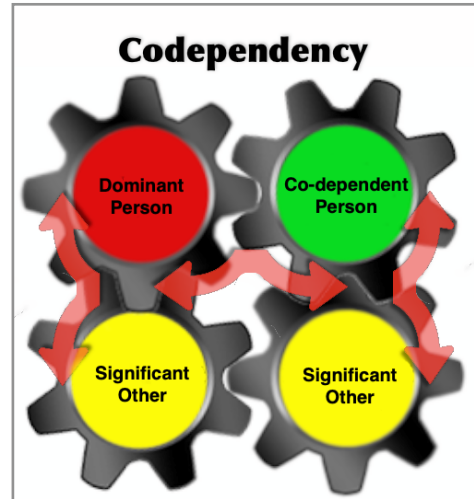


Our Heavenly Father's Children Confront Sin

Dear Friends in Christ Jesus our Lord,

In our recent email and in several previous writings, we wrote about **confrontation** and how essential it is in removing the ongoing apprehension that prevents the fullness of Christ's love in relationships. (At the end of this Teaching Email we again refer you to materials for further reading which we cited in the previous email.) If you've taken a peek at any of these materials, then you know that we are addressing from a spiritual/relational standpoint what psychiatry calls "codependency"—where relationships that are plagued by ongoing apprehension operate like spiraling gears.



We've used illustrations of spiraling gears to clarify the many ways in which unChristlikeness is fostered in Christian relationships. In this Teaching Email we want to confront what we view as the most anti-Christ aspect within Christianity – **the mutual toleration and support of unconfessed sin**. For over 40 years we've been warning Christians about the sinister upsurge of tolerated sin in each other's lives and in faith communities as repentance has disappeared from so much of Christianity. Even many parts of the Bible Belt have succumbed to a *Christianity without repentance*. The whole biblical command to turn away from sin and walk in Christ's love, forgiveness and compassion is blatantly disregarded and even discarded.

Who are the tolerators of sin? If you or someone you know sees himself or herself as a genuinely caring person who thrives on recognition and gratitude for what they do, you'll refuse to biblically confront a brother or sister who needs to be confronted about their sin. Our nation is currently obsessed with being psychologically sensitive to everyone. That's why you'll often hear tolerators say something like, "We'll hurt their feelings if we speak up", or, "It's not Christlike to interfere with their lives." But you can count on these truths:

- The person(s) who resists confronting someone with unconfessed sin has the same demonic strongholds which operate with familiarity in each of them (this is equally true in family and faith community); and/or there are unconfessed sins which they've tolerated in their own lives and therefore refuse to confront in someone else who is clinging to unconfessed sin.
- The person(s) who refuses to confront unconfessed sin fails to appreciate the deep bond of relational fellowship which the forgiven and cleansed righteous have with our heavenly Father and our Lord Jesus — an intimate fellowship which they want restored through repentance and confessing each time they do sin: "*We proclaim to you what we have seen and heard, so that you also may have fellowship with us. And our fellowship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ*" (1John 1:3).

The difference between repenting and confessing our sins versus denying that we need to confess our sin and turn away from it is an accusation against our very Lord Himself: “If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness. If we claim we have not sinned, we make Him out to be a liar and His word is not in us” (1John 1:9,10). Many in Christianity today are declaring that He is a liar by their very resistance to repent for their own sins and to confront others who say they are His but are tolerating sin — **thereby bringing public shame to Jesus and His holy reputation.**

We’ve noted in previous writings and most clearly in our article, *The Gospel Of The Covenant Is The Pilgrimage To Salvation* <<https://restorationministries.org/download/gospofcov2.pdf>>, that our heavenly Father is a Covenant *Giving* and Covenant *Keeping* God. The word “covenant” can mean *“to come into union with.”* The Covenant which our Father offers invites you to live in union with Him through the indwelling Holy Spirit. Union implies oneness, an ongoing pilgrimage with Him on earth from the moment you’re born again until the time when your name is read aloud before the host of heaven. Our goal in keeping the Covenant in Christ is to live in a way that brings glory to our Father. In fact, any goal or purpose that doesn’t incorporate glorifying our Father will ultimately prove idolatrous in one way or another.

Your Covenant union with our heavenly Father through His Son is THE most intimate relationship beginning when you’re born again and lasting for eternity. But while you are still in your body, it’s crucial that you realize that your unconfessed sin severs your fellowship with Him. If this doesn’t bring you the deepest sorrow, then you don’t appreciate what our Lord Jesus accomplished for you. And if someone close to you on your spiritual pilgrimage is entertaining unconfessed sin, that should sadden you as well. **YOUR LOVE FOR YOUR HEAVENLY FATHER AND YOUR LORD JESUS AND YOUR LOVE FOR THE PERSON HOLDING ONTO UNCONFESSSED SIN COMPELS YOU TO CONFRONT THE SIN.**

If you’re in a position to confront sin in a fellow follower of Jesus and for whatever reason you don’t, you love neither your Father and your Lord nor your brother or sister.

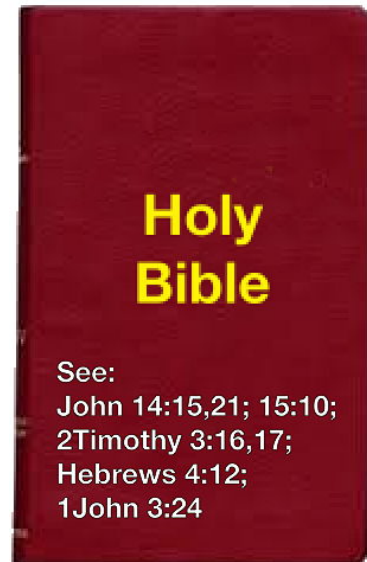
The Domino Effect Of Not Confronting

You’ve most likely heard, “One bad apple spoils the whole bunch.” A bad apple is someone whose behavior negatively influences the rest of the group. This adage is illustrated in the diagram at right. *Everyone is*



in sin: the person with unconfessed sin as well as those who refrain from confronting them. **Our Lord's own words** command His followers to confront a fellow follower who holds onto sin:

“If your brother or sister sins, go and point out their fault [where they have broken God's command], just between the two of you. If they listen to you, you have won them over. But if they will not listen, take one or two others along, so that ‘every matter may be established by the testimony of two or three witnesses.’ If they still refuse to listen, , tell it to the [called-out ones]; and if they refuse to listen even to the [called-out ones], treat them as you would a pagan or a tax collector” (Matthew 18:15-17).



Keep in mind that when you confront sin, you are not judging the person. Rather, you are upholding the *righteous standard of God's commands* which judges their sin. You are loving them as Jesus would love them, and seeking to free them from their burden of unconfessed sin. Then they can be restored to righteousness through their confession and can re-establish fellowship union with our Father and Lord Jesus. If you have the loving appreciation for the grace given you that the penalty for *your* sins has already been paid, then you are doing for them what you'd want someone to do for you if you were holding onto unconfessed sin. **Consider our Lord's own words:**

- *“Jesus replied: ‘Love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind.’ This is the first and greatest commandment. And the second is like it: ‘Love your neighbor as yourself.’ All the Law and the Prophets hang on these two commandments” (Matthew 22:37-40).*
- *“So in everything, do to others what you would have them do to you, for this sums up the Law and the Prophets” (Matthew 7:12).*

If You Say The Lord's Prayer, Then Do It!

The Lord's Prayer is a foundation which should compel you to carry out the actions commanded you in the Bible: *“Our Father in heaven, hallowed be Your name, Your kingdom come, **Your will be done**, on earth as it is in heaven” (Matthew 6:9,10)*. It's in the light of knowing that Jesus Himself commands His own to confront sin, that He affirms the criteria by which we will be judged: *“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven, but **only the one who does the will of My Father who is in heaven**” (Matthew 7:21).*

Your *love* in doing for others what you would have them do for you, *including confronting sin*, is not only foundational in verifying that you belong to our Lord Jesus. It's also the core motivation of true fellowship that verifies your Covenant union with our Father and Lord Jesus. Again, you are *not judging* the person who is holding onto

unconfessed sin. Far from it! You are an instrument of **mercy**, restoring fellowship where it has been severed through unconfessed sin. In fact, you really *don't* want to be judgmental: *"Be merciful, just as your Father is merciful"* (Luke 6:36). *"...judgment without mercy will be shown to anyone who has not been merciful. Mercy triumphs over judgment"* (James 2:13).

Extending mercy through confronting sin is one of the noblest actions that love can produce. So it's vital that you know that not confronting sin is sin: *"If anyone, then, knows the good they ought to do and doesn't do it, it is sin for them"* (James 4:17). This is where most of psychologically-sensitized Christianity finds itself today: **sinning by tolerating sin**. Someone with undemolished strongholds or unconfessed sin will often rationalize, resisting confronting by 'playing the other person's cards for them':

"What **if** they don't repent?" or "What **if** they hate me for speaking up?" or "What **if** they accuse me of judging them?" As soon as your mind succumbs to an **if**, you've given into the sin of omission. You've put your own fears and self-preservation ahead of their good. You know that you're beset by undemolished strongholds, the toxic motivations they leave behind, and/or unconfessed sin **if** you allow your mind to consider thoughts of **if**.

During our years of conducting retreats and seminars across the US and Canada we surveyed faith communities. When asked, "How many here have unconfessed sin?" all but a very few acknowledged they were holding onto sin. What was equally sad is that no one in the faith community was fulfilling our Lord's command to confront sin. On one of the two times Jesus speaks about the process of *being a faith community* (Matthew 18:15-17), He commands His followers to confront sin. If sin *isn't* confronted, what does that say about you and/or your faith community? **You're "Christian", without Christ!**

We know that our heavenly Father hears the prayers of the righteous (Proverbs 15:29; John 9:31; 1Peter 3:12), people whose sins are covered under the blood of Jesus when they confess their sins (see 1John 1:9,10). Because of the union our heavenly Father offers us through the New Covenant, why would anyone want to hold onto unconfessed sin? And why would anyone let a brother or sister hold onto unconfessed sin?

Two verses sum up the beauty of having your sins forgiven, the sins of those in your faith community forgiven, and each of you cleansed from all unrighteousness:

- *"Those who are wise will shine like the brightness of the heavens, and those who lead many to righteousness, like the stars for ever and ever"* (Daniel 12:3).
- *"So that you may become blameless and pure, 'children of God without fault in a warped and crooked generation.' Then you will shine among them like stars in the sky"* (Philippians 2:15).

We look forward to the day we all shine together. But for now, let's help each other stay free from unconfessed sin. May each of us heed the response of Isaiah, **"Here am I, Lord. Send me!"** (Isaiah 6:8).

Mike & Sue

For further reading about codependency and non-confrontation:

- Growing Relationships Through Confrontation

<https://restorationministries.org/download/grtcr.pdf>

- Teaching Email 10. “*Apprehension: The Silent Destroyer*”

[https://restorationministries.org/download/10.june25-05%20\(1\).pdf](https://restorationministries.org/download/10.june25-05%20(1).pdf)

- “*Is Interpersonal Apprehension Hindering You From Experiencing The Love Of Jesus?*”

<https://restorationministries.org/download/codependentgears.pdf>