

## PRAISE the Lord for:

- ★ Our partner organisations who faithfully facilitate the production and distribution of the paper globally, as well as following up responses to the paper
- ★ His ongoing direction and wisdom over the year in terms of the different editions and for the right stories to be produced each month
- ★ The number of commitments we are seeing here in Australia and elsewhere in the world.
- ★ A number of timely gifts received recently to help the ministry cover monthly costs
- ★ Our team of writers, all of whom continue to do a fabulous job each month. They are an integral part of the team and we wouldn't be as effective without them.

When I began to reflect on what to touch on this month, the question came to mind; why is confession of sin so important in our daily prayer life? I think Psalm 51 gives us some of the answers.

### 1 David states in v5 the result of the sin of Adam and Eve.

Twice it is stated; "Behold, I was brought forth in iniquity, and in sin my mother conceived me." Right from our conception we are tarred with sin. Some people have trouble believing that they were born with a sin nature. When I first became a Christian I really believed I had done God a favour. I had a faulty understanding of my sin nature. God began to graciously work in my life and shone the searchlight of His Holy Spirit on my heart. It was an extremely uncomfortable experience, because for the first time in my life, I had come to an inescapable conclusion that I was a sinner in desperate need of the grace of God. Until we see that, we tend to trivialise our sin as a slip or an unavoidable mistake, rather than an offence against God, a betrayal of His unconditional love.

### 2 David also brings home to us that sin separates us from God.

Romans 6:23 tells us "the wages of sin is death"... The word death, of course, does not mean physical death, but spiritual death – spiritual separation from a holy God. This is the scenario, for the non-Christian until they accept Christ as their personal Lord and Saviour.

For us as believers unconfessed sin has big problems. Firstly it affects God's hearing. Psalm 66:18 says, "If I regard iniquity in my heart the Lord will not hear me." It is not as though God is in need of a divine hearing aid, but that He cannot condone our sin. Isaiah 59:1-2 says, "Behold, the Lord's hand is not shortened, that it cannot save; Nor His ear heavy, that it cannot hear. But your iniquities have separated you from your God; And your sins have hidden His face from you, So that He will not hear."

So confession of sin is vital to keeping the communication line open to God. Sadly far too many Christians are content to leave unconfessed sin in their lives, and like David, wander in a spiritual wilderness for years. Our churches are filled with such people.

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## PRAYER needed for:

- ★ A full time Editor to free Carl up to concentrate on promotion and development of the ministry both here in Australia and overseas
- ★ Don & Lillian Kennedy who are our reps in the Eastern States. Pray for the Lord's protection particularly as they travel around the Eastern States promoting the paper
- ★ Each of our writers as they look to the Lord for inspiration for their monthly contribution to the paper
- ★ Ongoing funding for the running of the Perth office, for personal support, for the supply of Challenge papers globally and for project funding in these countries

### 3 Confession of sin is vital because God desires purity in our hearts.

Verse 6 says, "Behold You desire truth in the inward parts, and in the hidden part You will make me to know wisdom." Purity and power go hand in hand. This verse also raises the fact that whilst all sin emanates from our hearts, the results of our sins are not always public i.e. we can hide sin from others, but not from God.

### 4 Unconfessed sin is an incredibly negative thing in the life of Christians.

Thus confession of sin brings us back into a right relationship with God, bringing a joy and gladness back into our lives. We are free to be filled afresh with the Holy Spirit and this results in the effective service for the Lord Jesus.

This is brought home to us in v12-13: "Restore to me the joy of Your salvation, And uphold me with Your generous spirit. Then I will teach transgressors Your ways, And sinners shall be converted to You." First our relationship with God must be right. Once we are, David declares that we need to depend upon God to uphold or keep us in our walk. Out of this spawns a desire to serve God. Verse 13; "Then I will teach transgressors Your ways." Out of a right relationship comes the desire to serve God. With this comes a confidence that God will bless this service; "And sinners shall be converted..." It is not a matter of hoping, or if or maybe, but when sinners will be converted.

Ultimately, God desires obedience and purity in our walk because with purity God is able to cause us to serve Him in His power and authority, for His glory.

CARL CARMODY, EDITOR OF CHALLENGE

## MY RESPONSE

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