



The Chronicle

A Publication of The Church of God (England)

April to June 2021, Volume 16, Issue 2

Confession, a Pre-requisite to True Repentance

Philip C. Bennett

Confession: the act of admitting one has done something wrong or illegal. Confession is the first stage of coming to terms with what one has done.

Pre-requisite: a thing that is required as a prior condition for something else to happen or exist.

Repentance: The act of turning from and forsaking sin.

Some people feel that repentance is only required when one who is a sinner first comes to accept Christ as their Saviour. However, if after we accept Christ we sin and come short, we cannot simply continue as we are. This is not once saved always saved, as some denominations teach. Some churches falsely teach eternal salvation. However, if we sin, we will need to repent of our sin. We may need to start again, depending on the severity of our transgression.

Some people interpret Ephesians 4:5 incorrectly when it states, "*One Lord, one faith, one baptism,*" as implying we are only baptised once.

However, Jesus told the Church at Ephesus that they were to repent and do their first works again, which included **restitution** and **water baptism**.

Without confession, when we pray, our awareness of past failures tends to buffet our minds. It makes us feel hopeless and unworthy of even approaching God. The devil gains a victory over us. We soon stop praying altogether because we feel that God will not hear our prayers. To combat these spiritual attacks, we must take at face value all the promises of God concerning confession: "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*"

(1 John 1:9)

So if unrighteousness renders our praying ineffective, then confession is the solution to the problem of sin-guilt in prayer. Confession means to agree with God, concerning His opinion of a matter. It also means "to admit my guilt." When we confess our sins, we are agreeing with God concerning the sin in our lives.

Confession is the act of declared admission. Confession is important to God because it indicates that we take seriously our mistakes and failures. God does not ask for confession of our sins because He needs to know we have sinned. It is because God is aware we need to recognise we have sinned. After David sinned with Bathsheba, he 'swept it under the carpet' so to speak and continued with his life until God sent the prophet Nathan to talk to him: *"And the LORD sent Nathan unto David. And he came unto him, and said unto him, There were two men in one city; the one rich, and the other poor. The rich man had exceeding many flocks and herds: But the poor man had nothing, save one little ewe lamb, which he had bought and nourished up: and it grew up together with him, and with his children; it did eat of his own meat, and drank of his own cup, and lay in his bosom, and was unto him as a daughter. And there came a traveller unto the rich man, and he spared to take of his own flock and of his own herd, to dress for the wayfaring man that was come unto him; but took the poor man's lamb, and dressed it for the man that was come to him. And David's anger was greatly kindled against the man; and he said to Nathan, As the LORD liveth, the man that hath done this thing shall surely die: And he shall restore the lamb fourfold, because he did this thing, and because he had no pity. And Nathan said to David, Thou art the man. Thus saith the LORD God of Israel, I anointed thee king over Israel, and I delivered thee out of the hand of Saul; And I gave thee thy master's house, and thy master's wives into thy bosom, and gave thee the house of Israel and of Judah; and if that had been too little, I would moreover have given unto thee such and such things. Wherefore hast thou despised the commandment of the LORD, to do evil in his sight? thou hast killed Uriah the Hittite with the sword, and hast taken his wife to be thy wife, and hast slain him with the sword of the children of Ammon. Now therefore the sword shall never depart from thine house; because thou hast despised me, and hast taken the wife of Uriah the Hittite to be thy wife.*

Thus saith the LORD, Behold, I will raise up evil against thee out of thine own house, and I will take thy wives before thine eyes, and give them unto thy neighbour, and he shall lie with thy wives in the sight of this sun. For thou didst it secretly: but I will do this thing before all Israel, and before the sun."
(2 Samuel 12:1-12).

After David was convicted of his sin with Bathsheba, he confessed his sin and found forgiveness: *"And David said unto Nathan, I have sinned against the LORD. And Nathan said unto David, The LORD also hath put away thy sin; thou shalt not die."*
(2 Samuel 12:13)

This is a part of David's prayer that followed: *"Have mercy upon me, O God, according to thy lovingkindness: according unto the multitude of thy tender mercies blot out my transgressions. Wash me thoroughly from mine iniquity, and cleanse me from my sin. For I acknowledge my transgressions: and my sin is ever before me. Against thee, thee only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight: that thou mightest be justified when thou speakest, and be clear when thou judgest..."* (Psalm 51:1-4)

"...Hide thy face from my sins, and blot out all mine iniquities. Create in me a clean heart, O God; and renew a right spirit within me. Cast me not away from thy presence; and take not thy holy spirit from me. Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation; and uphold me with thy free spirit."
(Psalm 51:9-12)

Our prayer lives will never rise above our personal lives in Jesus Christ. If our personal lives touch too much of the world, our prayer lives will suffer. David puts it this way: *"If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear me."* (Psalm 66:18)

Why is confession so difficult for some?

It is painful. The moment we realise an act displeases God, we know we must change it. Immediately, an inner battle of the will takes place.

Do I surrender to God or do my own thing? It may be painful but it is of no use to pose before God. We sometimes hear the term that we confess our sins to God and our faults to one another but there may be times when in order to be totally delivered we need to confess openly to another or others. Once the devil has no secret for us, he can no longer blackmail us. If we go and confide in a member and they then divulge our secret, that is between them and God, but we should have confidence in one another.

Confession is like a spiritual surgery which brings healing to the wound incurred in the heart. Just as the surgeon lances a boil to permit the infection to drain and to heal from the inside, so confession opens the sore, drains the poison and heals from within. There is no healing within until there is first confession without. Confession is conditional to cleansing: *"He that covereth his sins shall not prosper: but whoso confesseth and forsaketh them shall have mercy."* (Proverbs 28:13)

Until known sin is fully dealt with, we are not ready to pray. When we pray with unconfessed sins there is a little voice inside calling us a hypocrite. We want God to bless us but how can a holy God pour Himself into an unclean vessel: *"be ye clean, that bear the vessels of the LORD."* (Isaiah 52:11)

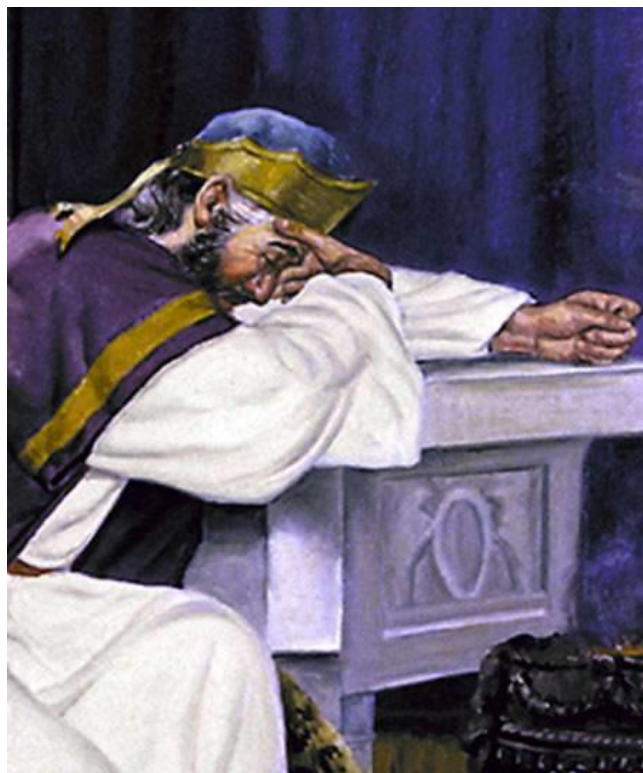
Those mightily used of God have been those most willing to confess their weakness. Only after Isaiah cried, *"I am undone,"* did the Lord invite him to serve. When Job confessed his sins, God changed his circumstances and gave him more blessings than he had previously.

Confession is not optional but is crucial for spiritual growth and effective prayer. It is a necessary first step to repentance. Before we will ever willingly turn from sin, we must first admit there is sin in our lives.

In one place God declared: *"your iniquities have separated between you and your God, and your sin have hid his face from you, that he will not hear."* (Isaiah 59:2)

Pharaoh pleaded to Moses: *"...Intreat the Lord, that he may take away the frogs from me."* (Exodus 8:8) A fatal flaw to Pharaoh's prayer was that there was no confession of sin. He did not say he had sinned and asked the Lord for forgiveness. He had no intention of changing; he only wanted relief from what he was going through. A prayer without penitence is a prayer without acceptance. If no tears have fallen upon it, it is withered. God knows if we are truly sincere and promises in His words: *"And ye shall seek me, and find me, when ye shall search for me with all your heart."* (Jeremiah 29:13)

God will forgive us and put us back in a right relationship with Himself when we confess and are truly repentant. 📖

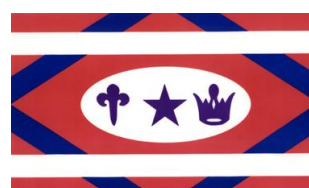


General Headquarters address



P.O. Box 450
Charleston, TN 37310 USA.
Telephone: **001-423 339 8264**
Fax: **001-423 339 8268**
Website: www.thechurchofgod.org
Email: info@thechurchofgod.org
The Evening Light subscriptions:
Telephone: **001-423 339 8264 ext. 211**
SS literature and merchandise enquiries:
Email: jtalley@thechurchofgod.org
Telephone: **001-423 339 8264 ext. 232**

National Office address



Philip C. Bennett
The Church of God, Long Lane,
Halesowen, West Midlands, B62 9LL.
Home telephone: **0121-551 0119**
Mobile phone: **07963 36 05 13**
Website: www.churchofgoduk.org
Email: enquiries@thechurchofgoduk.org

Registered Charity No. 1132804
Registered Company No. 07015215

National Administration

Oscar Pimentel	General Overseer
Philip C. Bennett	National Overseer/Pastor, Long Lane
Angela Clarke	Pastor, Druids Heath/National Treasurer/National Choir Director
Beverley Anderson	Pastor, Handsworth/National Women's Missionary Band/ National Ladies Retreat Co-ordinator
George Wilson	Pastor, London/National Family Camp Co-ordinator
Cynthia Opoku	National Assembly Band Movement Co-ordinator
Stuart Brown	National Church of Prophecy Marker Association/ Bible Training Institute Co-ordinator
Claudine Brown	National Evangelism Co-ordinator/National Choir Director
Jennifer Thompson	National Sunday School Co-ordinator
James Mwila	National Victory Leaders Band Co-ordinator
Rikki Prince	National Family Camp Co-ordinator/National Music Director
Justin Clarke	National Men's Retreat Co-ordinator
Beverley Wilson	National Reporter
Karen Richards	Assistant Editor of <i>The Chronicle</i>



From the Overseer's Desk

Great reports have been received from our ladies that were able to attend the National Ladies Retreat in Wolverhampton on 22nd to 23rd May 2021. They testified that it was a refreshing experience to be able to fellowship with each other after such a lengthy absence. It was also uplifting to gather for worship and instruction.

Just a few days later, the Lord poured out more blessings upon us as we gathered at the Church in Handsworth for a water baptismal service. Although not everyone was able to attend due to the Covid-19 restrictions, they were still able to watch the service via Skype. We thank God for the six candidates who were baptised. Four of the candidates will shortly be receiving the right hand of fellowship to become members of the great Church of God.

Although all our local churches have now resumed services at our usual places of worship, we are looking forward to returning to full normalisation and being able to fellowship together, without any limitations.

Please pray for our proposed National Convention and National Men's Retreat, that they will be able to go ahead without any hindrance.

"Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling, and to present you faultless before the presence of his glory with exceeding joy, To the only wise God our Saviour, be glory and majesty, dominion and power, both now and ever. Amen."

(Jude 24, 25)

Upcoming Events:

National Men's Retreat - Friday 30th to Sunday 1st August 2021

National Convention - Saturday 7th to Sunday 8th August 2021



ABM BOOST

Cynthia Opoku - National Assembly Band Movement Co-ordinator

The general Assembly Band Movement theme for the assembly year 2020-2021 is:
'Feed the Flock, Protect the Flock, Build the Flock'

Greetings my dear brethren in Jesus' name! The General ABM theme for this year is *'Feed the Flock, Protect the Flock, Build the Flock'*. God wants the best for His sheep, and so in Ezekiel 34, we learn that He was unhappy with how the shepherds were treating their flocks. In verse 17 of Ezekiel 34, we can see that God Himself will judge between the flock:

"And as for you, O my flock, thus saith the Lord GOD; Behold, I judge between cattle and cattle, between the rams and the he goats."

(Ezekiel 34:17)

Pastors and band leaders have a great responsibility: not only to feed, protect and build the flock, but to care for each other. God bless you.



Sunday School Department



The Church of God

SUNDAY SCHOOL BOOST

Jennifer Thompson - National Sunday School Co-ordinator

The general Sunday School theme for the assembly year 2020-2021 is:

‘Gather’

(Deuteronomy 4:10)

Greetings to our Sunday School scholars in the precious name of Jesus. Our General Sunday School theme for this year is “GATHER”.

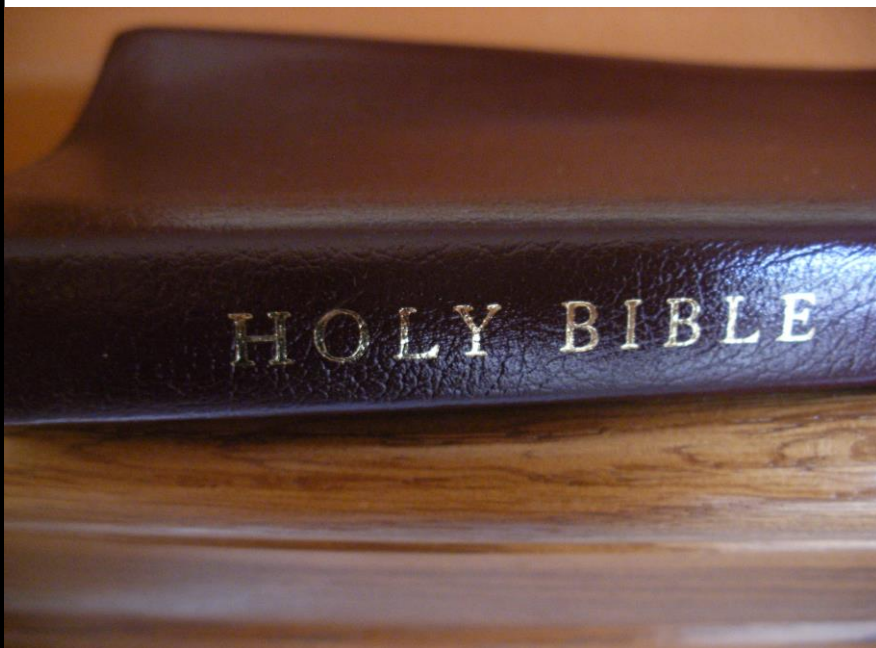
“...and that they may teach their children.”

(Deuteronomy 4:10)

Testimony from Sister Beverley Wilson, Sunday School teacher at London Church:

We have a great responsibility to nurture, admonish and be good examples to our children. We are also to bring them up in the fear of God. We can only teach them what we hear and learn. What a child sees in us is what they see in Christ, PRAISE GOD.

Many hearts have been enriched already from the knowledge and understanding they have received from the Holy Ghost in our Sunday School lessons.





WMB BOOST

**Beverley Anderson - National Women's
Missionary Band Co-ordinator**

The general Women's Missionary Band theme for the
assembly year 2020-2021 is:

'Sonlight' (St. Matthew 5:16)

God's Son Jesus, the Light of the world came to earth and zoomed in on every issue of life. He made mankind understand that there is no area of life that He could not help us with. He showed His hearers and sceptics that He was the 'Sonlight' - the light of this world. The Centurion at the cross stated: **"...Truly this was the Son of God."** (St. Matthew. 27:54).

Jesus healed all illnesses and even raised the dead, St. Matthew 11:5: **"The blind receive their sight, and the lame walk, the lepers are cleansed, and the deaf hear, the dead are raised up, and the poor have the gospel preached to them."**

The mentally ill: Jesus delivered Legion, St Mark 5:3-7: **"Who had his dwelling among the tombs; and no man could bind him, no, not with chains: Because that he had been often bound with fetters and chains, and the chains had been plucked asunder by him, and the fetters broken in pieces: neither could any man tame him. And always, night and day, he was in the mountains, and in the tombs, crying, and cutting himself with stones. But when he saw Jesus afar off, he ran and worshipped him, And cried with a loud voice, and said, What have I to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of the most high God? I adjure thee by God, that thou torment me not."** When Legion saw the 'Sonlight', he ran and worshipped Him as the Son of the most-high God. Mental illness is prominent in our society today, but we know that through the 'Sonlight' there is hope - even for these individuals.

The adulterer and divorced: the Son shone the light on the truth in this area of life in St Matthew 19:8 declaring **"...Moses because of the hardness of your hearts suffered you to put away your wives: but from the beginning it was not so."** St. Matthew 5:32: **"But I say unto you, That whosoever shall put away his wife, saving for the cause of fornication, causeth her to commit adultery: and whosoever shall marry her that is divorced committeth adultery."** Paul makes it clear that fornication is outside of marriage, when he stated, **"Nevertheless, to avoid fornication, let every man have his own wife, and let every woman have her own husband."** (1 Corinthians 7:2). This sin has swept over the earth and has caused devastation in our communities, but the 'Sonlight' can deliver and restore.

The 'Sonlight' showed us **how to love:** **"But I say unto you, Love your enemies, bless them that curse you, do good to them that hate you, and pray for them which despitefully use you, and persecute you;"** (St. Matthew 5:44) Only the love of God can enable us to do this. No human without the 'Sonlight' can love their enemies.

The 'Sonlight' showed us **how to give:** **"Give, and it shall be given unto you; good measure, pressed down, and shaken together, and running over, shall men give into your bosom. For with the same measure that ye mete withal it shall be measured to you again."** (St. Luke 6:38)

The 'Sonlight' showed us **how to pray:** **"But when ye pray, use not vain repetitions, as the heathen do:..."** (St. Matthew 6:7). **"And when ye stand praying, forgive, if ye have ought against any: ..."** (St. Mark 11:25). **"...Pray that ye enter not into temptation."** (St. Luke 22:40)

Let the qualities of the 'Sonlight' glow within our hearts and lives. As we come to the end of a very difficult and restricted Assembly year, I hope the 'Sonlight' shone from us, illuminating those around us, lost in sin. God bless you.

Special Note:

The Chronicle is an official publication of The Church of God (England) with Philip C. Bennett National Overseer and Editor. Articles intended for publication in the next issue of *The Chronicle* should be received **before 31st August 2021**. These submissions will be for the July to September 2021 issue. Please send to: Karen Richards, 12 Cherhill Covert, Druids Heath, Birmingham, B14 5YB. Email: kazgirl_uk@yahoo.com

Registered Charity No. 1132804

Registered Company No. 07015215