

THE MEANS OF GRACE

CONFESSION

ACTIVITY

BURDENS AND BENEFITS

Theme: People may resist confessing their sin, but it is for our benefit that God calls us to do so. When we confess our sins, the floodgates to God's grace are open for Him to cascade His blessings of forgiveness and salvation on us. As Martin Luther says in his Large Catechism, "When I urge you to go to confession, I am simply urging you to be a Christian" (LC V 32).

Materials: Balance scales, large paper, markers

Procedure: (30 minutes)

Begin your session by reading about David and Bathsheba in **2 Samuel 11** or a Bible storybook. Then ask, **Why didn't David even think about confessing that what he was doing was wrong? Why don't we confess our sins more often?** Have your students develop a list labeled "The Burdens of Confessing." Write student responses on a large sheet of paper. These might include (1) we don't want to be embarrassed, (2) we don't like admitting we are wrong or imperfect, (3) we want to have our own way, (4) we think we are right or acting properly, (5) we don't think we have done anything wrong or broken any rule or law, (6) we don't want to be punished, and (7) we don't know if we'd be forgiven.

Then have students develop a list of "The Benefits of Confessing." Again, write the student responses on paper. Student responses might include (1) we feel better, (2) we might get help to do better, (3) God invites us to confess our sin, (4) when we confess our sin to those we have offended, we can be forgiven and our relationship restored, (5) when we confess our sin, God, through His Word, assures us that our sins are forgiven for Jesus' sake, (6) when we confess our sin to the pastor in private confession, he absolves our sin in God's name and at His command.

After students complete and share their lists, ask how these burdens and benefits would weigh out on the balance scale to show the balance in favor of confessing our sins. Read the story of Nathan's confrontation with David (2 Samuel 12:1–14). Review the burdens and benefits of confession that David experienced (see Psalm 32:3, 5 and 51:1–4), and assure your students that through Jesus, their sins are forgiven (Matthew 9:2).

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