

# CONFESS

Bible Class – Loaded Words  
September 28 & 29, 2016

*“To confess is to echo back what you have heard.”*

## **Introduction:**

Our author writes that confess is a loaded word in that it “has become synonymous with admitting you’ve done something bad and 2) the admission is to be made to a person who will decide how bad you are and the price you should pay for what you’ve done.”

What images come to mind when you hear the word confess?

## **Definition of Terms**

Most people think the full and proper use of *confession* within the church is nothing more than rattling off a litany of sin, shame, and guilt.

1. Two Hebrew words are often translated “confess.”
  - Yada - To acknowledge the guilt of one’s sin
  - Zakar - To remember, think about, meditate upon, pay attention to, recollect.

- The knowledge of who we are as God’s children moves from our heart, to our lips, to our daily lives.
2. “Homologeō” is the Greek word most often translated confess in the New Testament.
    - Literally “to say the same thing”
    - In essence “to echo back what you have heard.”
    - “What I hear you saying God, is this...”
    - Romans 10:9 “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
  3. A fuller understanding of confess incorporates these responses: praising, thanking, proclaiming, acknowledging, and extolling.

## **Our Confession Is...**

1. A statement of who we are
2. A statement of what we believe
3. A statement of why we believe it

“When we take confession seriously we take our faith seriously.”

## **Sunday’s Texts**

- **Psalm 32:1-5**
- **Romans 10:8-15**
- **Matthew 10:32-33**

## Martin Luther on the Use of Private Confession

Private confession is to be kept in the church, because consciences afflicted and oppressed by the terrors of sin lay themselves bare in private confession and receive a consolation which they could not lay hold of in a sermon preached in public. To such people we want to open the door of confession as a refuge – people whose consciences the devil holds captive in his snares and has fascinated and worn out so thoroughly that they do not know how to release and extricate themselves but only feel and see that they are bound to perish. For there is no greater misery in this life than the pains and the anguish of a heart that lacks advice and consolation.

Therefore such people should be given an open door to confession so that they may seek and find consolation from the ministers of the church. Or if the matter is so repulsive that one is ashamed to confess it before the minister, let him confide in some other Christian and pious person, whoever he may be, whose faith is apparent. To him let

them complain about what is distressing them and troubling their conscience. And let them seek his advice by telling him: *O my brother, advise my disturbed and afflicted conscience lest I die in my sins or suddenly end my life in this or that manner.* If in such a case a person hears God's Word about the forgiveness of sins either from the minister or from someone else, he will be raised up and take comfort, and his heart, torn by the missiles of the devil, will be healed."

### The Two Parts of Confession

1. My act of lamenting sin and desiring comfort and restoration
2. God's work of absolving my sins through His Word placed in the mouth of a man.

"Thus, it is necessary to know that faith ought to hold that God freely forgives us on account of Christ and on account of His promise, and not on account of our works, contrition, confession, or satisfactions, or love. For if faith relies on these works, it immediately becomes uncertain."

Apology of the Augsburg Confession XII, 95