

Dogmatic Theology

REPENITENCE AND CONFESSION



Repentance and Confession



- REPENITENCE AND CONFESSION, Sacramental confession consists in the avowal (statement) of one's sins and faults, accompanied with genuine contrition (repentance), made to God before a priest for the purpose of obtaining absolution.
- The Sacrament of Repentance and Confession
Components of the Sacrament of Repentance & Confession
Remorse alone is not enough; Judas was remorseful and said, "I have sinned by betraying innocent blood." (Matthew 27:4) Determination to renounce sin .



Repentance and Confession



metanoē — met-an-o-eh'-o; from (meta>) and (noie); to think differently or afterwards, i.e. reconsider. • (moral feel compunction): — repent.

- Meaning: changing mind U-turn
- It is unending process of growth of life toward God.
- It is a perpetual (lasting) baptism.



Repentance and Confession



Faith that the blood of Christ:

- Absolves the past: without the shedding of His blood, we cannot be absolved.
- Purifies the present: the blood of Jesus Christ His Son, purifies us from every sin.
- Sanctifies the future: Jesus, to sanctify the people through His blood, suffered outside the gate.
- Confirms us in Him: "Whoever eats My body and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him."



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Sanctifies the future: Jesus, to sanctify the people through His blood, suffered outside the gate. •Confirms us in Him: "Whoever eats My body and drinks My blood, dwells in Me, and I in him."

Confession in the presence of the priest:

Biblically

Patristically

Historically

Practically

Psychologically



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Repentance and Confession



Repentance is:

1. To regret: Remorse
2. To admit: Do not justify yourself; do not say excuses (blame-game)
3. To correct: What you did
4. To hope: Judas, the betrayer, hadn't hope
5. To confess: to God before the priest
6. To transform: To exercise the free choice correctly
7. To renew: Renewal of heart and mind



Repentance and Confession



Biblically: The Old
Testament



Repentance and Confession



- Mosaic law prescribed confession of sins with a view to expiation and atonement. When a man incurred guilt and confessed, he was required to bring a sin offering, and the priest would make expiation for him, after which he would be pardoned (Lv. 5:1-6).
- “He who covers his sins will not prosper, but who ever confesses and forsakes them will have mercy .” (Proverbs 28:13)
- •Nathan the prophet said to David, “The Lord also has put away your sin.” (2 Samuel 12:13).



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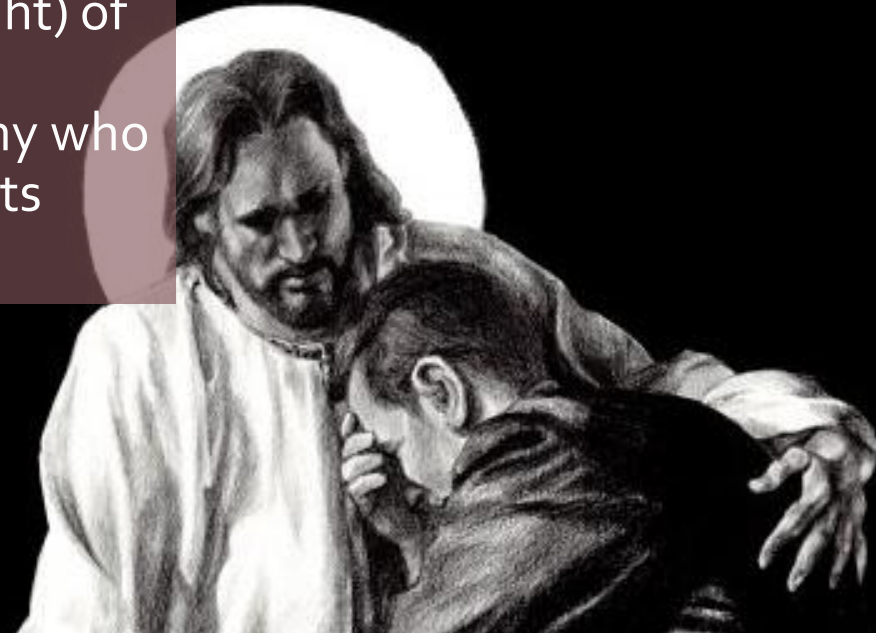
- The Period between the Old & New Testament:
 - St. John the Baptist " Were baptized by him in the Jordan, confessing their sins." (Matt. 3:6)
- The New Testament:
 - Before Christ instituted this sacrament, He had given His disciples two relevant promises. When St Peter recognized the true nature of our Lord Jesus Christ as the Messiah and acknowledged Him to be the Son of God, Christ conferred upon him the authority of loosing and binding "And I will give you the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven" (Matthew 16:19)



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- “Assuredly, I say to you, whatever you bind on earth will be bound in heaven, and whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven” (Matthew 18:18)
- After the resurrection, Christ breathed on His disciples, saying: “Receive the Holy Spirit. If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you retain the sins of any, they are retained” (John 20: 22,23) This authority became the prerogative (right) of the disciples and the apostles, and was passed on to their successors in the episcopate and the presbytery. “And many who had believed came confessing and telling their deeds” (Acts 19:18)



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- “Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God” (1 Corinthians 4:1)
- Our teacher Paul the Apostle punished a sinner from Corinth, and then forgave him. (1&2 Corinthians)
- To whom should we confess?:
 - To God: “Against You only have I sinned...” (Psalm 51: 4) (Psalm 50:4)
 - To the priest: “The Lord also has put away your sin...” (2 Samuel 12:13)
- The power of binding and loosing: “...whatever you loose on earth will be loosed in heaven.” (Matt.18:18) “ if you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them..” (John 20:23)



Repentance and Confession



- To the one you have wronged:
 - “Therefore if you bring your gift to the altar, and there remember that your brother has something against you...” (Matthew 5: 23,24)
- Confess to yourself:
 - I remember my own sins, rebuke myself, and feel remorse
This is done before, after or during sin.
- Historically:
 - The Apostolic Canons prohibited the clergy from denying this sacrament to any penitent: “If any bishop or presbyter does not receive him who turns away from his sin, but rejects him, let him be deposed; for he grieveth Christ who said, “There is joy in heaven over one sinner that repenteth.” [Canon (52)]



Repentance and Confession



- Ever since the early days of the church, the sacrament of confession formed a prominent part of Christian worship. The DIDACHE stipulates: "In the church, thou shalt acknowledge thy transgressions, and thou shalt not come near for thy prayers with an evil conscience. This is the way of life" (The Teaching of the Twelve Apostles 4. 14).
- The APOSTOLIC CONSTITUTIONS:
 - recognizing this God given authority, enjoin upon the congregation the duty of honoring the priesthood: "Reverence these, and honor them with all kinds of honor; for they have obtained from God the power of life and death, in their judging of sinners, and condemning them to the death of eternal life, as also of loosing returning sinners from their sins, And of restoring them to a new life" (Constitutions of the Holy Apostles 3.33, 1951, p. 412).



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- The church has ordained various prayers of absolution, which all refer to the authority given to the priesthood by Christ through the apostles. Besides private confession, made by a person to his confessor alone, the early church adopted another practice, which required penitents to make a full, public confession to the congregation. This practice, entailing some measure of public humiliation, Gradually disappeared, giving way to private, auricular confession, Which proved to be an adequate vehicle for obtaining absolution. Like all sacraments, confession has its outward signs and its inward graces.



Repentance and Confession



- The outward signs
- Is consist in the actual verbal confession, As well as the absolution given by the confessor after he has ascertained the genuine contrition of the penitent and his firm intention to make amends.
- The inward spiritual graces lies in:
 - (1) forgiveness of sin (Jn.20:23, 1 Jn. 1:9);
 - (2) complete effacement of the sin (Acts 3:19);
 - (3) exculpation from guilt ; (Lk. 18:14);
 - (4) salvation ; (Lk. 19:9, 1 Cor. 5:5);
 - (5) release from penalty of sin (Mt. 3:7, 10; Lk. 13:3)
 - (6) reconciliation to God (Rom. 5:1; Eph. 2:14); and
 - (7) reaffiliation to God. (Luke 15:17-24)



Repentance and Confession



Patristically

- All the fathers of the church preached the importance of confession from the early years of the church and before the schism. With regard to forgiveness through penitential acts the Council of Laodicea (341-381) stipulates: "They who have sinned in divers particulars, if they have persevered in the prayer of confession and penance, and are wholly converted from their faults, shall be received again to communion, through the mercy and goodness of God, after a time of penance appointed to them,
- in proportion to the nature of their offence" (The Canons . . . , Canon 2, 1956, p. 125).



Repentance and Confession



Practically and

Psychologically:

- The confessor feels that he has been relieved from a burden. There are many private things that a person needs to talk about with a person who can advise him and keep his secrets. “For if they fall, one will lift up his companion. But woe to him who is alone when he falls, for he has no one to help him up” To look after him, to encourage him. (Ecclesiastes 4:10)



Repentance and Confession



The Benefit of Confession:

- To attain forgiveness: getting an absolution and a solution
- Guidance: Those who have no guide, fall like leaves in autumn
- Obliterating pride
- Spiritual relief
- Obedience to the commandment which tells me to confess as previously mentioned
- Spiritual discipleship



Repentance and Confession



How Should I Confess?

- Sins of commission
- Sins of omission
- Sins of commission:
 - Passive: I confess my sins
 - Sins of the mind:
 - Every kind of thought:
 - Lust
 - love of praise
 - judgment
 - envy
 - ungratefulness



Repentance and Confession



- Sins of deed:
 - Stealing
 - adultery
 - smoking
- Sins of tongue:
 - Swearing
 - Lying
 - Judgment
 - Gossip
 - Slander
 - Exaggeration
 - Cursing
 - false testimony etc...



Repentance and Confession



- Sins of emotions (relationships):
 - Hostility
 - hatred
- Sins of omission:
- Active: negligence in:
 - Prayer
 - Reading the Holy Bible
 - Fasting
 - Service
 - Charity
 - Loving others (James 4:17)



Repentance and Confession



- Notes on Confession:
 - Self judgment
 - I can write down my sins on a piece of paper in order to remember them
 - Confessing regularly
 - Following guidance



Repentance and Confession



Things that shouldn't be said in confession

1. "I have no sin": "I do not sin" "I didn't do anything"
 - This means that one is not in need of an absolution
 - This also means that one is not in need of the Body and Blood of Christ for the forgiveness of sins
 - "If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves, and the truth is not in us." (1 John 1:8)
 - "If we say that we have not sinned, we make Him a liar, and His word is not in us" (1 John 1:10)



Repentance and Confession



2. "I have "I am a sinner" :

- Standard phrases like this one are not sufficient .

3. Beginning by talking about one's problems

- This turns confession session into a session of only guidance, advice, and encouragement • Confession is to remember and confess our sins

4. Excuses

- If there are any excuses, God knows them well without our mentioning them, and He does not want us to mention them again



Repentance and Confession



5. The sins of others
 - We need to confess our own sins not the sins of others
6. Be careful of:
 - self-righteousness
 - judgment
 - not forgiving others
 - seeking vengeance
7. “I’m trying to be good”
 - Have you been successful in this?
 - When God created man He saw that he was very good, but this good man says, does, thinks, and feels sinful things
 - The fact that a person is coming to confess, it already means that he is trying to be good.
8. One feels shy to repeat sins



Repentance and Confession



The Father of Confession

- As indicated earlier, a confessor must be an authorized priest, with a pious character, spiritual integrity, and a firm grasp of church doctrine. He should have insight into human nature, and show perception, discernment, and cooperation with a fellow human being who wants to make a clean breast of his personal wrongdoing. Above all he must be trustworthy, discreet, and able to command confidence.
- He must be willing to fast and pray for and on behalf of those who confess to him. In particular, he should treat all penitents, rich and poor, with patience, without fear or favor or expectation of material reward. As a rule, except in cases of disability or inability to attend, confessions is better to be received on the church premises.

