal with guilt, including distraction and changing our thought process to justify it, can keep us from acknowledging our sins and recognizing our need for God's forgiveness.
3. God is a loving and merciful Father who seeks us out when we have sinned to call us back into relationship with him.

## Session 2 – An Encounter with Mercy

1. Confession is more than just a place to get absolution for our sins – it is an encounter with God's mercy.
2. In this sacrament God not only **forgives** us, but **heals** our wounds and the root causes of our sins.
3. It is Christ himself whom we encounter in the Sacrament of Reconciliation – the priest is acting in the Person of Christ the head and forgiveness comes from the power and authority of Jesus.

## Session 3 – The Rite Explained

1. Priests generally find great joy in hearing confessions because they get to witness God's powerful mercy truly changing lives.
2. You won't shock or scandalize a priest with your confession, and he won't think any less of you for the sins you have confessed.
3. Confession is completely confidential because the priest is bound by the Seal of Confession.
4. The sacrament requires thoughtful preparation, which we call an examination of conscience.
5. There are 2 types of sins: mortal and venial
  - a. Mortal sin is serious sin that completely ruptures our relationship to God and requires us to go to Confession before receiving the Eucharist. 3 conditions must be met for a sin to be mortal:
    - i. grave matter
    - ii. full knowledge
    - iii. full consent
  - b. Venial sin weakens charity; it manifests a disordered affection for created goods; it impedes the soul's progress in the exercise of the virtues and the practice of the moral good; it merits temporal punishment.
6. The Rite of Penance includes
  - a. the Sign of the Cross,
  - b. Although not in the Rite of Penance, it is a good and praiseworthy custom for penitents to state how long it has been since their last Confession.
  - c. listing your sins,
  - d. receiving your penance,
  - e. making an Act of Contrition,
  - f. and receiving absolution.
7. All 3 acts of the penitent must be present in a confession in order for the confessor to impart sacramental absolution:
  - a. Contrition – an inner disposition of the heart, which includes purpose of amendment, before it is expressed in the Act of Contrition.
  - b. Confession – telling your sins to the priest.
  - c. Satisfaction or Penance - an act of love in response to forgiveness – it is not a way to earn forgiveness.

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## Session 4 – Biblical Foundations

1. God's mercy and abundant love is revealed in Exodus 34:6-7 and this theme is repeated throughout the Old Testament.
2. David provides the model for true contrition and confidence in God's loving mercy and forgiveness.
3. God delegates his authority to angels in the Old Testament and to men in the New Testament.

Then, in John 20, the authority to forgive sins is specifically delegated to the Apostles.

## Session 5 – Answering Common Questions about Confession

1. The Sacrament of Reconciliation flows out of God's nature of steadfast love and mercy.
2. We confess our sins to a priest because Jesus gave his Apostles the authority to continue his ministry of reconciliation and forgive sins.
3. Confession makes sense on a human psychological level because we all need to get things off our chest and have the peace of forgiveness.
4. In Confession we are reconciled to both God and the church, and we receive God's healing mercy.