

Confession and Self Examination

From Spiritual Disciplines Handbook: Practices that Transform Us by Adele Ahlberg Calhoun, page 101.

“There is no better mirror in which to see your need than the Ten Commandments.”
—Martin Luther

Desire	to surrender my weaknesses and faults to the forgiving love of Christ and intentionally desire and embrace practices that lead to transformation
Definition	Self-examination is a process whereby the Holy Spirit opens my heart to what is true about me. This is not the same thing as a neurotic shame-inducing inventory. Instead it is a way of opening myself to God within the safety of divine love so I can authentically seek transformation. Confession embraces Christ’s gift of forgiveness and restoration while setting us on the path to renewal and change.
Scripture	<p>“Search me, O God, and know my heart; test me and know my anxious thoughts. See if there is any offensive way in me, and lead me in the way everlasting.” (Psalm 139:23-24)</p> <p>“Blessed is he whose transgressions are forgiven, whose sins are covered. Blessed is the man whose sin the LORD does not count against him and in whose spirit is no deceit.” (Psalm 32:1-2)</p> <p>“Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.” (James 5:16)</p>
Practice Includes	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • admitting to God the natural propensity to rationalize, deny, blame and self-obsess • examining the “sin network” in your life as evidenced in presumptuous sins, besetting weaknesses, self-centered habits and broken relationships • replacing sinful habits with healthy ones • seeking God’s grace to change • confessing sins by examining your life in light of (1) the seven deadly sins, (2) the Ten Commandments, (3) prayers of confession found in prayer books or Scripture (Psalm 51), and (4) a life confession, journaling confessions to God and confessions to others
God-Given Fruit	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • keeping company with Jesus as he helps you with how much or how little you change • being transformed into Christlikeness • thinking of yourself with sober judgment, awareness of your blind spots • gaining insight into your temptations and God’s work in your life • having compassion toward others in their faults • seeing yourself as God’s loved and forgiven child no matter what you have done • living in thankfulness for God’s work in your life • savoring the gift of salvation