

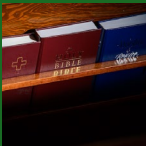
# Confession and Absolution

Building our Foundation / Understanding what Lutherans believe.

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The very thought of confessing our sins aloud can feel intimidating, and that's completely normal.



The Bible doesn't insist we must confess our sins to another person, but it offers this comforting reassurance if you're feeling guilt, shame, or doubts weighing on you.



In the Lutheran tradition, Confession is retained not as a law, but as a distinct gift of the Gospel for the consolation of terrified consciences.

# Confession and Absolution

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- Picture yourself sitting face-to-face with someone, sharing honestly about those shameful things you've said or done.

**We have a challenge every day in our lives.**



# Considering your role in this life according to the Ten Commandments:

## Are you a father, son, daughter, husband, wife, or worker?

- Have you been disobedient, unfaithful, or lazy?
- Have you been rude or quarrelsome?
- Have you hurt someone with your words or deeds?
- Have you stolen, been negligent, or wasted anything?
- Have you done any harm?



# What are some ways in which people attempt to deal with sin and its consequences in their lives?

- Ignoring the bad things they do.
- When you do choose to confess

The church—through the pastor or others—reminds us from the Bible that Jesus already paid the price for those sins, and God’s forgiveness is readily spoken over you.



# As a Christian, what should we do...

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- When we confess our sins, we acknowledge the truth that we have failed to fear, love, and trust in God above all things. Christ's absolution "declares me free of my sin through His Word placed in the mouth of a man (**BEC15**)."
- **Note: Basic Ecclesial Community (BEC)**



# How does life change when I recognize that every day is a day for repentance?

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- Our sinful condition drives us to commit sin, consciousness, and unconsciousness.

**Therefore, we need to turn to our confession daily.**



# Confession is divided into 2 parts:

- Confession
  - **Acknowledging Sin.** The individual confesses their sins.
- Absolution.
  - **Receiving forgiveness** from the confessor as if from God Himself.



# The Core Belief

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- The person should "in no way doubt but firmly believe" that their sins are forgiven before God in heaven through this act.



# What is Confession?

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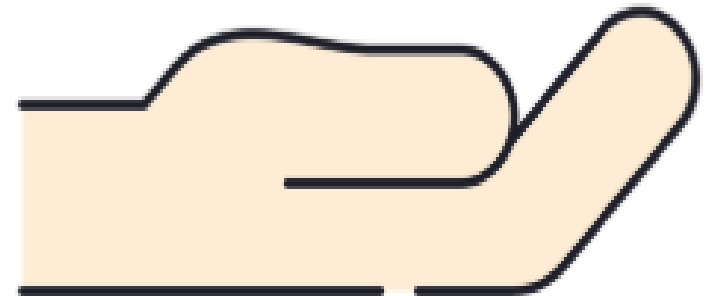
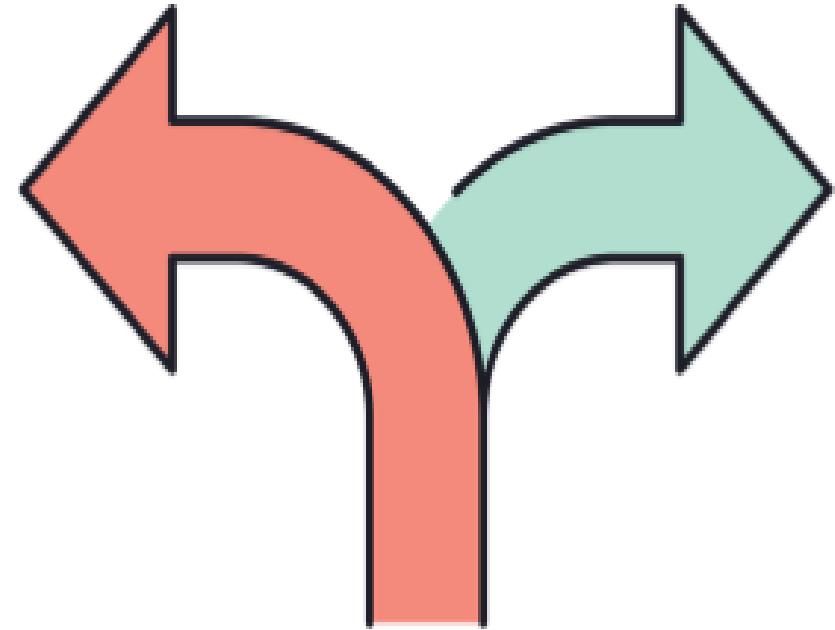
- In Confession, we admit that our sins have offended God and are deserving of His eternal punishment.



# What sins should we confess before God?

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- We confess all our sins, including known and unknown, intended and unintended. We, as Christians, must remember that all our lives are ones of repentance.
- Read 1 John 1:8-9, and you will understand why in our worship the general confession.



# Think about this:

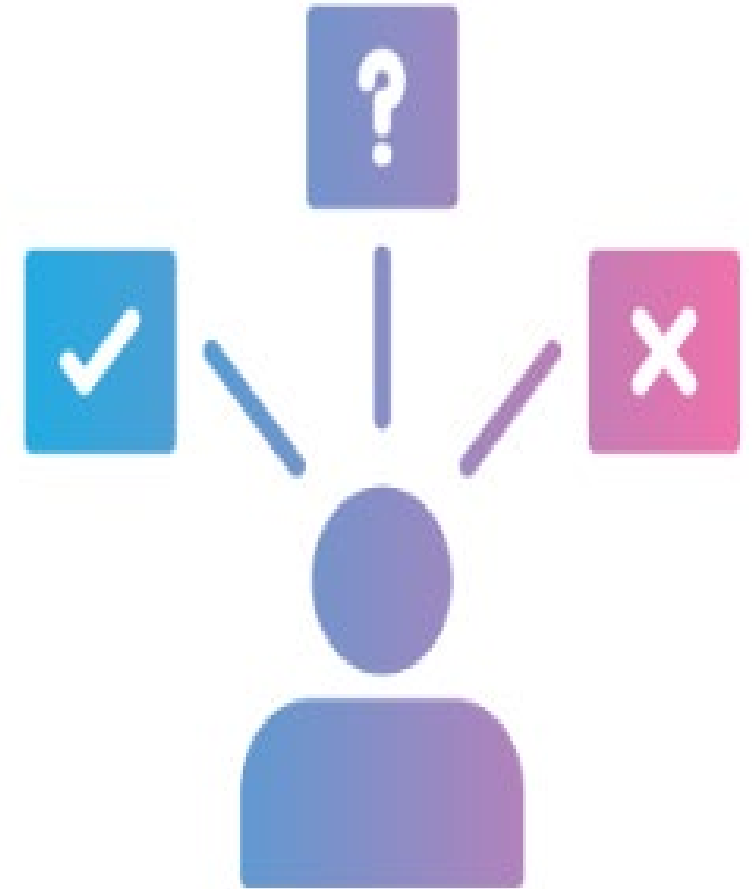
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- “If only sins that can be named are forgiven, consciences could never find peace. For many sins cannot be seen or remembered.”



# What sins should we confess before our neighbor?

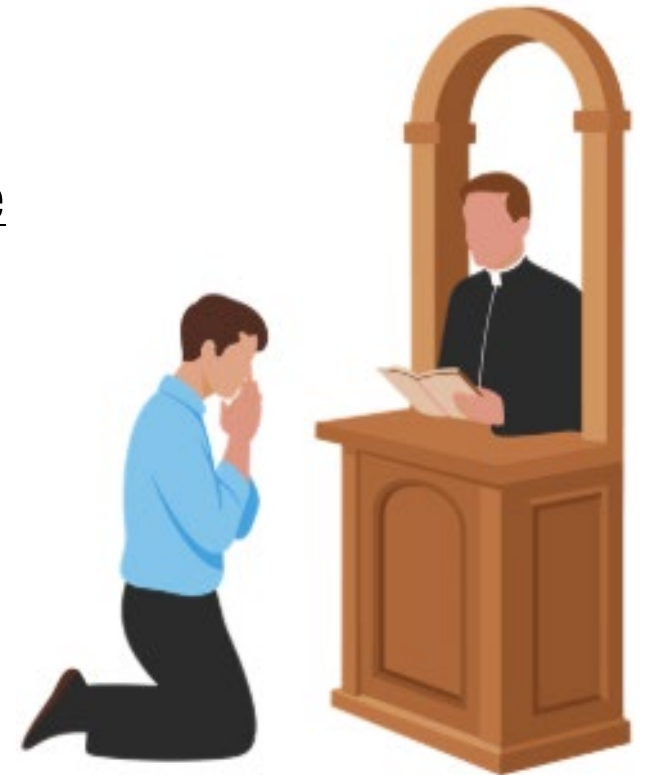
- We should confess our sins to our neighbors, and we seek their forgiveness and reconciliation.
- Avoid confessing something else that is not related to the person you are confessing to, because it might end up as gossip.
- (Read James 5:16)



# What sins should we confess to our Pastor?



- Sometimes we wonder whether we should or should not confess our sins to our pastor. When we are particularly troubled by our sin and its consequences in our lives, we can go to our pastor and ask for an individual Confessor for Confession and Absolution (private).
- **Note:** Individual confession to the pastor is not a biblical requirement for receiving the gift of forgiveness. However, the sinner is given the opportunity to hear the Absolution personally.



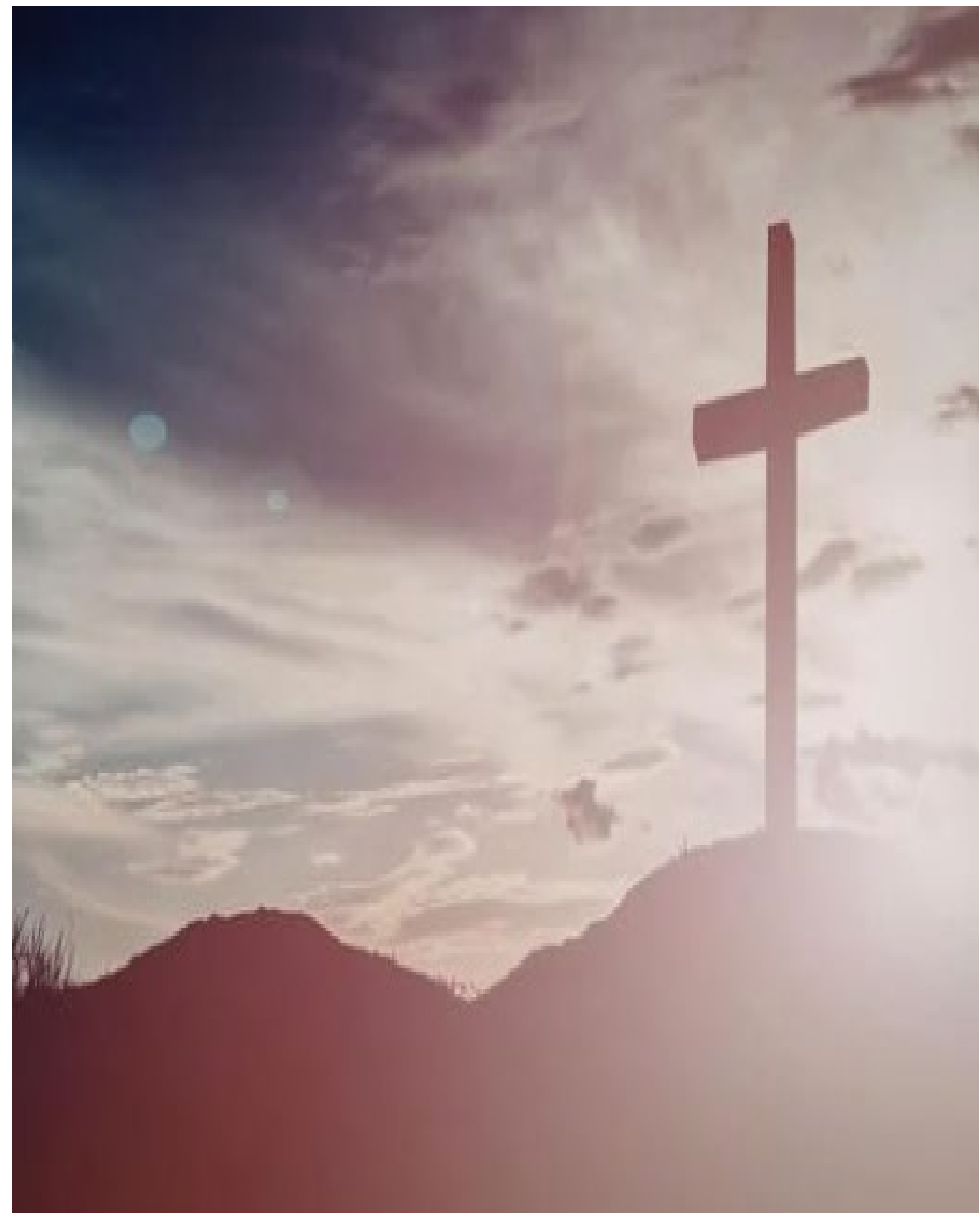
During our services, we make a general confession of our sins and receive Christ's Absolution from the Pastor.

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- This is the second part that you received after confessing your sins.
  - You received the Word of Christ's Absolution spoken by our Pastor.
  - Read 2 Corinthians 5:18 and Colossians 1:13-14.



Your forgiveness is not given to you by the Pastor.

**It is given to you from the pastor who communicates the **Word of Christ** to you.**

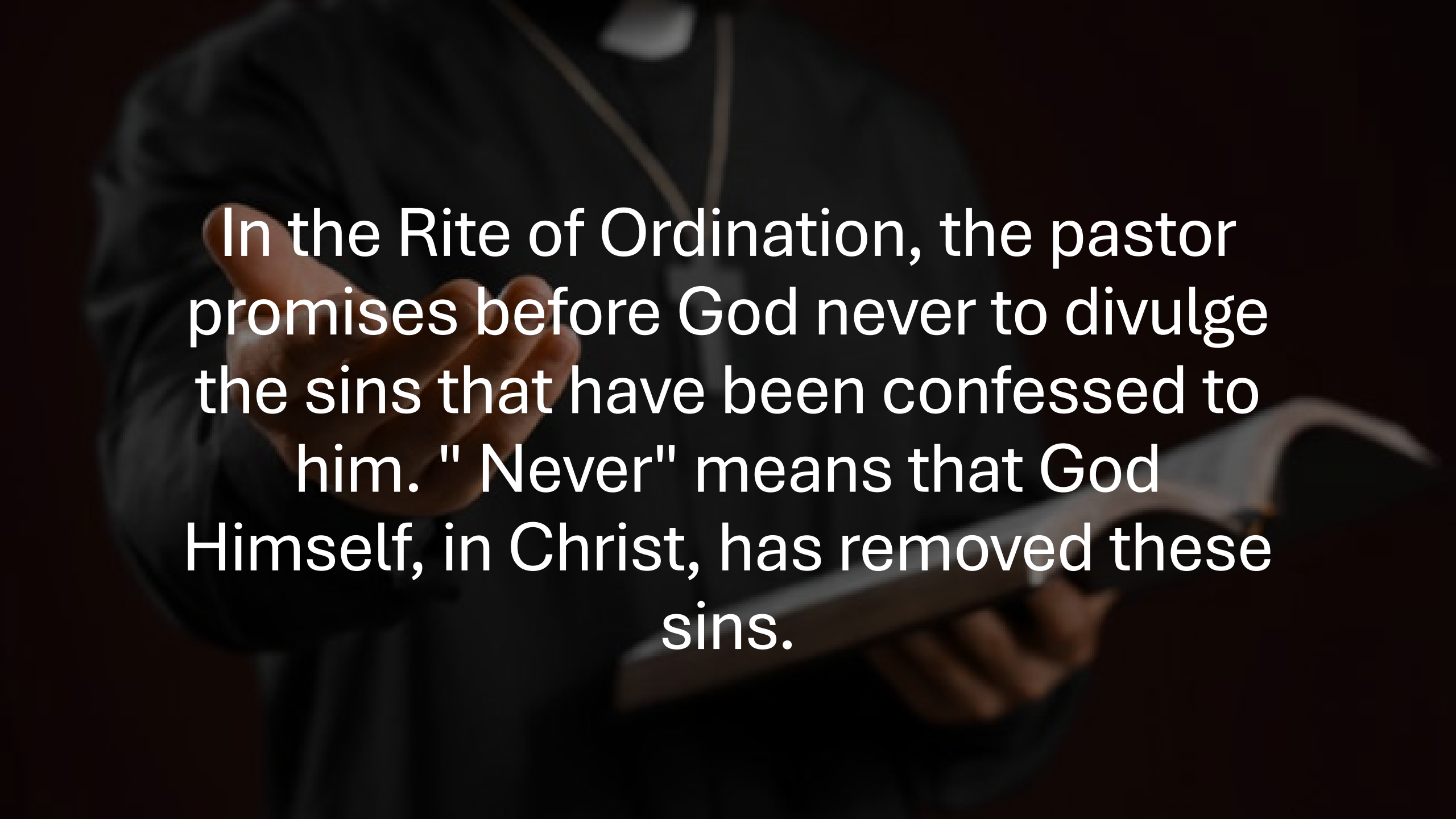


# Some Applications to Our Lives

How should we regard the absolution spoken by the pastor?

- Lutheran teachings point to our people's actions; “they should highly prize the Absolution as God’s voice, pronounced by God’s command.”
- When the pastor absolves us -that is, says, “I forgive you all your sins” – he speaks with Christ’s authority and on His behalf.
- **We must firmly believe that God Himself has completely forgiven our sins.**





In the Rite of Ordination, the pastor promises before God never to divulge the sins that have been confessed to him. "Never" means that God Himself, in Christ, has removed these sins.

# Is there any benefit to individual confession?

- This is not mandated in the bible.
- But if you do, the Christian has a safe place to name his or her sins so that they are no longer carried alone.

# There can be no mistaking to whom these Words of Jesus are addressed:

- “I forgive you all your sins.”
- “Private Confession and Absolution.”
- Equips the Christian to stand firm against “false belief”, despair, and other great shame and vice.
- This relates to the Sixth Petition from the Lord’s prayer. (“And lead us not into Temptation”)

# May only Pastors forgive sins?


**No. All Christians are given the word of Christ's forgiveness to proclaim in their daily vocations.**

- If someone offends you in front of you, it is your call to forgive that person.
- Forgiveness is between the parties involved; therefore, the person needs to ask for forgiveness, and the other party absolves them.

**If this is not happening, we need to apply Matthew 18:17.**

# How do I prepare for Confession?

- During our divine services, you receive an invitation which is called Exhortation.
- This is calling you to prepare your heart and present yourself to God.



**2 Corinthians 13:5 is the best illustration of an exhortation.**

- **“<sup>5</sup> Examine yourselves, to see whether you are in the faith.**

- **Test yourselves.**

- Or do you not realize this about yourselves, that Jesus Christ is in you?—unless indeed you fail to meet the test!”**

2 Corinthians 13:5 is the best illustration of an exhortation.

• **Note: “So any heart that feels its sinfulness and desires consolations has here a sure refuge when he hears God’s Word and makes the discovery that God, though a human being, loses and absolves him from his sins.”**

# Penitential Psalms

For meditation and preparation:

Psalm 6

Psalm 32

Psalm 38

Psalm 51

Psalm 102

Psalm 130

Psalm 143

# The Office of the Keys

- This is a special authority which Christ has given to His church on earth to forgive the sins of repentant sinners, but to withhold forgiveness from the unrepentant if they do not repent.

# **This is supported by John 20:22-23:**

- **“22, And when he had said this, he breathed on them and said to them, 'Receive the Holy Spirit. 23 If you forgive the sins of any, they are forgiven them; if you withhold forgiveness from any, it is withheld.’”**



**This is supported by John 20:22-23:**

- But also, Saint Paul himself complains, “with my flesh I serve the law of sin.”

**(Romans 7:25).**

It is not in our power to judge how great and how many sins there are. This belongs to God alone.

# As Christian

- We confess that Jesus sends His servants to proclaim the good news, forgiving the sins of all who repent and withholding forgiveness from those who insist on remaining in their sin.

**The special power or authority the church received from Christ is just to forgive all who repent.**

**God alone forgives sins through Christ Jesus; the Christian church is ordered to work towards this goal. We shall receive in the Church nothing but the forgiveness of sin through the Word and signs, to comfort and encourage our consciences.**

# Excommunicate

A person may be excluded from the Church to not participate in the Lord's Supper, along with many other activities and privileges of the fellowship in the Christian Church.

**But it is not excluded or excepted from hearing God's Word.**

# Excommunicate

When a person is excommunicated by the Church, it is intended to show people who refuse to repent the seriousness of their sin and ultimately to rescue such a person from eternal condemnation and win them back to Christ.

Therefore, it is important for that person to open their hearts and ears and listen to God's word.

# Lutheran Foundation

**You have just completed your session.**

**Please complete the quiz to evaluate your understanding of this session.**

A young boy with short brown hair is looking up at a chalkboard. On the chalkboard, there are several question marks drawn in white chalk. The boy's face is partially visible at the bottom of the frame.

**Scroll down and go to Quiz  
Session 4**