

Confession:

James 5:16 *Therefore, confess your sins to one another, and pray for one another so that you may be healed. The effective prayer of a righteous man can accomplish much.*

1 John 1:9 *If we confess our sins, He is faithful and righteous to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.*

David, in Psalm 32:3-5
*When I kept things to myself,
I felt weak deep inside me.
I moaned all day long.
Day and night you punished me.
My strength was gone as in summer heat.
Then I confessed my sins to you
And didn't hide my guilt.
I said, "I will confess my sins to the Lord,"
And you forgave my guilt.*

Nehemiah did not complain, whine, or see who else could fix the problem. He prayed to be enabled to be part of the solution..... And in the end, Peter was on the front lines preaching Christ.

How about us? Our country is a mess. Should we confess the sins of our country and ourselves? Should our prayers ask God to help us to be part of a solution?

Series: Biblical Gen. Ed.

Title: 2 Guys' Confessions

Topic: Confession leads to _____.



To set the stage for the first passage:

- It has been about 1,000 years since Moses, and is about 400 years before Christ.
- The 70 year captivity of the southern tribes ended about 90 years ago.
- Two groups of people have returned to Jerusalem – the 1st was led by Zerrubabel and Joshua in 538 BC, the 2nd was led by Ezra in 458 BC.
- The temple has been rebuilt.
- Attempts to rebuild the walls failed due to opposition.
- Nehemiah, still back in Persia, gets word of the dismal condition of the walls. He will go back in 445 BC.
- What we will read today happened about 13 (15) years after the close of Ezra.

Neh. 1:1-3:

So far, we see the time is 446, the place is the winter palace of the king Artaxerxes, the main character gets some news from back home, and the news concerns Nehemiah greatly.

Lesson:

Neh. 1:4-11

Matt. 26:69 ...

The two men:

1. Nehemiah:

The captivity lasted 70 years. It has been about 90 years since the first group went back. Nehemiah has never been to Jerusalem. He

has never seen the city or the temple. He has never participated in a Passover or any other festival. He was born and raised in the "worldly" land and culture of Persia.

Significance of the walls:

In the ancient world, a city without walls was a city completely open and vulnerable to its enemies. They had no defense, no protection at all.

An un-walled city was always a backwater town, with nothing valuable in it. If there were anything of value in an un-walled city, it could be stolen away easily because there was no defense to stop it. The temple could be rebuilt, but never made beautiful, because anything valuable would be taken easily.

Those living in an un-walled city lived in constant stress and tension; they never knew when they might be attacked and brutalized. Every man lived in constant fear for his wife and children.

Nehemiah's prayer:

1. He showed a deep _____ about the people.
2. He declared an obvious _____ about God's character. V. 5
3. He made a _____ of sin. V. 6 & 7 His

confession illustrated 3 qualities:

- Intensity. "I beseech You."
- Honesty. Nehemiah made no attempt to excuse the Israelites for their sin and actually owned his part in it. He surveyed the grim record of Israel's past and present failure, and he knew that he was not exempt from blame. Notice that he prays, *we have sinned against You; I and my father's house have sinned.* *7 We have acted very corruptly against You.*

- Urgency. *make Your servant successful today.*

4. He has _____ in God's promises. V. 8-10
5. He declares his _____ to get involved. V. 11 (He needs to convince the king.)

**Nehemiah gets involved:
Neh. 2:1-8**

2. Peter:

In the garden Peter flashed his sword when the troops came to Gethsemane to get Jesus.

- He boasted one moment and bolted the next.
- Earlier he snoozed when he should have prayed.
- He denied when he should have defended.
- He cursed when he should have confirmed.
- He ran when he should have stayed.

We read Matthew's account of the night Peter denied Christ:
Matthew wasn't there that night.

Did Peter confess? The evidence we know:

- 1) He went back to the upper room (they had all fled in the garden, remember?).
- 2) He was the first to run to the empty tomb.
- 3) He was first out of the boat when Jesus was on the shore.
- 4) He couldn't stay silent.
50 days after _____ Christ, Peter is _____ Christ.

Peter must have confessed, even though Scripture is silent on this...