

Mine iniquity have I acknowledged, and my sin have I not hid.
I said: I will confess mine iniquities before the Lord against myself.
And Thou forgavest the ungodliness of my heart.

Psalm 31:5

If we say that we have no sin, we deceive ourselves,
and the truth is not in us. If we confess our sins,
He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins,
and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.

I John 1:8–9

Pearls from the Holy Fathers, First Week of October, 2007

A MAN is never so fine, so dear to God, as when he kills his pride before Him and before [*his spiritual father hearing his confession*].

Metropolitan Anthony Khrapovitsky, *Confession*, pp. 13–14

BY resolving to make one's confession, the soul is thereby held from sinning as by a bridle. For what we do not confess, that we do fearlessly as though in the dark.

Ladder of Divine Ascent, Step 4:53, p. 39.

NOTHING gives the demons and bad thoughts such power over us as nourishing them and hiding them in our heart unconfessed.

Ibid., Step 23:40, p. 143

A BROTHER asked Abba Poemen, "Why should I not be free to do without manifesting my thoughts to the old men?" The old man replied, "Abba John the Dwarf said, 'The enemy rejoices over nothing so much as those who do not manifest their thoughts.'"

The Desert Christian, p. 181, Abba Poemen #101.

REVERENCE your spiritual father. He tries to bring you close to God. During confession, three are present: God, the confessor, and he who confesses.

The Elder Ieronymos of Aegina, p. 219

HE who hates his sins will cease to sin, and he who confesses them will receive forgiveness. It is impossible for a man to forsake the habit of sin if he does not first acquire a hatred of sin; and it is impossible to receive forgiveness before a confession of iniquities. With the latter [*i.e., confession*] there is real abasement, and with the former [*i.e., hatred of sin*] there is remorse arising from shame that cleaves to the heart.

If we do not hate those things which are blameworthy, we cannot smell the stench of their activity; and so long as we carry them in ourselves, we shall not be able to perceive their malodour. Therefore, until you cast away from yourself that which is unseemly, you will not comprehend the disgrace that entangles you, nor the shame that arises from it. But when you see your burden in others, understand the dishonour that covers you. Withdraw from evil, and immediately you will comprehend its malodour. For if you do not withdraw, you will never learn it, nay rather, you will put on its stench like a beautiful fragrance, and you will reckon the nakedness of your shame to be a veil of glory.

Blessed is the man who has receded from this darkness and who sees himself!

St Isaac the Syrian, Homily 32, p. 152