

PRAYERS OF CONFESSION

The prayer of confession invites us to speak words that are remarkably honest about our own sin, words that do not come naturally in our relationship with God or with our fellow human beings. Such honesty, perhaps more than we could ever generate in our own strength, becomes remarkably liberating when we sense the immensity of God's grace. In this way we can think of the prayer of confession (and of the assurance of pardon that follows) not as an onerous obligation but as a gift of grace.

A full prayer of confession acknowledges that our sin is more than an isolated example of bad judgment. We are sinful people, and we live in need of a Savior. Our confession also acknowledges that sin infects not just persons but also societies, institutions, and all of creation. Along with the confession of personal sins, we confess our participation in the structures and institutions in which evil persists.

Even as we confess our sin, we are claiming God's promises in Christ, which are sealed in our baptism. Many classical prayers of confession thus feature a decisive turn from honest confession to explicit profession of faith and trust in Christ.

The biblical psalms, especially the penitential psalms, model for us the kind of soul-searching honesty and integrity that should mark our prayers of confession. Many of these psalms themselves, either spoken or sung, may serve as prayers of confession today.

In preparing a prayer of confession, consider what kind of expression of penitence most compellingly expands on the imagery, metaphors, or keywords in the Scripture readings prominent in the worship service. Also consider incorporating an expectant silence before, during, or after the prayer of confession to allow worshipers to meditate on the poignant words of confession.

In some traditions the confession and assurance immediately precede the opening greeting and songs of praise. In others, the confession and assurance follow the sermon or the prayers of the people and immediately precede the Lord's Supper. Either may be appropriate, depending on the pastoral context of the service.

Refrains

The following refrains may be repeated at various appropriate points or at the close of an extemporaneous prayer of confession.

- 1 Help us, O God of our salvation,
for the glory of your name;
**deliver us, and forgive our sins,
for your name's sake.**

—Psalm 79:9, NRSV

- 2 Restore us, O LORD God of hosts;
let your face shine, that we may be saved.

—Psalm 80:19, NRSV

- 3 *This simple refrain from the early church, the Kyrie eleison, presented here in both Greek and English, expresses both confession and lament and may be spoken or sung at the conclusion of a prayer of confession.*

Lord, have mercy.	<i>Kyrie eleison.</i>
Christ, have mercy.	<i>Christe eleison.</i>
Lord, have mercy.	<i>Kyrie eleison.</i>

- 4 *This simple refrain from the early church is called the Trisagion, which roughly means “three times holy.” It may be spoken or sung at the conclusion of a prayer of confession.*

**Holy God,
holy and mighty,
holy immortal One,
have mercy on us.**

- 5 *This traditional prayer for forgiveness is called the Agnus Dei, which is Latin for “Lamb of God.” Though traditionally used in conjunction with the Lord’s Supper, it may also be spoken or sung at the conclusion of a prayer of confession.*

**Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, have mercy on us.
Lamb of God, you take away the sin of the world, grant us your peace.**

Scriptural Prayers

- 6 Be mindful of your mercy, O LORD,
and of your steadfast love,
for they have been from of old.
Do not remember the sins of my youth or my transgressions;
according to your steadfast love remember me,
for your goodness’ sake, O LORD!
Good and upright is the LORD;
therefore he instructs sinners in the way.
For your name’s sake, O LORD,
pardon my guilt, for it is great.
Turn to me and be gracious to me,
for I am lonely and afflicted.
Relieve the troubles of my heart,
and bring me out of my distress.
Consider my affliction and my trouble,
and forgive all my sins.

—Psalm 25:6-8, 11, 16-18, NRSV

The following three resources draw from two penitential psalms (Ps. 51, 130). Additional texts may draw from the other penitential psalms as well (Ps. 6, 32, 38, 102, 143).

- 7 Have mercy on me, O God, in your faithful love,
in your great tenderness wipe away my offences;
wash me thoroughly from my guilt,
purify me from my sin.
For I am well aware of my offences,
my sin is constantly in mind.
Against you, you alone, I have sinned,
I have done what you see to be wrong,
that you may show your saving justice when you pass sentence,

and your victory may appear when you give judgment,
remember, I was born guilty,
a sinner from the moment of conception.
But you delight in sincerity of heart,
and in secret you teach me wisdom.
God, create in me a clean heart,
renew within me a resolute spirit,
do not thrust me away from your presence,
do not take away from me your spirit of holiness.
Give me back the joy of your salvation,
sustain in me a generous spirit.
Lord, open my lips,
and my mouth will speak out your praise.
Sacrifice gives you no pleasure,
burnt offering you do not desire.
Sacrifice to God is a broken spirit,
a broken, contrite heart you never scorn.

—Psalm 51:1-6, 10-12, 15-17, NJB

- 8 Have mercy on me, O God,
according to your steadfast love;
according to your abundant mercy
blot out my transgressions.
**Wash me thoroughly from my iniquity,
and cleanse me from my sin.**
For I know my transgressions,
and my sin is ever before me.
**Against you, you alone, have I sinned,
and done what is evil in your sight,
so that you are justified in your sentence
and blameless when you pass judgment.**
You desire truth in the inward being;
therefore teach me wisdom in my secret heart.
**Hide your face from my sins,
and blot out all my iniquities.**
Create in me a clean heart, O God,
and put a new and right spirit within me.
**Do not cast me from your presence,
and do not take your holy spirit from me.**

—Psalm 51:1-4, 6, 9-11, NRSV

- 9 Out of the depths I cry to you, O LORD.
Lord, hear my voice!
Let your ears be attentive
to the voice of my supplications!
**If you, O LORD, should mark iniquities,
Lord, who could stand?**
But there is forgiveness with you,

so that you may be revered.
**I wait for the LORD, my soul waits,
and in his word I hope;
my soul waits for the Lord
more than those who watch for the morning,
more than those who watch for the morning.**
O Israel, hope in the LORD!
For with the LORD there is steadfast love,
and with him is great power to redeem.
It is he who will redeem Israel
from all its iniquities.

—Psalm 130, NRSV

- 10 O Lord, great God,
all holy, Father most gracious,
filled with mercy and steadfast love,
we are embarrassed to come before you,
for we have preferred the ways of this world to your ways,
for we have rebelled against your wisdom
and we have gotten into trouble,
for we have rejected your fatherly guidance
and have gotten lost altogether.
To you belongs righteousness, O Lord,
and to us confusion of face.
O Lord, great God,
all holy, filled with awe,
Father, most gracious,
filled with mercy and steadfast love,
incline your ear to our troubles.
Hear us when we pour out our sorrows before you.
Forgive us,
not on the ground of our own righteousness,
but on the ground of your great mercy.
On the ground of your great mercy
in the gift of your Son, Jesus Christ.
It is in his name that we pray,
for he is our Savior and the mediator of the covenant of grace. **Amen.**

—based on Daniel 9:4-19

General Prayers of Confession

- 11 **Merciful God,**
we confess that we have sinned against you
in thought, word, and deed,
by what we have done,
and by what we have left undone.
We have not loved you
with our whole heart and mind and strength.

**We have not loved our neighbors as ourselves.
In your mercy forgive what we have been,
help us amend what we are,
and direct what we shall be,
so that we may delight in your will
and walk in your ways,
to the glory of your holy name.
Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

- 12 Almighty and merciful God,
we have erred and strayed from your ways like lost sheep.
We have followed too much
the devices and desires of our own hearts.
We have offended against your holy laws.
We have left undone those things which we ought to have done;
and we have done those things which we ought not to have done.
O Lord, have mercy upon us.
Spare those who confess their faults.
Restore those who are penitent,
according to your promises declared to the world
in Christ Jesus, our Lord.
And grant, O merciful God, for his sake,
that we may live a holy, just, and humble life
to the glory of your holy name. **Amen.**
- 13 Holy and merciful God,
in your presence we confess
our sinfulness, our shortcomings,
and our offenses against you.
You alone know how often we have sinned
in wandering from your ways,
in wasting your gifts,
in forgetting your love.
Have mercy on us, O Lord,
for we are ashamed and sorry
for all we have done to displease you.
Forgive our sins,
and help us to live in your light
and walk in your ways,
for the sake of Jesus Christ, our Savior. **Amen.**
- 14 Merciful God,
you pardon all who truly repent and turn to you.
We humbly confess our sins and ask your mercy.
We have not loved you with a pure heart,
nor have we loved our neighbor as ourselves.
We have not done justice, loved kindness,
or walked humbly with you, our God.

Have mercy on us, O God, in your loving-kindness.

In your great compassion,

cleanse us from our sin.

Create in us a clean heart, O God,

and renew a right spirit within us.

Do not cast us from your presence,

or take your Holy Spirit from us.

**Restore to us the joy of your salvation
and sustain us with your bountiful Spirit
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

—based on Psalm 51:10-12

- 15 Gracious God,
our sins are too heavy to carry,
too real to hide,
and too deep to undo.
Forgive what our lips tremble to name,
what our hearts can no longer bear,
and what has become for us
a consuming fire of judgment.
Set us free from a past that we cannot change;
open to us a future in which we can be changed;
and grant us grace
to grow more and more in your likeness and image;
through Jesus Christ, the light of the world. **Amen.**
- 16 Merciful God,
in your gracious presence
we confess our sin and the sin of this world.
Although Christ is among us as our peace,
we are a people divided against ourselves
as we cling to the values of a broken world.
The profit and pleasures we pursue
lay waste the land and pollute the seas.
The fears and jealousies that we harbor
set neighbor against neighbor
and nation against nation.
We abuse your good gifts of imagination and freedom,
of intellect and reason,
and turn them into bonds of oppression.
Lord, have mercy upon us;
heal and forgive us.
Set us free to serve you in the world
as agents of your reconciling love in Jesus Christ. **Amen.**
- 17 O gracious and gentle and condescending God,
God of peace, Father of mercy, God of all comfort:
we confess before you the evil of our hearts;

we acknowledge that we are too inclined
toward anger, jealousy, and revenge,
to ambition and pride,
which often give rise to discord and bitter feelings
between others and us.
Too often have we thus both offended and grieved you,
O long-suffering Father.
Forgive us this sin and permit us to partake of the blessing
you have promised the peacemakers,
who shall be called the children of God.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

18 Awesome and compassionate God,
you have loved us with unfailing, self-giving mercy,
but we have not loved you.
You constantly call us, but we do not listen.
You ask us to love, but we walk away from neighbors in need,
wrapped in our own concerns.
We condone evil, prejudice, warfare, and greed.
God of grace, as you come to us in mercy,
we repent in spirit and in truth,
admit our sin, and gratefully receive your forgiveness
through Jesus Christ, our Redeemer. **Amen.**

19 Eternal and merciful God,
you have loved us with a love beyond our understanding,
and you have set us on paths of righteousness for your name's sake.
Yet we have strayed from your way;
we have sinned against you in thought, word, and deed,
through what we have done and what we have left undone.
As we remember the lavish gift of your grace
symbolized in baptism, O God,
we praise you and give you thanks that you forgive us yet again.
Grant us now, we pray, the grace to die daily to sin,
and to rise daily to new life in Christ,
who lives and reigns with you,
and in whose strong name we pray. **Amen.**

20 Almighty God, we confess how hard it is to be your people.
You have called us to be the church,
to continue the mission of Jesus Christ to our lonely and confused world.
Yet we acknowledge we are more apathetic than active,
isolated than involved, callous than compassionate,
obstinate than obedient, legalistic than loving.
Gracious Lord, have mercy upon us and forgive our sins.
Remove the obstacles preventing us
from being your representatives to a broken world.
Awaken our hearts to the promised gift of your indwelling Spirit.
This we pray in Jesus' powerful name. **Amen.**

- 21 Lord, you showed us true humility by becoming one of us,
yet too often we practice pride.
You cried alongside your friends and for the city of Jerusalem,
yet too often we rush past the pain of others and are careless about our cities.
You loved those who were weak, despised, or cast out,
yet too often we love those who are strong, respected, or popular.
You freely forgave and healed,
yet too often we hold grudges and cause pain.
You lived a perfectly holy life,
yet too often we do not yearn for righteousness.
You prayed that we who believe in you should be united with each other and you,
yet too often we focus on the differences that separate us from other believers.
You were mocked, whipped, and even killed for us,
yet too often we deny you.
You call us to be the salt of the earth and the light of the world,
yet too often we blend into or hide from our culture.
Forgive us, Lord, so that we will shine with your glory. Amen.
- 22 Often, O holy and righteous God,
we dare your justice,
mock your mercy,
jeer your patience,
slight your power, and
show contempt for your love.
We even say “I’m sorry” insincerely and confess our sin flippantly.
We plead your help
to own up carefully to how we have wronged you,
to admit honestly how we have grieved you,
to plead penitently for your mercy and pardon.
We beg your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Savior and Lord. **Amen.**
—based on a prayer by John Bunyan (1628-88)
- 23 Father, we are sorry for the many times we have left you
and chosen to satisfy our own selfish desires.
For the times we have hurt the members of our families
by refusing to do our share of the family tasks.
Father, we have sinned. Forgive us.
For the times we were unkind and impatient with those who needed our time and
concern.
Father, we have sinned. Forgive us.
For the times we were too weak to stand up for what was right
and allowed others to suffer because of our cowardice.
Father, we have sinned. Forgive us.
For the times we refused to forgive others.
Father, we have sinned. Forgive us.

24 O God of shalom,
we have built up walls to protect ourselves from our enemies,
but those walls also shut us off from receiving your love.
Break down those walls.
Help us to see that the way to your heart
is through the reconciliation of our own hearts with our enemies.
Bless them and us,
that we may come to grow in love for each other and for you,
through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**

25 Wondrous God,
who sets suns and moons above us,
mountains and valleys beneath us,
and friends and strangers among us:
how often have we tried to hide from your presence,
how seldom have we looked for your creating face
and your fashioning hand!

Lord, have mercy upon us.

Wondrous God,
who took upon yourself flesh of our flesh in Jesus our brother,
and being found in human form made the ultimate disclosure of yourself
in the face of Jesus Christ:

how often we have forgotten you,
how seldom have we really loved and followed you!

Christ, have mercy upon us.

Wondrous God,
who pours out freely the Holy Spirit:
how often have we ignored your promptings,
how seldom have we asked for your help or accepted your gifts!

Lord, have mercy upon us. Amen.

26 Holy God, we groan at our weaknesses, and we ask forgiveness.
Your Word is so clear, and your grace is so good.
But we close our ears to your call,
and with our perverse pride we foul the gifts you have given us.
Like your servant Paul, we know what you require of us;
yet, like Paul, what we do is not the good we want to do,
and the evil we do not want to do, that evil we keep on doing.
We mistreat those we love,
and we dishonor you, the One who made us.
How long, O Lord, will we continue to ignore your will?
Yet you provide streams of living mercy;
you invite us again and again to live renewed lives.
So we turn once again to the cross,
to the empty cross, to the stone rolled away,
to our interceding Lord Jesus Christ seated at your right hand,
to the gracious gift of your Spirit.

We seek your forgiveness through Jesus Christ, our Savior.
We draw upon your promises,
and we ask once again simply for mercy.
With your Holy Spirit, sanctify us.
Hear our prayer, O Lord, for we ask it in Christ's name. **Amen.**

- 27 O Lord, our hearts are heavy with the violence of our world,
so much suffering through the ages,
wars and holocausts, genocide and abuse.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:
Lord, have mercy.
O Lord, you love and care for us as a parent;
you came to share life with us as a brother.
But we confess we have failed to live as your children
and instead have broken many bonds.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:
Lord, have mercy.
O Lord, you have called us to live together in community,
to consider one another as brother and sister,
regardless of ethnicity, economic status, or popularity.
Yet we prejudge one another,
refuse to love one another,
and victimize one another.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:
Lord, have mercy.
O Lord, giver of all life,
you fearfully and wonderfully made us
and breathed into our nostrils the breath of life.
Yet we endanger the lives of one another,
abuse the lives of young children among us,
destroy those who are defenseless,
and oppress those who are powerless.
We cry on behalf of our violent world:
Lord, have mercy.
Pardon us through Jesus Christ, our Savior. Amen.

- 28 To you, Holy God, we confess our sin
with as much shame and sorrow as we can muster.
We know it won't be enough
because we are on easy terms with our sin.
We confess to you, O God,
that we deceive ourselves about our sin,
and then we deceive ourselves about
whether we deceive ourselves,
slipping and sliding and sidestepping the truth.
O God, you are holy beyond all that we can think or imagine.
You are the source of righteousness,
the overflowing fountain of goodness.

You made us to be like you
in knowledge, righteousness, and holiness.
And yet here we are, so often soiled,
smudged, distracted from your purposes,
and running after the gods of this world.
Please forgive and restore us through Jesus, your Son. **Amen.**

29 O Lord our God, you have searched us and known us.
You know not only what we say, but also what we think.
You know not only what we say, but also what we almost said.
You know how quickly our thoughts rise to praise ourselves
because we are well-off or good-looking or healthy or smart,
boasting of your gifts as if they were our accomplishments.
You know how slowly our thoughts sink to accuse ourselves
even when we have turned our backs on you,
fascinating ourselves with alien gods
whose calling we heed while ignoring your own.
Quickly boasting, slowly accusing, truly we need to repent.
O God, forgive, correct, and heal us through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

30 Merciful God,
for the things we have done that we regret,
forgive us;
for the things we have failed to do that we regret,
forgive us;
for all the times we have acted without love,
forgive us;
for all the times we have reacted without thought,
forgive us;
for all the times we have withdrawn care,
forgive us;
for all the times we have failed to forgive,
forgive us.
For hurtful words said and helpful words unsaid,
for unfinished tasks
and unfulfilled hopes,
God of all time,
forgive us and help us
to lay down our burden of regret. Amen.

31 Forgive us our sins, O Lord.
Forgive us the sins of our youth and the sins of our age,
the sins of our soul and the sins of our body,
our secret and our whispering sins,
our presumptuous and our careless sins,
the sins we have done to please ourselves,
and the sins we have done to please others.
Forgive us the sins that we know,

and the sins that we know not;
forgive them, O Lord,
forgive them all because of your great goodness.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

- 32 Gracious God,
you have given us the law of Moses and the teachings of Jesus
to direct us in the way of life.
You offer us your Holy Spirit
so that we can be born to new life as your children.
Yet, O God, we confess that the ways of death have a strong attraction
and that we often succumb to their lure.
Give us the vision and courage to choose and nurture life,
that we may receive your blessing. **Amen.**
- 33 God of birth, God of joy, God of life,
we come to you as a people hungry for good news.
We have been so dead to miracles
that we have missed the world's rebirth.
We have preoccupied ourselves with pleasures
and have overlooked the joy you offer us.
We have been so concerned with making a living
that we have missed the life you set among us.
Forgive us, gracious God.
Open our eyes and our hearts to receive your gift;
open our lips and hands to share it with all humanity
in the name of our Savior, Jesus Christ. **Amen.**
- 34 For the times we have lied to one another
and the times we have been lied to,
heal us, Jesus, Savior of the world.
For the times we have laughed at another's pain
and the times we have been laughed at,
heal us, Jesus, Savior of the world.
For the times we have spoken when we should have remained silent
and the times we have remained silent when we should have spoken,
heal us, Jesus, Savior of the world.
For the times we have not respected another's freedom
to be different from us,
heal us, Jesus, Savior of the world.
For the times we have betrayed a friend
and the times we have been betrayed,
heal us, Jesus, Savior of the world.
O God of heaven and earth,
you emptied yourself of your power
and became a helpless baby
in order that you might heal the sick world.
Teach us to empty ourselves of the things

**that destroy us and keep us alone.
Empty us of our jealousy,
of our meanness,
of our fear of others.
For Jesus' sake. Amen.**

35 Loving God,
we confess before you and each other
that our lives are not pure and holy
apart from the cleansing we have from the work of Christ.
And we confess that too often Christ in us is hidden by our actions
that wound rather than heal,
that tear down rather than build up.
Open our eyes,
that we may see you in the ones we say we love.
Open our ears,
that we may be quicker to listen than to speak.
Open our mouths
to speak good rather than evil of our neighbors.
Open our hands
in generosity and help us let go of clenched fists.
Open our hearts
to a desire to follow Jesus in full obedience
to your will and your way.
We pray trusting in your forgiveness and
in the power of your Holy Spirit to lead and guide us
in paths of justice and righteousness
for your name's sake. **Amen.**

36 Lord, we cry to you to heal our wounds.
We call to you in distress and plead for your salvation.
We have sinned against your law and failed to do your will;
we confess that we've disobeyed your holy Word.
We pray, purge our lives of selfishness and our hearts of bitterness.
Lead us back to righteousness; save us through Jesus Christ. **Amen.**
—based on a text of Ulrich Zwingli (1529)

37 Eternal God, we confess that often we have failed
to be an obedient church:
we have not done your will;
we have broken your law;
we have rebelled against your love;
we have not loved our neighbors;
we have not heard the cry of the needy.
Forgive us, we pray.
Free us for joyful obedience.
Through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

- 38 Holy and merciful God,
for the times we have followed the path of the wicked,
stood in solidarity with those who were wrong,
or sat quietly and allowed sin to happen, forgive us.
Help us to meditate, even delight, in your Word
so that we will flourish with the fruit of your Spirit. **Amen.**
- 39 Almighty God,
so many of King David's psalms show a heart out of tune,
sighing, crying, and breaking with sorrow,
yet still clinging to faith in you.
So too, O Lord, are our hearts.
In Jesus Christ, you have given us what we need most:
his cross makes our forgiveness possible,
and his Spirit tunes our hearts again to sing your praises.
Humbly we beg your pardon for our sins.
Eagerly we plead your help
to enthrone in our hearts David's Son:
Christ Jesus, King of the universe,
our Savior and Lord.
And with King David we declare our trust in your unfailing love. **Amen.**
- 40 Righteous Father,
we who own more than we use,
proclaim more than we experience,
and request more than we need,
come asking your forgiveness.
We seek your salvation, then act like we save ourselves.
We beg your forgiveness, then repeat our errors.
We experience your grace, then act defeated.
We rely on your power, but only in hard times.
We have become confused and misguided.
Forgive our every defection.
Bring us to an unbroken commitment
and a steady trust,
through Jesus Christ, who is the way of hope,
the truth of God,
and the life of love,
now and always. **Amen.**
- 41 Jesus, friend of sinners, your words to your disciples were plain:
Whatever we did for the least of our brothers and sisters,
we did for you.
But have we fed the hungry,
invited in the stranger,
clothed those whose garments were thread-bare,
looked after the sick,
visited the incarcerated?
In your mercy, Lord, please forgive us. **Amen.**

- 42 God of love, in the wrong we have done
and in the good we have not done,
we have sinned in ignorance;
we have sinned in weakness;
we have sinned through our own deliberate fault.
We are truly sorry.
We repent and turn to you.
Forgive us
and renew our lives
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**
- 43 For self-righteousness that will not compromise,
and from selfishness that gains by the manipulation of others,
forgive us, O God.
For the lust of money or power that drives to kill,
forgive us, O God.
For the arrogance and thoughtlessness
that abuses your good creation,
forgive us, O God.
For trusting in the weapons of war
and mistrusting the councils of peace,
forgive us, O God.
For hearing, believing, and speaking lies about other nations,
forgive us, O God.
For suspicions and fears
that stand in the way of reconciliation,
forgive us, O God.
For words and deeds that encourage discord,
perpetuate racist assumptions,
sexist stereotypes, and classist attitudes—
for everything that contributes to oppression,
forgive us, O God. Amen.
- 44 Merciful God,
you made us in your image,
with a mind to know you,
a heart to love you,
and a will to serve you.
But our knowledge is imperfect,
our love inconstant,
our obedience incomplete.
Day by day, we fail to grow into your likeness.
In your tender love, forgive us
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. **Amen.**

- 45 Lord, sometimes our lives have such little focus:
we have so much to do;
we possess so much stuff;
we're driven by the need for still more—
and it easily seems to control us.
We're sorry, Lord, for how distracted we've become
and for losing our way
without even realizing it.
Forgive us and help us
to know that you are the only one we need. **Amen.**
- 46 God of love and justice,
we long for peace within and peace without.
We long for harmony in our families,
for serenity in the midst of struggle.
We long for the day when our homes
will be a dwelling place for your love.
Yet we confess that we are often anxious,
we do not trust each other,
and we harbor violence.
We are not willing to take the risks
and make the sacrifices that love requires.
Look upon us with kindness and grace.
Rule in our homes and in all the world;
show us how to walk in your paths,
through the mercy of our Savior. **Amen.**
- 47 Holy God, we confess that we have not lived as you have taught us.
We have put our longing for money, success, or happiness
above our desire for you and your kingdom.
We worry about what others will think, what we wear,
how our reputation can be polished.
We make idols out of the winning record of a sport team,
the next promotion at work, the perfect family,
the cleanliness of our house, or the latest technology.
We are careless with our words, saying things we don't mean,
things that are hurtful to our children or friends.
We are so busy with our lives
that we forget our every breath depends on you.
While we waste time on meaningless activities,
we fail to recognize moments of grace throughout our day.
We indulge in hateful thoughts against those we feel have offended us,
and we are indifferent toward the suffering in our own neighborhoods.
We forget that all people bear your image.
In an effort to look better, we compare ourselves to others.
We take advantage of weakness and are passive in the face of injustice.
For personal gain and reputation, we lie blatantly, and we lie by omission.
We would rather blame others unjustly than accept fault.

We long for what is not ours and begrudge the blessings of others.
Forgive us for thinking of ourselves before others and before you.
Free us from unreasonable expectations of ourselves and others,
from the need to compete, and from loss of perspective
so that we may glorify you in all we think, say, and do. **Amen.**

- 48 Our Father, forgive us for thinking small thoughts of you
and for ignoring your immensity and greatness.
Lord Jesus, forgive us when we forget that you rule
the nations and our small lives.
Holy Spirit, we offend you in minimizing your power
and squandering your gifts.
We confess that our blindness to your glory, O triune God,
has resulted in shallow confession,
tepid conviction, and only mild repentance.
Have mercy upon us.
In Jesus' name. **Amen.**

- 49 There are many times we think we love you well, O God.
But upon hearing your call to love you with all our heart,
and all our mind, and all our strength,
we confess that our love for you is a diluted love,
made insipid and flat by lesser loyalties and a divided heart.
Our love seems pure only for brief moments;
soon our affections are drawn away.
How easily our devotion dies.
Forgive us;
in deep mercy spare us, despite our lost first love for you;
in grace rekindle our love for you
in seeing anew Jesus' love for us. **Amen.**

- 50 Lord, in your mercy hear our prayer.
We confess that it is still all too easy for us
to sacrifice our convictions for convenience,
your standards for status, your principles for promotion,
your absolutes for our ambition,
our souls for shallow and unsatisfying success.
How easily we are seduced by power, prestige, pleasure,
or possessions—
seduced into violating our integrity or harming our fellowship with you.
From earth's fullest bliss we turn to you again, unfulfilled.
Forgive us our half-hearted devotion and our double-minded spirit.
In the name of him who refused to save himself we pray. **Amen.**

- 51 God of everlasting love,
we confess that we have been unfaithful
to our covenant with you and with one another.
We have worshiped other gods: money, power, greed, and convenience.

We have served our own self-interest
instead of serving only you and your people.
We have not loved our neighbor as you have commanded,
nor have we rightly loved ourselves.

**Forgive us, gracious God,
and bring us back into the fullness
of our covenant with you and one another.
Through Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

52 God of grace,
we confess that we have elevated
the things of this world above you.
We have made idols of possessions and people
and used your name for causes
that are not consistent with you and your purposes.
We have permitted our schedules to come first
and have not taken the time to worship you.
We have not always honored those who guided us in life.
We have participated in systems
that take life instead of give it.
We have been unfaithful in our covenant relationships.
We have yearned for, and sometimes taken, that which is not ours,
and we have misrepresented others' intentions.

**Forgive us, O God,
for the many ways we fall short of your glory.
Help us to learn to live together according to your ways
through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.**

53 O God, you have shown us the way of life
through your Son, Jesus Christ.
We confess with shame our slowness to learn of him,
our failure to follow him, and our reluctance to bear the cross.

Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us.
We confess the poverty of our worship,
our neglect of fellowship and of the means of grace,
our hesitating witness for Christ,
our evasion of responsibilities in our service,
our imperfect stewardship of your gifts.
Have mercy on us, Lord, and forgive us. Amen.

54 When we have afflicted others,
whether by our own power
or by our silent support of systems
that oppress, enslave, and crush,
break us, Lord.
When we have perplexed others
and purposely confused them for our own gain
or driven them to despair,

break us, Lord.

When we have persecuted others,
casting them out of our community,
leaving them forsaken and alone,

break us, Lord.

When we have struck down others,
casting stones on their dreams and hopes
until they are destroyed,

break us, Lord.

Then broken, we carry in our bodies the death of Jesus
so that the life of Jesus may be made visible in our bodies;

make us, Lord.

With the power that belongs only to you,
make us into your treasure;

make us, Lord.

We are the clay, and you are the potter.

We are the work of your hands;

make us, Lord.

Do not be exceedingly angry
and do not remember our iniquity forever.

Now consider, we are all your people.

Make us, Lord, through Jesus Christ, our Lord. Amen.