

## Study 15. We love killing sin (confession and repentance)

Big idea: confession and repentance are part and parcel of living out the gospel

Can you think of a time in which you've got your directions or instructions badly wrong and had to turn around and start again? Are you the type to ask for help or keep on going the wrong way?

### Observation and interpretation

Read Psalm 51

- What does the title tell us about the circumstances of this psalm?
- Given what we know is on David's mind, how can he say that it is against God that he has sinned (verse 4)?
- How would you characterise the different sections of this psalm?
  - ⇒ Verses 1-6:
  - ⇒ Verses 7-14:
  - ⇒ Verses 15-19:

Read Titus 1:16, 2:11-14

- How can our actions deny that we know God?
- Why is repentance important to a gospel shaped life?
- What is it about the gospel that enables us to say "no" to sin?

Read 1 John 1:9-10

- What do you think it means to "confess" our sins? Who are we confessing to?
- Why can we be confident to confess our sins?
- Why does claiming to be without sin "make him out to be a liar"?

### Implications

- What is the difference between being truly sorry for sin, and merely sorry that we have been caught (or fearing punishment)?
- What is the place (if any) for public confession of sin?
- Should we confess our sins to each other or should it just be between us and God?
- What does repentance look like for people who are struggling with ongoing weaknesses or addictions?
- Is there a point at which repentance is no longer genuine?
- Consider some of the most common areas in which we struggle with sin. What lies drive us towards them? What does the gospel say to those lies, and how then does it empower us to change?

- Sexual immorality
- Greed
- Anger

### **A process for repentance**

You might like to work through this process of repentance. At each step there are passages suggested for you to meditate on.

1	God's forgiveness freely offered	1 John 1:9, Romans 3:24, 5:8
2	Acknowledge our sin	1 John 1:8, Psalm 32:5, Isaiah 59:12,
3	Embrace forgiveness (yes, he forgives <i>you!</i> )	1 John 2:12
4	Repent (cease or start)	1 John 3:6
5	Repair damage where possible	Matt 5:23-24
6	Continue in accountability and prayer	James 5:16, Hebrews 10:24,

### **Prayer ideas**

Think about using this general confession from the *Book of Common Prayer*:

Almighty and most merciful Father,  
 we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.  
 We have followed too much the devices and desires of our own hearts.  
 We have offended against your holy laws.  
 We have left undone what we ought to have done,  
 and we have done what we ought not to have done,  
 and there is no health in us.  
 Yet, good Lord, have mercy on us:  
 restore those who repent,  
 according to your promises declared to us in Jesus Christ our Lord.  
 And grant, merciful Father, for his sake,  
 That we may live a godly, righteous, and obedient life,  
 to the glory of your holy name. Amen.