



19 Minutes with Luther

The Keys and Confession

- The Knowledge of God
- Law and Gospel
- Introduction to the Law
- 1st Commandment
- 2nd Commandment
- 3rd Commandment
- 4th Commandment
- 5th Commandment
- 6th Commandment
- 7th Commandment
- 8th Commandment
- 9th & 10th Commandments
- The Conclusion
- The Gospel & the Nature of God
- The Apostles' Creed (Faith)
- 1st Article (Creation)
- 1st Article (Preservation)
- 1st Article (Protection)
- 1st Article (The Fall into Sin)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Person)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Office)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Work)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Humiliation)
- 2nd Article (Christ's Exaltation)
- 2nd Article (Christian Life)
- 2nd Article (Saved by Faith)
- 3rd Article (The Holy Spirit)
- 3rd Article (Calls)
- 3rd Article (Enlightens)
- 3rd Article (Sanctifies)
- 3rd Article (Keeps in Faith)
- 3rd Article (Invisible Church)
- 3rd Article (Visible Church)
- 3rd Article (Forgiveness)
- 3rd Article (Eternal Life)
- Baptism (Part 1)
- Baptism (Part 2)
- Holy Communion (Part 1)
- Holy Communion (Part 2)
- Keys & Confession (Part 1)
- Keys & Confession (Part 2)
- **Keys & Confession (Part 3)**
- Introduction to the Lord's Prayer
- The Address
- 1st Petition
- 2nd Petition
- 3rd Petition
- 4th Petition
- 5th Petition
- 6th Petition
- 7th Petition
- The Doxology

Confession

First: What is confession?

Confession has two parts. The one is that we confess our sins; the other, that we receive absolution or forgiveness from the pastor as from God himself, not doubting but firmly believing that our sins are thus forgiven before God in heaven.

Second: What sins should we confess?

Before God we should plead guilty of all sins, even those we are not aware of, as we do in the Lord's Prayer.

But before the pastor we should confess only those sins which we know and feel in our hearts.

Third: How can we recognize these sins?

Consider your place in life according to the Ten Commandments. Are you a father, mother, son, daughter, employer, or employee? Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy? Have you hurt anyone by word or deed? Have you been dishonest, careless, wasteful, or done other wrong?

Fourth: How will the pastor assure a penitent sinner of forgiveness?

He will say, "By the authority of Christ, I forgive you your sins in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. Amen."

1. The first part of confession is that we admit that we are sinners who deserve God's punishment. According to the following passages, why will we confess our sins?

"Confess your sins to each other" (James 5:16).

"If we confess our sins, [God] is faithful and just and will forgive our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9).

2. King David wrote: *"Because of your wrath there is no health in my body; my bones have no soundness because of my sin. My guilt has overwhelmed me like a burden too heavy to bear. My wounds fester and are loathsome because of my sinful folly. I am bowed down and brought very low; all day long I go about mourning. I confess my iniquity; I am troubled by my sin"* (Psalm 38:3-6,18). What does God use to lead people to confess their sins? What others effects will God's use of this instrument have on people?

3. The second part of confession is hearing the comforting message that our sins are forgiven. Identify the two parts of confession as they appear in a typical worship service.

4. Read again King David's words from Psalm 38. When and why might we want to make a private confession to our pastor?

5. When will we want to confess a sin to another person?

6. How will confessing our sins help with our relationships with others?

7. Explain: There can never be true confession without a desire to put away sin.

8. Many people are reluctant to confess their sins. Instead, they will try to justify their sins or transfer the guilt of their sin to others (to their parents, coworkers, or situations in which they find themselves). Why are people reluctant to confess their sins? What is the result of refusing to do so?

Luther said:

"If the needs that ought to move and induce us to make confession were pointed out, then one would need little urging or coercion. Everyone's conscience would so drive and disturb him that he would be glad to do what a poor and miserable beggar does when he hears that a rich gift of money or clothing is being handed out at a certain place; so as not to miss it, he would run there as fast as he can and would need no bailiff to beat and drive him on. . . . If you were a Christian, then you ought to be happy to run more than a hundred miles to confess and not let yourselves be urged to come; you should rather come and compel us to give you the opportunity." (Tappert, pp. 459,460.)

Closing Prayer

I, a sinner, come to you with a penitent confession. Savior, show me mercy, too; grant for all my sins remission. Let these words my soul relieve—Jesus sinners does receive. Amen. (CW 304:5.)

At home

- Memorize Confession.
- Read Private Confession (CW, pages 154,155).

Helps

(1) We will confess our sins because God demands that we do so and because we want to be assured of his forgiveness. (2) God uses his Law, the Ten Commandments, to lead us to confess our sins. God's law convicts and crushes the sinner so that he feels God's wrath, is filled with despair over his own righteousness, and pleads for God's mercy. (3) A typical worship service will include a time of formal confession and absolution. Elements of confession and absolution, however, may be found throughout the service (in the hymns, prayers, or sermon). (4) We might want to confess privately to our pastor when we are troubled by a particular sin in our lives so that we might be assured of God's forgiveness. (5) God wants us to confess to others when we have sinned against them. (6) Sin threatens any relationship, be it with God or others. Confessing sin and being assured that it is forgiven will foster a relationship. (7) True confession includes sorrow over the sin that has been committed and a sincere desire never to offend God again by repeating that sin. (8) A proud and self-righteous person, whose heart has been hardened to the message of God's law, will refuse to make confession. Such a person forfeits the assurance of God's forgiveness.