

The Slavery of Freedom (Part 1)

OVERVIEW

If we're going to win a fight against the flesh we'll need to be honest with ourselves, God, and one another. There is no healing in hiding. For thousands of years, followers of Jesus have fought their disordered desires not by hiding them, but by confessing them. By confessing these desires and behaviors before God and others, followers of Jesus are able to find freedom from them; it is the truth that sets us free.

EXERCISE 1: EXAMEN AND CONFESSION WITH GOD

Spend some time this week on your own asking the Holy Spirit: "When did I fail to love God or love someone else?"

If you decide to practice the Examen daily, spend each time reflecting on the previous 24 hours. If you decide to do it twice in the week ahead, spend both times reflecting on the previous 48-72 hours and so on.

Conclude each time of Examen by acknowledging (i.e. confessing) those moments of sin before God and thanking God for his forgiveness and love.

EXERCISE 2: PRACTICE CONFESSION WITH A TRUSTED CONFIDANT

If you feel ready and want to dive further into this Practice, spend time this week confessing sin to a brother or sister in Christ. This could look like reaching out to a member of your DNA, a good friend, a pastor, or a mentor and doing the following:

- Set up a time to confess sin to one another. This time doesn't have to be long and it could be over the phone, but it should be in a place that is safe and private.
- Meet (or talk) and confess the sin. If confession is new to you, consider using the following prompt:
 - "This week I failed to love God by _____" or "I failed to love (this person) by _____".
 - Starting with one or two areas of sin, rather than trying to cover an exhaustive list.
 - When (or if) a person confesses to you, be slow to speak and quick to listen. Do not offer advice, feedback, or judgment. Instead, quietly listen until they have said all that they wanted to say. Hearing someone's confession is different from coaching them.
 - When the confessor is finished, point them to God's forgiveness by reading a passage about God's forgiveness, praying for them and declaring God's forgiveness over them, or simply looking them in the eye and telling them how much God loves them and how he is full of forgiveness towards them.
- When both parties are finished, close in prayer, thanking God for his forgiveness.