

# Confess and Bless

## *A prayer activity*

We all want to connect deeply with the Lord and with each other in prayer. But sometimes we have a hard time knowing where to begin. Confess and Bless is a prayer activity (that happens in 2 parts) that you can do with any small group. First let's look at the two principals---confess and bless in the scriptures:

**Confess** – The Bible talks about vertical confession (confessing your sins to God). “If we confess our sins [to God] he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.” (1 John 1:9). The promise is that vertical confession brings purification. The Bible also talks about horizontal confession (confessing your sins to other people). “Confess you sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16) The promise is that horizontal confession brings healing. Sometimes we fail to see life change (healing) happen in our lives because we aren't regularly confessing sin openly and honestly to other believers.

**Bless** – Hebrews 3:13 says “But encourage one another daily, as long as it is called Today.” It's clear that the Lord wants us to bless and encourage each other. When we speak words of affirmation to one another, the Lord uses it in big ways to grow His people.

## ***Putting it into practice:***

1. Confess – when we do “confess and bless” we practice both horizontal and vertical confession. Get into groups of about 4 to 6 people. Tell the groups you are entering a time of prayer confession. Tell the groups to ask the Holy Spirit to search their hearts and reveal any sin. Then in the small groups take 10-15 minutes to have them pray out loud---confessing their sins to God. It is OK if there are periods of silence---trust the Lord to be speaking to our hearts during those silences. By confessing out loud, the Lord hears us confessing, as do our brothers/sisters in the Lord. This is a great way to walk in the light and experience purification and healing. It will be hard to be open and honest about your sin, but the benefits are so worth it!
2. Bless – After you finish your 10-15 minutes of “confess” move to the “bless” time. Begin by choosing 1 person in the small group of 4-6. Then take 10 minutes and shower compliments and affirmations on them. Let them know what you love about them. Let them know how you've seen God using them, changing them, and loving them. Let them know what character qualities or fruits of the Spirit you see in them. Tell them what they mean to you. Basically you want to just bombard them with verbal encouragement and love. Be creative! After you finish this one person, there may be time to “bless” a second person. If not, just wait until the next time your group gets together, then choose a new person to bless after you do the confess part. Make sure you get to bless every person eventually.