

# MOUNT SINAI MISSIONARY BAPTIST CHURCH

## MONDAY EVENING BIBLE STUDY

### Psalm 6

### The Conquering Power of Confessing Sin

#### Quote

“A great part of our worthiness lies in an acknowledgment of our own unworthiness.”

Matthew Henry

#### I. Introduction

Holiness is the chief attribute of God. The angelic host surrounding God have no trouble recognizing this **truth** as they cry out, “Holy, **holy**, **holy** is the Lord Almighty” (Isa. 6:3). In the same way, what God desires in the believer’s life, more than anything else, is personal holiness. God says to his people, “Be **holy**, because I am **holy**” (Lev. 11:44–45; 19:2; 20:7; 1 Pet. 1:16). This call for holiness requires that the believer live a pure and separated life, rooted and grounded in God’s Word (Ps. 1:1–3).

But what happens when a believer falls into **sin**? When he fails to acknowledge and confess his **sin**, God will apply his chastening rod to restore him to holiness (Heb. 12:3–11). This is the message of Psalm 6, a penetrating insight into the life of David. During an unspecified time of his life, he persisted without acknowledging his **sin** to God. The consequences of unconfessed **sin** in his life were devastating. This “psalm of David” does not record the actual **confession** of his **sin**, but it is a reality to be understood.

Psalm 6 was “for the director of music” and was to be played “with stringed instruments.” The word *sheminith* occurs in Psalm 12 and 1 Chronicles 15:21. It may have referred to an eight-string instrument. This psalm is classified as a penitential psalm, one in which the psalmist turns to God for **forgiveness**. This is the first such psalm in the Book of Psalms (cp. Pss. 32; 38; 51; 102; 130; 143).

#### II. Commentary

#### MAIN IDEA

Unconfessed **sin** in David's life was painful and costly, but by acknowledging it to God, he found a renewed confidence in the Lord.

*A the Problem of Unconfessed Sin (6:1–7)*

**6:1.** David knew he had lost favor with God: **O Lord, do not rebuke me in your anger.** He was painfully aware that he was under God's **rebuke, anger, and wrath**, which in reality was the Lord's loving **discipline** for unconfessed **sin** in his life. He was aware that God was displeased with him. David appealed to God to lighten the **discipline**.

**6:2.** Crying out for relief from God's painful **discipline**, David yearned, **Be merciful to me, Lord, for I am faint.** He was so physically weak that he was faint, suffering loss of energy, drive, and ambition. Knowing that he deserved what he was receiving from God, David asked for **mercy**, not justice. He asked for the undeserved relief and tender compassion of the Lord in the midst of his misery: **Heal me, for my bones are in agony.** The word *bones* was a poetic way of describing his inner turmoil.

**6:3.** Having forfeited inward peace, David mourned, **My soul is in anguish.** His soul, representing his entire inner being, was downcast, discouraged, and in deep dismay. With a heavy heart aching for relief, he cried out, **How long, O Lord, how long?** This time of anguish had existed for a long time. The question **how long?** appears sixteen times in the Psalms, and it always expresses the anguish of a weary soul seeking comfort from God.

**6:4.** Sensing that his once-close intimacy with God had been forfeited, David prayed, **Turn, O Lord, and deliver me.** The closeness of their relationship had been breached because of his unconfessed **sin**. He felt estranged from God, as if the Lord had turned his back on him and hidden his face. This had resulted in a loss of sweet fellowship between himself and the Lord.

Praying for deliverance from his ordeal, David asked the Lord, **Save me because of your unfailing love.** This **salvation** was God's deliverance from his present **discipline**. David wanted the Lord to set him free from his physical, emotional, and spiritual pain in accordance with his loyal, unconditional love.

**6:5.** If God did not deliver him from this time of punishment, David knew he would soon die. Realizing he was in danger of losing his life, David reasoned with God, **No one remembers you when he is dead. Who praises you from the grave?** In other words, he explained to God that he could not offer him public

praise or service if he suffered the loss of his life. David knew that a believer who persists in unconfessed **sin** may be subject to a premature death (Acts 5:1–11; Jas. 5:20; 1 John 5:17).

**6:6–7.** Drowning in grief, David suffered from sleeplessness, tossing and turning in his bed. He declared to the Lord, **I am worn out from groaning; all night long I flood my bed with weeping and drench my couch with tears.** Having shed many tears, David cried out, **My eyes grow weak with sorrow.** His eyes were so swollen that they could not be closed in sleep. Throughout the night he thought about his foes, who were God’s instruments of **discipline**.

*B the Power of Confessed Sin (6:8–10)*

**6:8.** Turning to his adversaries, who had been taunting him, David commanded them, **Away from me, all you who do evil.** Suddenly he was as bold as a lion, rebuking those who had threatened his life. Why the dramatic change? David explained it was because the Lord had heard his weeping. This weeping surely involved the **confession** of his **sin**, now acknowledged to God with godly sorrow.

David, the man after God’s own heart, had sought **forgiveness** with the weeping of a broken heart. With remorse over his sins, he had been forgiven and had been given a new, **holy** boldness. Although it is not directly stated, this **confession** of **sin** is clearly implied by the words **the Lord has heard**.

**6:9.** With deep, inner assurance toward God, David boasted, **The Lord has heard my cry for mercy; the Lord accepts my prayer.** The reason David was suddenly bold before God is because he was newly right before God. This confidence was based upon his assurance that God had heard his cry for **mercy**, which was a prayer of **confession** of **sin** leading to **forgiveness**.

**6:10.** How the situation had changed! With renewed **faith**, David prayed, **All my enemies will be ashamed and dismayed.** Why? Because he had confessed his **sin**, David believed that God would intervene on his behalf and scatter his enemies. When the Lord acted, they would turn back in sudden disgrace. The dismay he had felt was now reversed, and his foes would be turned back in defeat. These enemies whom God had used to **discipline** David would surely be defeated by the Lord because David had confessed his **sin**.

### III. Conclusion

Essential to every healthy Christian life is the spiritual **discipline** of confessing one's **sin** to God. Confession begins with the heart attitude in which a person is sensitive to the convicting ministry of the Holy Spirit. It is the Spirit's work to point out specific areas of a believer's life that are entangled in **sin**. Then, once convinced, the believer must acknowledge his **sin** to God, naming the offenses to the Lord (1 John 1:9).

Sin does not break a Christian's relationship with God. That is, when a Christian sins, he is still a Christian. But known **sin** does break fellowship with God. Scripture indicates that God is displeased when we do not repent of known **sin**. He may **discipline** us to bring us to **repentance**, just as a loving parent disciplines his child (Heb. 12:5–11).

The believer must deal honestly with God, openly confessing the **sin**, never minimizing or excusing the offense. A Christian should never go for long periods of time with unconfessed **sin** in his life (Eph. 4:26–27). He should keep short accounts with God, regularly acknowledging his iniquity to him and seeking his **forgiveness**. A believer must turn from his **sin** and pursue the path of obedience (Prov. 28:13).

God delights in forgiving his children for their **sin**. Just as it is man's nature to **sin**, so it is God's nature to forgive those who repent. Therefore, the people of God should be confident when they confess their **sin**, knowing they will find acceptance and pardon with the Lord and a restoration of fellowship.

#### IV. Teaching Outline

##### A. The Problem of Unconfessed Sin (1–6)

##### 1. Loss of divine pleasure (1)

##### a. Do not rebuke me in anger (1a)

##### b. Do not **discipline** me in wrath (1b)

##### 2. Loss of physical strength (2)

##### a. Restore my strength (2a)

##### b. Heal my bones (2b)

##### 3. Loss of emotional peace (3)

##### a. My soul is anguished (3a)

- b. My soul is impatient (3b)
- 4. Loss of spiritual intimacy (4)
  - a. Turn to me (4a)
  - b. Save me (4b)
- 5. Loss of physical life (5)
  - a. Deliver me from death (5a)
  - b. Deliver me from the grave (5b)
- 6. Loss of physical sleep (6–7)
  - a. I groan all night (6a)
  - b. I grow weary (6b)
- B. The Power of Confessed Sin (8–10)
  - 1. Confidence toward men (8)
  - 2. Confidence toward god (9–10)
    - a. The Lord accepts my prayer (9)
    - b. The Lord attacks my enemies (10)<sup>1</sup>

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<sup>1</sup> Steven Lawson, [\*Psalms 1–75\*](#), ed. Max Anders, vol. 11, Holman Old Testament Commentary (Nashville, TN: Holman Reference, 2004), 40–44.