

Take a Cleansing Bath of Confession

By Dwayne Moore

I hate to feel sweaty and dirty. In fact, anytime I come in from exercising or working out in my yard, I immediately head for the shower! I love feeling clean (and I'm sure all those *around* me appreciate it, too!).

In the same kind of way, we should want to always keep a clean heart before God. Our goal should be to live in a constant state of forgiveness. Notice I didn't say a constant state of *perfection*. Unfortunately, we *will* sin on occasion. However, anytime we get "dirty," we should confess it instantly and then trust God to cleanse us completely. Remember, neither the Lord nor the world needs to be around "stinking" Christians!

If we're to enjoy clean living every day, we need to embrace two important habits: accountability and self-examination. Being accountable to another person or persons we respect and trust is a powerful deterrent to sin. When you know someone else will be asking you the "tough questions," you think twice before indulging in things you shouldn't. Also, accountability partners encourage and challenge us to grow in our faith and do the things we *should* do. Ecclesiastes 4:12 tells us, "A person standing alone can be attacked and defeated, but two can stand back-to-back and conquer. Three are even better, for a triple-braided cord is not easily broken" (NLT).

It's also vital that we examine ourselves closely. When Paul warned about receiving the Lord's Supper in an unworthy manner, he said: "But if we took care to judge ourselves, then we wouldn't have to worry about being judged by another." (1 Corinthians 11:31, *The Voice*). It's hard to say for sure, but that could be interpreted that if we confess sins *now*, then those sins won't be brought up to us at judgment later. At the very least, that verse certainly implies that we can skip some painful discipline from the Lord in this life!

Either way, Paul is giving us some strong motivation to keep a check on ourselves at all times. We need to "take a bath" regularly, giving God every opportunity to expose and cleanse any sinful thoughts, motives and attitudes which may be lurking in our mind, as well as words and actions that don't glorify God.

We want to hear God say "well done." Today is the day to get ready!

My Sin List

You'll need to block out 45 minutes to an hour to do this assignment. You'll need the journal or notepad you've been using this week

Give your soul a long, cleansing bath, by making a thorough list of your *unconfessed* sins. It's vitally important that you meet with God privately to make this list, if at all possible. You don't want anything to distract you. You'll also need your Bible, along with your journal and a pen to write.

Here are your instructions to follow as you make your "sin list":

1. Start in prayer. Thank God for giving you this time, and ask him to bind the powers of darkness which would try to hinder or deceive you.

2. Meditate on Psalm 51, and then pray those verses to God.

3. As you go through these following steps, only write down what you've *not* already confessed in the past. God doesn't remember sins you've confessed, so he won't remind you of those!

a. Examine your *thoughts and attitudes* before God. Write down any which God reveals to you to as sinful and displeasing to him.

b. Next, examine the *words you've spoken* to family and friends, as well as to co-workers, schoolmates, or others. Write about any words you've spoken which tore down and dishonored the Lord or others, whether recently or far in your past.

c. Examine your *motives* for the things you do. Which ones are selfish and dishonoring to God?

d. Now, think about your *actions*. What outward sins is God revealing to you?

e. Finally, have you *offended* someone or is someone offended toward you?

4. Once you've finished your list, read back through it, carefully confessing and agreeing with God about each of those sins.

5. Hold your list up to the Lord. Thank God that every sin is now *forgiven!* Claim 1 John 1:9 as you pray to him. Ask God to help you *forsake* each sin and to continue to walk in forgiveness. If you've offended someone, ask God to help you go and reconcile with that person (Matthew 5:23-24).

6. Finally, tear up your list into tiny pieces and throw it in the garbage, signifying God's forgiveness. God's done with these sins, and now so are you!

NOTE: This article is an excerpt from [Heaven's Praise: Hearing God Say "Well Done"](#) by Dwayne Moore (Group, 2011), Week 5, Day 5.

About This Column:

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