

## 1 CONFESSION

## 2 CONFESSION APP

- If you Google “high-tech innovation,” the Roman Catholic Church normally wouldn’t pop up in the search engine, until now!
- Recently the church has come up with a way for tech-savvy parishioners with smart phones and iPads to keep track of their sins before going to their local priest for confessional.
- It is called “The Confession App,” and it’s the first app to be officially sanctioned by the Vatican.

## 3 How it Works

- You download the app, register and log in with a secure password, and then you choose your "Vocation" (Single, Married, Religious or Priest) and your preferred "Act of Contrition" (the type of prayer of confession you'll be making).
- The next screen gives you a customized "Examination of Conscience" based on the Ten Commandments. If you sign up as a "Religious" person, for example, your examination is divided into five areas (Responsibilities to God, Responsibilities to Promises and Vows, Responsibilities to My Ministry, Responsibilities to Others, and Responsibilities to Society).
- Tap one of those areas and you're given a list of possible sins, which allows you to check off the ones you've committed since your last confession. You then take your phone or tablet into the confessional booth (the app gives you the liturgy to say) and confess your sins to the priest.
- You can then tap on "Prayers" and you'll be given several choices of confessional prayers you can say.

## 4 In the NEWS

## 5 What About Protestants?

- Protestants may find this application useful as well.
- Even though the idea of confessing our sins to anyone but the Lord might be offensive, it is never a bad idea to examine our walk with God.
- Since many of us are already connecting with each other on our Smart Phones and iPads, why not also use them to connect honestly, humbly and contritely with God.

## 6 Why Confess our Sins?

- Acknowledging sin in our lives is the first step to being reconciled back to God.
- God will not have a relationship with us unless we confess our sins.
  - “When anyone is guilty in any of these ways, he must confess in what way he has sinned.” (Lev 5:5 NIV)

- “Then I will go back to my place until they admit their guilt. And they will seek my face; in their misery they will earnestly seek me.” (Hos 5:15 NIV)

## 7 Psalm 32

- In the opening of this Psalm, David acknowledges, Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit. (Psa 32:2 NIV)
- However, then he tells of a man who until he confessed his sin was extremely miserable and burdened with guilt.
  - When I kept silent, my bones wasted away through my groaning all day long. (Psa 32:3 NIV)
  - For day and night your hand was heavy upon me; my strength was sapped as in the heat of summer. (Psa 32:4 NIV)
  - Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD” (Psa 32:5 NIV)
  - and you forgave the guilt of my sin.

## 8 Psalm 32

- Then David exhorts the godly to seek the LORD . . .
  - Therefore let everyone who is godly pray to you while you may be found; surely when the mighty waters rise, they will not reach him. You are my hiding place; you will protect me from trouble and surround me with songs of deliverance. (Psa 32:6–7 NIV)
- Based upon those promises, David gives this instruction . . .
  - Do not be like the horse or the mule, which have no understanding but must be controlled by bit and bridle or they will not come to you. Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him. (Psa 32:9–10 NIV)
- The moral of the story is that the best way to handle depression and guilt is to acknowledge our sins to the LORD. Then our relationship with God is restored and so are His promises.

## 9 Confession & Restoration

- “When your people Israel have been defeated by an enemy because they have sinned against you, and when they turn back to you and confess your name, praying and making supplication to you in this temple, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your people Israel and bring them back to the land you gave to their fathers.” (1 Kings 8:33–34 NIV)

- “When the heavens are shut up and there is no rain because your people have sinned against you, and when they pray toward this place and confess your name and turn from their sin because you have afflicted them, then hear from heaven and forgive the sin of your servants, your people Israel. Teach them the right way to live, and send rain on the land you gave your people for an inheritance. (1 Kings 8:35–36 NIV)

## 10 Confession & Restoration

- In the Epistle of James, a question is asked . . .
  - Is any one of you sick? He should call the elders of the church to pray over him and anoint him with oil in the name of the Lord. And the prayer offered in faith will make the sick person well; the Lord will raise him up. (James 5:14–15 NIV)
  - If he has sinned, he will be forgiven. (James 5:15 NIV)
  - Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. (James 5:16 NIV)

## 11 Confession & Restoration

- In James, we see the following truths,
  - The elders have the responsibility of anointing with oil and praying for the sick.
  - If they have faith, the sick will be raised up.
  - Even, if the person’s illness was the result of sin and/or discipline from the Lord, it will be forgiven.
  - So then, let us all pray for each other that we will confess our sins, so we can be healed.

## 12 Not for Everyone

- However, confession is not for everyone.
- Stubborn, self-righteous, and arrogant people will never confess their sins.
- But for the contrite, humble, and those who are upright in heart there is special grace, mercy, and forgiveness.
  - The sacrifices of God are a broken spirit; a broken and contrite heart, O God, you will not despise. (Psa 51:17 NIV)
  - For this is what the high and lofty One says — he who lives forever, whose name is holy: “I live in a high and holy place, but also with him who is contrite and lowly in spirit, (Is 57:15 NIV)
  - As David says, Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart! (Psa 32:11 NIV)

### 13 If we Confess our Sins

- If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. (1 John 1:8–9 NIV)
  - We deceive ourselves when we deny the obvious.
  - We also deceive ourselves when we imply that everyone sins, thus minimizing our responsibility.
  - However, if we acknowledge those areas of weakness in our lives, we will find grace, mercy, and purification.

### 14 How To Confess

- Confession is the beginning of a renewed relationship with the Lord. He doesn't require that it be a formal, memorized, or a robotic act. It should come from a sincere heart.
  - The Lord wants to see true, meaningful repentance from humble hearts. (Matthew 11:28–30)
  - He want us to be specific in our prayers for the confession of sin, not generic. Tell God what you did.
  - He wants us to not only acknowledge our sins, but to take responsibility.
  - As He forgives us, so should we also forgive others. (Matthew 6:12)

### 15 Conclusion

- A lot of our problems and troubles may very well be connected to our lack of sincere confession.
- We go around pointing out the sins of others rather than acknowledging and taking responsibility of our own obvious faults.
- As the Apostle Paul says, But if we judged ourselves, we would not come under judgment. (1 Cor 11:31 NIV)
- So then, let us learn to take honest inventories of ourselves and acknowledge our faults to each other and to the Lord, so that we may be healed.
- In our cell groups, let us not use the time to criticize our spouses, but confess to each other our own short-comings so that God's grace can freely flow in our congregation.

### 16 The Promise of Confession

- The following is what happens when the upright in heart acknowledge their guilt and turn from their sins . . .
  - You are my hiding place (Psa 32:7 NIV)
  - [Y]ou will protect me from trouble (Psa 32:7 NIV)
  - [You] surround me with songs of deliverance. (Psa 32:7 NIV)

- The Lord will say to them, “I will instruct you and teach you in the way you should go; I will counsel you and watch over you.” (Psa 32:8 NIV)
- Many are the woes of the wicked, but the LORD’s unfailing love surrounds the man who trusts in him. (Psa 32:10 NIV)
- Rejoice in the LORD and be glad, you righteous; sing, all you who are upright in heart! (Psa 32:11 NIV)

## 17 A.C.T.S.

- To help us incorporate confession into our lives, trying using the ACTS model of prayer.
  - A – Adoration (Praise & Worship)
  - C – Confess and Acknowledge our Sins
  - T – Thanksgiving (Thanking God for His goodness)
  - S – Supplication (Requests for yourself and Others)

## 18 Conclusion

- Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD; O Lord, hear my voice. Let your ears be attentive to my cry for mercy. If you, O LORD, kept a record of sins, O Lord, who could stand? But with you there is forgiveness; therefore you are feared. (Psa 130:1–4 NIV)