Confession Differences

**Confession** is a very important thing in the Scriptures and should not be thought of as a light thing. Sometimes it is spoken and makes the difference of whether one goes to Heaven or Hell. Sometimes it is spoken to warn and advise one how important it is to keep and maintain his walk and fellowship with the Lord. Sometimes it is spoken to show one not to be ashamed of the Lord and to speak up for Him and ones testimony of Him. Sometimes it is an acknowledgement of one’s faithfulness and allegiance to his own belief and steadfastness all the way to the end. There are many different instances in the Scriptures where **confession** and **confessing** have different meanings and different outcomes. The factors are dependent upon the context they are found in the Scriptures. (What is the writer talking about?) **Confession** is a Doctrinal matter and the majority of the times it is mentioned, is not optional. Remember, we are talking about “What saith the Lord.” We have to (and are commanded) to “rightly divide” (not wrongly) the Holy Scriptures. Let’s read and study about ‘**confession**’ and its differences in the Scriptures, while those differences still remain true in every instance. Amen.

Definitions of “**Confession**” with Scripture

*To own, acknowledge or avow, as a crime, a fault, a charge, a debt, or something that is against one's interest, or reputation; to acknowledge sins and faults; to disclose the state of the conscience.*

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we **confess** our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” ***1 John 1:8-9***

*To own, avow or acknowledge; publicly to declare a belief in and adherence to.*

“Whosoever therefore shall **confess** me before men,” ***Matthew 10:32a***

*To own and acknowledge, as true disciples, friends or children.*

“..him will I **confess** also before my Father which is in heaven***.***” ***Matthew 10:32b***

*To own; to acknowledge; to declare to be true, or to admit or assent to in words; opposed to deny.*

“That if thou shalt **confess** with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation.” ***Romans 10:9, 10***

“Then will I **confess** to thee, that thine own right hand can save thee.” ***Job 40:14***

*To show by the effect; to prove; to attest.*

“These all died in faith, not having received the promises, but having seen them afar off, and were persuaded of them, and embraced them, and **confessed** that they were strangers and pilgrims on the earth. For they that say such things declare plainly that they seek a country.” ***Hebrews 11:13-14***

*To hear or receive the confession of another.*

“**Confess** your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much.” ***James 5:16***

Below are some different kinds of **confession** as found in the Scriptures, with different circumstances, by different people, for different reasons, with different outcomes. Every time the word and subject of **confession** comes up in the Scriptures, it is not necessarily speaking of the same kind of **confession** all of the time.

The Scriptures do teach that the Lord is merciful and stands ready to forgive. But remember, the Lord is just and will not compromise His Holiness to save or forgive anyone. It has to not only be accomplished by His mercy but also legally (by His justice.) God might want to forgive someone, and someone might be **confessing** his head off, but if He (God) cannot do it justly, He will not. This is why it is important for the believer to understand **confession** from God’s view point both in the Old Testament setting and the New Testament setting, and not the worlds. Let’s see some.

**Confession** examples

Achan (***Read Joshua 6:18 the command) (Read Joshua 7 the sin, revealing, confession, penalty)***

In the Book of Joshua there is a man named Achan. He is part of the Israeli people traveling with Joshua. ***Proverbs 28:13***

* Achan covered his sin literally with dirt
* The silver, gold and garments didn’t profit him anything at all. In fact, he lost everything because of them.
* Achan **confesses** his sin, but if any mercy was shown him it is certainly not evident.
* Sometimes the **confession** comes too late and his did.
* Achans **confession** came too late; He didn’t **confess** until he was caught red-handed.
* Achan was warned ahead of time that his sin would bring a curse on himself and Israel, and it did. ***(Joshua 6:18; 7:1-9)***
* No amount of **confession** could lift that curse.
* One can only speculate as to any spiritual mercy shown him for his **confession**.
* As for the physical consequences of his **confession**, he was cursed and there was no mercy afforded him.
* One thing to notice about Achans **confession** is that he acknowledges that he sinned against “God.” This is important because Mohammed and Allah in the Koran say it is a lie. In the Koran, Sura 4:111 says “And whoever commits a sin, he only commits it against his own soul.” In the Holy Bible, not the Koran, ‘sin is against God.

Joseph is worried about ‘sinning against God.’ ***Genesis 39:9***

David **confessed** “I have sinned against the LORD.” ***2 Samuel 12:13***

The prodigal son said, “I have sinned against heaven.” ***Luke 15:21***

Backslidden Jews said, “We have sinned against the Lord.” ***1 Samuel 7:6***

Pharaoh said, “I have sinned against the LORD your God,” ***Exodus 10:16***

POINT: For sin to be “sin,” it has to be against GOD. Because “sin is the transgression of the Law” ***1 John 3:4*** God’s Law.

* Another thing about Achans **confession** is that you cannot always tell what a man means when he say’s “I have sinned.” He might not mean “I want to get right with the Lord.” Achan **confessed** “I have sinned” because he was caught red-handed.
* The progression of sin is first ‘presentation.’ “When I SAW the spoils.” The next step is ‘illumination.’ The Holy Spirit gives light on the temptation on whether it is right or wrong. Achan had that illumination in ***Joshua 6:18-19***. Sin has not entered with presentation or illumination; it enters when debate arrives. When one begins to debate the matter in their mind: should I do it or should I not? Debate shows a degree of unbelief in the light God has given you on the matter. Debate is trying to figure out whether you can commit the sin with little or no consequences. Debate is where sin enters.
* Achan saw that Babylonian garment, the sack of silver, and the wedge of gold and instead of remembering what God had told them, he rolled that thing around in his mind and thought about it. He looked, and then he coveted, also referred to as ‘lust.’ “Then when lust hath conceived it bringeth forth sin.” ***James 1:15***
* The sin that Achans lust brought forth was ‘theft.” “…then I coveted them, and I took them.” Achans lust and sin led to his death.
* Achan put something he desired in the place of God and what God said.
* Achans sin affected innocents. 36 men died because of Achans sin, his wife died, his children died, and his beasts died. Achans sin affected people who had nothing to do with it, the congregation, the spiritual leader, and Achans family.
* We learn from Achans sin committed that sin should be judged and **confessed**, not hidden away. ***1 Corinthians 11:31*** “…if we would judge ourselves, we should not be judged.”

Saul (***Read 1 Samuel 15***)

* Comes to late
* When Saul **confessed** and said, “I have sinned” ***1 Samuel 15:30*** he meant: “Let me go on being king as if nothing ever happened.”

Balaam (***Numbers 22:34***)

* Made with wrong motives or ulterior motives in mind
* When Balaam **confessed** and said, ‘I have sinned’ ***Numbers 22:34*** what he actually meant was: “Please don’t kill me.” The Angel of the Lord was right there with a drawn sword ready to kill him.

Pharaoh (***Exodus 9:27***; ***10:16***)

* Made with wrong motives or ulterior motives in mind
* When Pharaoh **confessed** and said “I have sinned” ***Exodus 9:27***, ***10:16*** what he meant was: “I am sick and tired of these plagues; now get off my back.

Judas (***Matthew 27:3-4***)

* Made to the wrong party; Judas **confessed** to a priest.
* When Judas **confessed** and said ‘I have sinned’ ***Matthew 27:4*** all he meant was: “I betrayed an innocent man and my conscience is killing me over it.”

David -

* Didn’t **confess** his adultery and murder until he was caught.
* David found mercy unlike Achan.
* David had “sure mercies”
* When David said “Against thee, the only, have I sinned, and done this evil in thy sight ***Psalms 51:4*** he was down on his face getting right with God.
* David was fortunate, and had been promised God’s ‘sure mercies.’ Under the Law David should have been put to death for adultery and murder, but he had God’s ‘sure mercies.’ Very important to notice.

The Prodigal son

* When the prodigal **confessed** and said ‘I Have sinned’ ***Luke15:18-21*** he intended to go home where he belonged and make things right with daddy.

New Testament **confession**

* **Confession of “sin”** is a condition of fellowship, not salvation.
* You can **confess** your sins to a Roman Catholic Priest all you want, and all it will do is wind you up in Hell like Judas Iscariot (***Acts 1:25***; ***Matthew 27:3-5***)
* Salvation has nothing to do with **confession** of sin, not even to God.
* Salvation is conditioned on **confessing “Jesus Christ” as your Saviour by faith**

~Salvation **confession~**

“That if thou shalt **confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus**, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth **confession is made unto salvation**. For the scripture saith, Whosoever believeth on him shall not be ashamed. For there is no difference between the Jew and the Greek: for the same Lord over all is rich unto all that call upon him. For whosoever shall call upon the name of the Lord shall be saved.”***Romans 10:9-13***

~Already saved/ Restoring fellowship with the Lord **confession~**

“If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us. If we **confess our sins**, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” ***1 John 1:8-9***

Note: *Both instances require* ***confession*** *but are different in major ways!*

* After Salvation, **confession of “sin”** to restore fellowship with God is made by **confessing “the sin”,** and it is only made possible by the blood shed by the Lord Jesus Christ on the cross. (***1 John 1:7-9***)

Facts:

* Brethren, the Lord knows what a man means when he **confesses** and say’s “I have sinned.” There is the testimony of a Limey in World War 1 who got caught in the artillery zone between his own side and the Germans. He was lying there on his face in the mud, seeing pieces of men blown every place all around him. He said he **confessed** to God everything he could think of, and he said that all the time he was doing that, he had no intention of stopping any of it. He was just trying to cut a deal with God to save his worthless hide. His **confessing** and saying “I have sinned” didn’t carry any weight.
* The Lord knows when the **confession** is real and when it isn’t.
* The Lord knows the thoughts and the intents of the heart when it comes to **confession**.
* **Confession** for salvation is not **confession** of sin.
* **Confession** of sin is not **confession** for salvation.