

CONFESSION OF SIN

You may kneel or sit during the prayer of confession

Officiant: Let us humbly confess our sins to Almighty God.

People: 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 those things which we ought to have done,
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done;
and apart from your grace, there is no health in us.
O Lord, have mercy upon us. Spare all those who confess their faults.
Restore all those who are penitent, according to your promises
declared to all people in Christ Jesus our Lord.
And grant, O most merciful Father, for his sake,
that we may now live a godly, righteous, and sober life,
to the glory of your holy Name. Amen.

Priest: The Almighty and merciful Lord grant you absolution and remission of all your sins, true repentance, amendment of life, and the grace and consolation of his Holy Spirit. Amen.

Eternal Weight Of Glory

Verse 1

Now the days and hours and moments
Of our suff'ring seem so long;
And the toilsome wait and wond'ring
Threaten silence to our song.
Now our pain is real and pressing
Where our faith is thin and weak,
But our hope is set on Jesus;
And we cling to him, our strength.

Verse 2

Oh eternal weight of glory!
Oh inheritance divine!
We will see our Lord redeeming
Every past and future time.
All our pains will be transfigured,
Like the scars of Christ our Lord.
We will see the weight of glory,
And our broken years restored.

Chorus

For behold! I tell a myst'ry:
At the trumpet sound we'll wake
"Death is swallowed up in vict'ry!"
When we meet our King of Grace
Every year we thought was wasted
Every night we cried "How long?"
All will be a passing moment
In our Savior's vict'ry song

Verse 3

We will see our wounded Savior.
We'll behold him face to face;
And we'll hear our anguished stories
Sung as vict'ry songs of grace.

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PSALM 119:49-64

- 49 Remember your word to your servant,
in which you have made me hope.
50 This is my comfort in my affliction,
that your promise gives me life.
51 The insolent utterly deride me,
but I do not turn away from your law.
52 When I think of your rules from of old,
I take comfort, O Lord.
53 Hot indignation seizes me because of the wicked,
who forsake your law.
54 Your statutes have been my songs
in the house of my sojourning.
55 I remember your name in the night, O Lord,
and keep your law.
56 This blessing has fallen to me,
that I have kept your precepts.
57 The Lord is my portion;
I promise to keep your words.
58 I entreat your favor with all my heart;
be gracious to me according to your promise.
59 When I think on my ways,
I turn my feet to your testimonies;
60 I hasten and do not delay
to keep your commandments.
61 Though the cords of the wicked ensnare me,
I do not forget your law.
62 At midnight I rise to praise you,
because of your righteous rules.
63 I am a companion of all who fear you,
of those who keep your precepts.
64 The earth, O Lord, is full of your steadfast love;
teach me your statutes!

Leader and People:

Glory to the Father, and to the Son, and to the Holy Spirit: as it was in the beginning, is now, and will be for ever. Amen

JOURNALING & DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Key Insight: Enduring hardship is part of our lives as Christ followers. Christ and the apostles endured suffering and so will we. This is not to say that we should seek out suffering as even Christ asked that the cup be passed if possible. During Christ's suffering he remained relational with his disciples who were sleeping, acted like himself in obedience to and communion with the Father, and returned to Joy in enduring the cross. Our ability to endure hardship is something we grow in as Christians and leaders. The Rare Leadership book offers several stages of growth to describe how we endure hardship as we mature:

- Infant - Not able to care for self or communicate needs. Makes it clear that they are upset but not why.
- Child - Able to care for self in growing measure and communicate needs. Not yet skilled at remaining relational or solving problems with the group's needs in focus. Learning who their people are and what it means to act like themselves.
- Adult - Able to care for self and one other person at the same time. Able to remain relational, act like themselves and return to joy in the face of challenges. Avoids falling into addictive behavior to endure hardship.
- Parent - Able to model and teach skills needed to remain relational, act like themselves and return to joy. Further the adult can see when their own skills or teaching ability is limited and provide other resources so as not to stunt the growth of the spiritual children.
- Elder - Having raised children of their own they are able to take on the needs of the community. Elders can see who in the flock needs parenting/re-parenting and gather these people under their wing and make them part of their people.

QUESTIONS:

- How did you identify with Paul's testimony?
- How has your experience been different?
- Take time to reflect on your patterns of behavior when facing hardship. Are there any specific areas where you feel you need to grow?
- Review the stages of maturity. Where do you see examples of these levels of leadership around you? How do you see yourself growing in maturity? Are there new ways that you and those you lead need to grow?

CLOSING PRAYERS

All: Guide us waking, O Lord, and guard us sleeping; that awake we may watch with Christ, and asleep we may rest in peace.

Leader: The almighty and merciful Lord, Father, Son, and Holy Spirit, bless us and keep us, this night and evermore. Amen.