

Faith Matters # 3 – “Confession” – Feb. 19

Everyone starts out following the direction and values of the world. Many people later turn around on the path of life to follow Jesus instead. That turning around is called repentance. As Luke tells us, “Repent and turn to God so that your sins may be wiped out.” (Acts 3:19). Clean slate. Start over.

But even though we do follow Jesus in this new direction we often wander, following Him at a distance, sometimes not at all. We know that He said, “I give you a new commandment, that you love one another.” (Jn 13:34) But do we? Always? If not, that’s why we offer prayers of confession.

We know He said we should make disciples (Mt. 28:19), but we fail to do that. He teaches us, “If any want to become my followers, let them deny themselves, and take up their cross and follow me” (Mk 8:34) but we’re not good at self denial. That’s why we offer prayers of confession.

One of the glorious truths of our faith is Jesus’ promise: “I am with you always.” But how often do we forget that, thinking we’re going alone through trials & sorrows & pain. We are encouraged to “search the Scriptures” but do we often? Do we ever?

Paul instructed new Christians (& also to us here at Erskine): “Rejoice always, pray without ceasing, give thanks in all circumstances” (I Thess. 5:17). Those, too, are topics for confession: we don’t rejoice always, pray without ceasing, or give thanks in all circumstances.

Even our failure to offer prayers of confession is something to confess. Not doing what we should is called “sins of omission”. I’ll leave up to you the sins of commission that need confessing.

In our first prayer, adoration, we acknowledge God’s majesty, power, and love. In our second prayer, confession, we acknowledge what separates us from growth in Christ. The author of I John reminds us, “If we confess our sins, He who is faithful and just will forgive us our sins, & cleanse us from all unrighteousness” (I Jn. 1:9).

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