

## Confession Session Three

### "Confess What?"

STEP ONE: Begin by guiding the group through "Handout One"

The handout will not be the most exciting part of the exercise, but it's important that the kids understand that the words of the confession in worship:

- "Identify sin" and "raise sin" up to God for forgiveness
- Teach us what "sin" is

In this, we learn that sin can be conscious, unconscious, and includes items of action, inaction, and even simple thought.

Walk through the handout either in large group or small groups. (I'd suggest large group here, and **keep it moving.**)

Make sure they identify the basic ideas listed above.

If they question (as they might), how sin includes "thought," explain that Jesus taught us this (he who lusts after a woman in his heart has committed a sin) and it is hard to understand. But it points largely to our "nature" to not be perfect, but rather caught up in sin.

At the end of the handout SAY: *When we sin, we separate ourselves from God and from one another, our next exercise will hopefully help to show us how to recognize sin, and recognize ways this "separation" happens—thus our need to confess.*

STEP TWO: Break the kids into small groups, hand out the little story of "Timmy's Pretty Much Boring Day" and ask them to read the stories together in their groups.

As they finish, ask them to do the assignment at the end of the story—give them plenty of time to accomplish this.

The instructions for the kids stress that they should note sins of

- Action
- Inaction
- Done Consciously
- Done Unconsciously
- Sins of the "heart" or "mind" without thought

See who can find, and explain, the most sins!

STEP THREE: Review the story with the large group.

See who has the "most sins" listed. Then (if time allows) read the story slowly.

Have the kids raise their hands for each sin and explain it.

Add to the explanations when needed.

STEP FOUR: Ask the following questions:

How did Timmy's actions separate him from:

- His parents (not listening, lying, making them do stuff he should do by himself, i.e., getting up, hurting relationship)
- Shep?
- His baby brother (making him look bad, "using" him to get away with stuff)
- His sister (demeaning her, making her the "butt" of his joke)
- His friends (making them think it's cool to talk badly about others or make fun of them)
- Betsy (not standing up for her, even when she was his friend, pretending not to want to sit with her)
- His teacher?
- Jesus? (Choosing to hurt others for fun rather than be kind)

STEP FIVE: Does Timmy need to confess? After he confesses, how should he change?

**Handout One: Worship Words**  
***What Do they Mean?***

These lines are from the "confession" in the old green book (LBW). Read the lines as a group and answer the questions as you go along...

***"If we say we have no sin, we deceive ourselves..."*** (What do these words mean?)

***"...we confess that we are in bondage to sin and cannot free ourselves."*** (What does this mean? What is "bondage to sin?")

***"...We have sinned against you in thought, word and deed..."*** (What does this mean? What is "thought, word, and deed? Are we saying that just THINKING bad stuff is sinful?)

***"...by what we have done and by what we have left undone..."*** (What is "done" and "undone"? Can we sin by NOT doing something? What would that look like?)

A contemporary confession (used at Trinity, Mount Joy) puts the same ideas this way...

***"We come before you today, recognizing we are broken; we are broken by sin..."*** (What does it mean to be "broken" by sin?)

***"We are bound to sin and cannot heal ourselves. We have sinned in our actions, thoughts and deeds. We have sinned by not loving you and others as we should..."*** (What does it mean to be "bound" to sin?)

Finally, this confession from another LBW service shows the presence of sin "we don't know about."

***"Some of my sin I know—the thoughts and words and deeds of which I am ashamed—but some is known only to you."*** (Are we saying that sometimes we can even sin without knowing it??)

**Anyway you cut it—there's a whole lot of sinning going on!**

## Timmy's Pretty Boring Day

One morning, Timmy got up for school, just like he did every morning.

Well, sorta.

When his alarm went off, he flipped the switch, on purpose, clear past the “snooze” setting to “off” and went back to sleep. Mom had to get him up, as usual, and tell him to hurry. She had to call twice, even though he heard her (just like the alarm) the first time.

On the way to his feet, he reached down and shoved the dirty clothes he had been asked to put in the hamper under his bed. As he did this, he noticed his head hurt. Not in the, “Oh my gosh my head is killing me,” sorta way, but more in the “Hmm. I think my head hurts a little,” sorta way. He swung his head back and forth—pretty hard—hoping that it would hurt more and that he could stay home from school.

It didn't. In fact, just as Timmy's dog, Shep, came running up to him for his morning pat on the head, Timmy realized moving his head had actually made it feel better. If he was going to stay home on this day, he'd either have to spike a fever, fast, or paint the back of his throat with toothpaste so he could barf. He thought about it—wondering if he could pull it off as Shep leaned into him, tail-a-wagging. Greatly disappointed in his lack of illness, Timmy raised his leg to push Shep away. “Beat it!” he snarled, and headed downstairs.

At breakfast, his sister wasted no time in accusing him of leaving the toilet seat up. Timmy, of course, had done this (he loved hearing his sister scream upon sitting and hitting the toilet water), but, just as dad was about to yell, Timmy calmly asserted that Petey, his three year old brother, had been playing with the seat the on and off for days now. “Actually,” Timmy said, “his aim stinks. I've had to clean up after him twice.” (Truthfully, Timmy had only cleaned one minor “miss” on the toilet seat earlier in the week. He had performed this task badly, just before putting the seat back in the “up” position and walking away.)

When Timmy got to the bus stop, the guys were talking about girls. Not in the “She's cool,” or even in the “She's really pretty,” sorta way, but in other ways. Timmy laughed at all of the comments. He really laughed when his friend, Mack, pretended to walk like Betsy—who was a really, really tall girl in his class. Mack pretended like Betsy was a monster, swatting her smaller classmates out of the way, stealing lunch from someone and then, or course, burping loudly.

Timmy told Mack that he was hysterical. Even though he thought Betsy was really nice, liked talking to her in study hall, and thought she was (for an eight foot tall person) really pretty. (Timmy then made a mental note that he should probably avoid Betsy today.)

School was really normal. Timmy had to tell his science teacher he left his homework sheet home and would bring it in tomorrow. (He had forgotten to do it, but it was either lie or get a zero.) He then pretended that a seat at lunch was saved for a friend when Betsy asked if she could sit there. At soccer, where everyone was supposed to run a warm-up lap while they waited for the coach, he made rude noises with his friends and then told the coach they had all done their run.

The night was great. The toilet seat trick worked again. Petey peed all over the bathroom and Timmy got to laugh as Mom cleaned it up. Then, Mom and Dad went to bed early so he got to skip his normal bedtime and play an extra half-hour on his XBOX.

That night, Timmy had a dream. He was having a milkshake with some guy with long hair, a beard, and a robe. "Tell me, Timmy," the guy said between sips of his shake, "What did you do today?"

"Oh, today was pretty boring."

"Really?"

"Oh yeah," Timmy said.

But then, a funny thing happened. As Timmy launched into his answer, looking into the warm, but questioning eyes of his milkshake-drinking companion, he realized that his stomach suddenly didn't feel so good...

**Your assignment: given what you know about sin, work with your group to figure out how many times Timmy sinned on his "pretty boring" day. It's a contest between your group and the other groups, so make sure to number each sin as it happens on the paper and be ready to explain "why" it's a sin.**

**Re-read the story and remember to look at:**

**Things that are sins Timmy "did"**

**Things that are sins Timmy should have done, but didn't.**

**Things that are sins Timmy maybe didn't even know he was doing.**