

## Celebrate Recovery

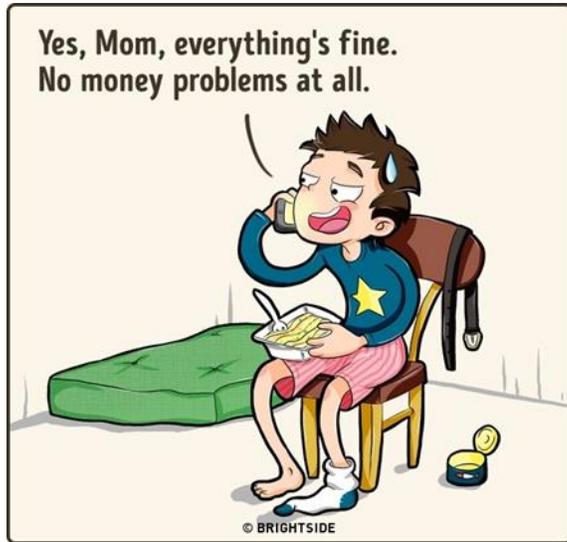
### Admit Lesson 13

Principle 4: Openly examine and confess my faults to myself, to God, and to someone I trust.

*“Happy are the pure in heart.” (Matthew 5:8)*

Step 5: We admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.

*“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)*



#### Introduction

This week we are going to focus on **confessing (admitting) our sins, all the dark secrets of our past, to another person.**

*We have all heard that the wages of sin is death, but you may not have heard that the wages of sin are never frozen or that they are never subject to income taxes. One of the main reasons for that is because most of the wages of sin go unreported! And, by the way, if the wages of sin is death, shouldn't you quit before payday?*

#### Why Admit My Wrongs?

All joking aside, this part of Principle 4 is often difficult for people. I am often asked, **“Why do I have to admit my wrongs to another?”**

Many of us have been **keeping secrets** almost all of our lives. **Every day those secrets take a toll on us.** The toll we pay is **loss of self-respect and energy** as well as **bondage** to old **codependent habits.** **Admitting** —out loud —those secrets **strips them of their power.** **They lose much of their hold on us when they are spoken.**

Still, we are afraid to reveal our secrets to another person, even someone we trust. **We somehow feel as if we have everything to lose and nothing to gain.** I want you to hear the truth tonight. **Do you know what we really have to lose by telling our secrets and sins to another?**

1. **We lose our sense of isolation.** Somebody is going to come down into that well we talked about two weeks ago and be alongside us. Our sense of aloneness will begin to vanish.
2. **We will begin to lose our unwillingness to forgive.** When people accept and **forgive us, we start to see that we can forgive others.**
3. **We will lose our inflated, false pride.** As we see and accept who we are, we begin to **gain true humility,** which involves **seeing ourselves as we really are and seeing God as He really is.**
4. **We will lose our sense of denial.** Being truthful with another person **will tear away our denial.** We begin to feel clean and honest.

Now that you know what you have to lose when you admit your wrongs to another, let me tell you three benefits you will gain.

1. **We gain healing** that the Bible promises. Look at *James 5:16 again: “Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”* The key word here is healed. The verse doesn’t say, “Confess your sins to one another and you will be forgiven.” God forgave you when you confessed your sins to Him. Now He says you will begin the healing process when you confess your sins to another.

2. **We gain freedom.** Our secrets have kept us in chains — bound, frozen, unable to move forward in any of our relationships with God and others. Admitting our sins snaps the chains so God’s healing power can start. *“They cried to the Lord in their troubles, and he rescued them! He led them from the darkness and the shadow of death and snapped their chains” (Psalm 107:13 – 14, TLB).*

Unconfessed sin, however, will fester. In *Psalm 32:3 –4 (GNT)* David tells us what happened to him when he tried to hide his sins: *“When I did not confess my sins, I was worn out from crying all day long... My strength was completely drained.” Remember, “Openness is to wholeness as secrets are to sickness.”* My grandpa used to say, “If you want to clear the stream, you need to get the hog out of the spring.” Admit and turn from your sins. Remember that the only sin God can’t forgive is the one that is not confessed.

3. **We gain support.** When you share your inventory with another person, you get support! The person can keep you focused and provide feedback. When your old friend “denial” surfaces and you hear Satan’s list of excuses — “It’s really not that bad”; “They deserved it”; “It really wasn’t my fault” — your support person can be there to challenge you with the truth. But most of all, you need another person simply to listen to you and hear what you have to say.

### How Do I Choose Someone?

Unlike little Jessica, the little girl trapped in the well, whom we talked about in Lesson 12, you can choose the person to come down into your well with you, so choose carefully! You don’t want someone to say, “You did what?” or “You shouldn’t have done that.” You don’t need a judge and jury. We already talked about the verdict. Remember *Romans 3:23 –24 (TLB): “All have sinned; ... yet now God declares us ‘not guilty’ ... if we trust in Jesus Christ, who ... freely takes away our sins”* and *1 John 1:9: “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness”?*

You just need someone to listen. I find that it works best to choose someone who is a growing Christian and is familiar with the eight principles or the 12 Steps.

1. Choose someone of the same sex as you, whom you trust and respect. Enough said!
2. Ask your sponsor or accountability partner. Just be sure they have completed Principle 4 or Steps 4 and 5. The process should go more smoothly if the person is familiar with what you are doing. He or she will also have a sense of empathy, and if the person can share personal experiences, you will have a healthy exchange.
3. Set an appointment with the person, a time without interruptions! Get away from the telephones, kids, all interruptions for at least two hours. I have heard of some inventories that have taken eight hours to share. That’s perhaps a little dramatic.

### Guidelines for Your Meeting

1. **Start with prayer.** Ask for courage, humility, and honesty. Here is a sample prayer for you to consider:

God, I ask that You fill me with Your peace and strength during my sharing of my inventory. I know that You have forgiven me for my past wrongs, my sins. Thank You for sending Your Son to pay the price for me, so my sins can be forgiven. During this meeting help me be humble and completely honest. Thank You for providing me with this program and

\_\_\_\_\_ (the name of the person with whom you are sharing your inventory). Thank You for allowing the chains of my past to be snapped. In my Savior's name I pray, Amen.

- 1 Read the Principle 4 verses found on page 25 in Participant's Guide 3, Getting Right with God, Yourself, and Others.
- 2 Keep your sharing balanced —weaknesses and strengths!
- 3 End in prayer. Thank God for the tools He has given to you and for the complete forgiveness found in Christ!

**Think/write/discuss**

1. In Principle 4 we are asked to give our inventory three times. Who are we to confess it to and why?

2. Most of us find it easier to confess our wrongs to ourselves and God. We seem to have more difficulty in sharing them with another person. What is the most difficult part for you? Why?

3. What is your biggest fear of sharing your inventory with another person?

4 List three people with whom you are considering sharing your inventory. List the pros and cons for each. Select one

5. Pick a quiet location to share your inventory. List three places and circle the best one.

Now you are ready for one of the most liberating experiences of your life here on this Earth! You will appreciate *James 5:16 as never before. "Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed."*

#### **Principle 4 Verses**

*"Admit your faults to one another and pray for each other so that you may be healed" (James 5:16, TLB).*

*"You were dead in sins, and your sinful desires were not yet cut away. Then He gave you a share in the very life of Christ, for He forgave all your sins, and blotted out the charges prove against you, the list of His commandments which you had not obeyed. He took this list of sins and destroyed it by nailing it to Christ's cross. In this way God took away Satan's power to accuse you of sin, and God openly displayed to the whole world Christ's triumph at the cross where your sins were all taken away" (Colossians 2:13-15, TLB).*

*"If we say that we have no sin, we are only fooling ourselves, and refusing to accept the truth. But if we confess our sins to Him, He can be depended on to forgive us and to cleanse us from every wrong (And it is perfectly proper for God to do this for us because Christ died to wash away our sins)" (1 John 1:8-9, TLB).*

*"A man who refuses to admit his mistakes can never be successful. But if he confesses and forsakes them, he gets another chance" (Proverbs 28:13, TLB).*

*"Yes, each of us will give an account of himself to God" (Romans 14:12, TLB).*

*"There was a time when I wouldn't admit what a sinner I was. But my dishonesty made me miserable and filled my days with frustration. All day and all night Your hand was heavy on me. My strength evaporated like water on a sunny day until I finally admitted all my sins to You and stopped trying to hide them. I said to myself, 'I will confess them to the Lord.' And You forgave me! All my guilt is gone" (Psalm 32:3-5, TLB) .*

*"So there is now no condemnation awaiting those who belong to Christ Jesus" (Romans 8:1, TLB).*