

ECCLESIASTES, PART II

READ

Your Scripture reading this week is the remaining six chapters of Ecclesiastes. As you continue to wade through the by-now-familiar theme of “everything is meaningless” throughout Ecclesiastes—a theme that might even strike you as curious for a work of Scripture—listen closely for Solomon’s great “conclusion of the matter.” After years of searching and struggle, after endless disappointment and much chasing after the wind, after tasting all the good that this world has to offer and still being left wanting more, Solomon finally comes to one thing—one thing he can truly trust for security, one thing that truly satisfies, one thing that imparts meaning to an otherwise meaningless existence.

As you read, continue to let the insights you gain inspire and inform your conversations with God. How does Solomon’s story remind you of your own story? How is it different? What wisdom and insight have you gained along the way? Discuss these matters with God.

MEMORIZE

By now, there are ten passages from *Morph* to memorize. If you’ve fallen behind, don’t let that discourage you. Just keep plodding.

I know what it is to be in need, and I know what it is to have plenty. I have learned the secret of being content in any and every situation, whether well fed or hungry, whether living in plenty or in want. I can do everything through him who gives me strength (Philippians 4:12-13).

I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free (Psalm 119:32).

MEDITATE

One powerful way to have transformative conversations with God is through confession.

Interestingly, Scripture describes confession in a variety of ways. Understanding these descriptions gives depth to confession. The description of confession most commonly understood is *confession of sins*. Scripture tells us that, “He who conceals his sins does not prosper, but whoever confesses and renounces them finds mercy” (Proverbs 28:13). In another place we read, “If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness” (1 John 1:9). These descriptions of confession call us to lean into God’s grace as we bring our sins before him.

A second description of confession is *confessing Christ as Lord*. We read in Scripture that “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved” (Romans 10:9-10). Yes, this description of confession describes an initial confession of Christ, but it also describes what authentic

confession looks like. Authentic confession, the confessing of our sins, is allowing Christ to be Lord over a troubled area we are confessing. If we confess sexual sin, for example, we're asking Christ to be Lord of how we express ourselves sexually. If we confess addictive behaviors, we're asking Christ to be Lord of those areas and asking him to give us the strength to overcome. If we confess hatred toward others, we're asking Christ to be Lord of our relationships and to give us hearts of love. Authentic confession is not just making a list of things we've done wrong. Authentic confession is bringing these wrongs before God and asking that he be fully God of our lives again. Scripture tells us that *"Everyone who confesses the name of the Lord must turn away from wickedness"* (2 Timothy 2:19). In other words, we must BOTH confess our sins, renouncing the lordship of all that has competed with God for our affections, AND confess Jesus as Lord, surrendering to God's lordship in our lives.

While confession need not be elaborate, some might find it helpful to incorporate one or more of the following suggestions:

- **Prayer posture:** A prayer posture is the position that your body assumes as you pray before God. Each posture communicates a unique heart attitude before God. Hands stretched upward can communicate an attitude of worship and thanksgiving, while a head bowed can communicate reverence and esteem. If you are confessing sins before God, consider posture. What's going on in your heart? How might your posture reflect your heart?
- **Journal:** You may also find it helpful to write your confession in a journal. Putting your confession in black and white can make it feel solid and tangible and can serve as a clear reminder of the commitment you made before God to renounce your sin and follow his direction.

As always, remember that your conversations with God should be highly personalized to your own situation. What is most important is that you continue to cultivate an authentic relationship with God through daily connection. Talk to God about what is truly on your heart and do so in a way that is most natural for you. Confession should not feel forced. If you have nothing to confess, you should not feel pressured to do so. Or if you do need to confess sin in your life, but you are not yet ready to sincerely surrender to Christ's lordship in this area, then begin your conversation with God here. Tell him about this area of your life, your reluctance to let it go, and ask him for a change of heart.