

# CHAPTER FOUR



## “Search me and Know me” Confession

“It’s our wounds that God often uses to heal others, not our competencies”

Event to contemplate ‘confession’ (whether to God or to others) immediately feels uncomfortable. *Nobody* enjoys the internal feeling of guilt / shame / regret / sadness / sorrow that we experience when we become aware of our shortcomings, either in general or even more so in particular. We enjoy even less the prospect of having to admit this out loud!

Our culture at large has a problem with admitting fallibility or error. “Sorry” really is a difficult word to say! We, as Christians, have another issue on top of this general reluctance when we consider the word ‘sin’. What is it? What does it mean? How do we explain it?

It is easy, and too simplistic to reduce sin to “a thing I did which was wrong” - that action may well have occurred as a result of sin, but what is meant by ‘sin’ is different than that.

“The broad biblical definition is given in the form of a story, not a statement”.

“The issue with sin isn’t that God has a tight moral grid, and colouring within the lines is how we prove we are on his side. It’s that sin inhibits us from doing what we were made to do best - love - to receive love and to give it”.

Sin makes us aware of our soul-nakedness. It makes us cover up, cover over and to attempt to build an image of reality and person which is based on fear.



To name a specific sickness is to invite the presence and power of the healer into that specific area. Eugene Peterson wrote that “God does not deal with sin by ridding our lives of it as if it were a germ, or mice in the attic. God does not deal with sin by amputation as if it were a gangrenous leg, leaving us crippled, holiness on a crutch. *God deals with sin by forgiving us, and when he forgives us, there is more of us, not less.*”

There is a fallacy that spiritual maturity means somehow a holy successfulness which actually removes us from the presence of the Doctor, and requires less confessions from us, the successful and professional disciple. The exact opposite of this belief is true! Spiritual maturity is characterised by humility, openness, desire for God’s presence, awareness of the extent to which which we are not God, and a continual excavation of the layers of self-ish-ness which lay beneath the surface of each of us.

**“A maturing community is a confessing community - not a church without sin, but a church without secrets”**

If wounded, scar-riddled disciples are truly Christlike and know the close grace of Jesus, able to experience wholeness themselves and offer it to the world around them...and confession is the key which unlocks this... then how do we best do it?!