

You may prepare yourself by meditating on the Ten Commandments (LSB pages 321–322). You may also pray the penitential psalms (6, 32, 38, 51, 102, 130, or 143).

If you are not burdened with particular sins, do not trouble yourself or search for or invent other sins, thereby turning confession into a torture. Instead, mention one or two sins that you know and let that be enough.

When you are ready, kneel and say:

Confession of Sins

Pastor, please hear my confession and pronounce forgiveness in order to fulfill God's will.

Proceed.

I, a poor sinner, plead guilty before God of all sins.

I have lived as if God did not matter and as if I mattered most.

My Lord's name I have not honored as I should;

my worship and prayers have faltered.

I have not let His love have its way with me,

and so my love for others has failed.

There are those whom I have hurt, and those whom I have failed to help.

My thoughts and desires have been soiled with sin.

If you wish to confess specific sins that trouble you, continue as follows:

What troubles me particularly is that . . .

Confess whatever you have done against the commandments of God, according to your own place in life.

The pastor may gently question or instruct you—not to pry or judge—but to assist in self-examination.

Then conclude by saying:

I am sorry for all of this and ask for grace. I want to do better.

Absolution

God be merciful to you and strengthen your faith.

Amen.

Do you believe that my forgiveness is God's forgiveness?

Yes.

Let it be done for you as you believe.

The pastor places his hands on the head of the penitent and says:

In the stead and by the command of my Lord Jesus Christ I forgive you all your sins in the name of the Father and of the ✠ Son and of the Holy Spirit.

Amen.

The pastor may speak additional Scripture passages to comfort and strengthen the faith of those who have great burdens of conscience or are sorrowful and distressed.

The pastor concludes:

The Peace

Go in peace.

Amen.

You may remain to say a prayer of thanksgiving. Psalms 30, 31, 32, 34, 103, or 118 are also appropriate.