

The crucial confession

Romans 7:14-25,8:1,2

Let me put a fortune tellers hat on my head and try to peek into your soul. now I want you to be totally honest with yourself. And if I hit a nerve please don't say anything, and don't even raise an eyebrow.

1. You are a model of faith and virtue, and those in your family and church hold you in high esteem.
2. you have secret doubts about God and which He were more audible and visible.
- 3 You honestly do not feel like a "responsible adult" and sometimes feel overwhelmed by life.
4. You have one great fear in your life. it may be that your children will come to some accidental end. Or it may be that you will contract some great disease and die. Or it may be that you will lose your Job. And this great fear haunts you on a regular basis.
5. You do not feel as close to people as you would like. Lack of intimacy is a problem.
6. You have read the bible for years and believe it to be God's inspired word. But you feel perplexed and guilty that most of it doesn't seem to touch you where you live.
7. You have periodic bouts with depression that you hide from even your closest friends-- even though you claim God as the great hope.
8. You have one nagging skeleton in your closet that will not grant you peace. it rattles occasionally, making you feel fresh guilt over an old crime.
- 9 you have a great secret, a secret so close so intimate that if it ever got out you know no one would ever like you again.
10. You have become an expert at hiding your true feelings and you frequently feel the tension from keeping up that great front>

If my predictions are anywhere near accurate
It proves one great thing
it proves even though you are a flawed human being'
a flawed human being that hasn't got it all
together.

The greatest confession of the New Testament is found
in Matt. 16:16 Peter You are the Christ the Son of
the Living God.

And we all need to make that confession in faith.

But there is another great confession that all of us
need to make.

Acts 14:15

The people of Lystra wanted to call them gods
and Paul and Barnabus had to confess their humanity

Men, why are you doing these things? We are also men
of the same nature as you.

We are human

If the first great confession is the key in finding
heaven

The second great confession is the key to finding joy.

It is important for two reasons:

1. it opens the door to forgiveness from God
2. It breaks down all the doors that are shut
keeping others from loving you.

take them in order.

I. confession of humanity allows God to forgive us.

When we see ourselves as morally perfect
religious piety
at least on the outside
we cut ourselves off from forgiveness
we don't need it.

The harlot in all her sin will have more joy than the
overly pious Pharisee who feels guiltless.

she has been forgiven of much she knows the joy of
grace

The Pharisee only knows the tedium of the law.
Luke 7:47 He who has been forgiven little loves
little.

Why do you suppose Jesus reserved his harshest words
for the religious of his day?

they were sincere
had a good reputation
moral men
But Jesus called them a brood of vipers.

As long as they thought of themselves as righteous
right with God they could not see their own sin.
As long as they thought themselves as good
enough they had no need of grace.
Why would a sinless keeper-of-the-law need a
Savior?

they were playing a deadly game.
Sinless and Perfect Game

any one who plays is guaranteed

1. a life of respectability
2. a life of religious piety
3. a life of inner misery and loneliness

all you have to do is deny your guilt
do all you can against pornography
but deny your own lust
teach against materialism
but forget that you are in the same
trap.
scream at the top of your lungs against
spiritual apathy
but hide your own lack of commitment
condemn those who have doubts
and go on fighting your own

focus on the rest of the world and its problems
and as you do stuff your own feelings of guilt
Judge others so you don't have to judge
yourself.

Oh the sinless and Perfect game has its rewards:
distorted sort of self esteem
your neighbors will hold you up in great regard
The church will praise you for your holiness
Paul played the game for a while
Romans 7
waging a war, doing that he didn't want to do

Where did it all bring him.

Rom. 8:1-2 There is now no condemnations for those who are in Christ Jesus For the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus has set you free from the law of sin and of death.

GRACE
played a new game sinful and forgiven.

II. fellowship

playing the sinless and perfect game has another devastating effect

not only does it detach us from grace it ruins intimacy of fellowship

Do you really think Fred Pharisee had any close friends
How many common folk rushed to them to swap fishing stories or to share grief of a death in the family?

The Pharisee, for all of his good intentions in playing his Game of Sinless and Perfect erected a barrier around himself;

a barrier of fine things.

prayer
Scriptures
fasting
public worship
righteous deeds

great things but a barrier.

In our desire to keep our great face on we put a mighty barrier between ourselves and others.

A great paradox:

The more "spiritual we become the less effective we seem to be to witness to those who need God's love.

***** Think for a moment:

who do we go in our times of disappointment
who do we call of our lives become to hard to bare.

Who do we call when life has give us a great punch in the eye.

do we call the D.S.

do we call super saint

we call someone who will listen and relate to our very "Human" feelings.

The church needs more cracked pots.

flawed humans

daring to be come fully Christian

and still be come fully human..... Like Christ

Why do Christians have to be so to put on such a hard

veneer?

the church has been producing too many carbon
copies

We need to be just plain human

A saint in the sanctuary is tolerable
but a saint at the supper table is insufferable

Any one

Any one

Any one who goes through life never admitting
humanness or even expressing it.

will repel all that are around because
we all have tried to play the same game
and know it is a farce.

CONCLUSION

The good news is that we can admit these feelings
we must admit them

until we do we will know nothing of divine
forgiveness that makes us love much

until we do we will always put up a barrier between
ourselves and the rest of the world

the toughest battle you will ever have to fight is the
battle to be yourself
to live your own destiny
to celebrate your humanity

but the prizes are well worth the pain

God's grace

man's kinship

The battle is worth fighting.