

The Heart of Step Five

Step 5 is where healing deepens.

It is the moment we bring our Step 4 inventory into the light — not to be shamed, but to be freed.

“Confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed.”

James 5:16

Confession is not humiliation.

Confession is liberation.

⁷ But if we walk in the light, as he is in the light, we have fellowship with one another, and the blood of Jesus, his Son, purifies us from all sin.

⁸ If we claim to be without sin, we deceive ourselves and the truth is not in us. ⁹ If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness.

1 John 1:7-9

Reflection:

- What fears rise up when you think about sharing your Step 4 inventory?
- Who is a safe, trustworthy person you could share with?
- What healing do you hope God will bring through Step 5?

Prayer:

Lord, give me courage to speak the truth.

Give me humility to confess what I've carried alone.

Give me grace to receive Your forgiveness.

Give me trust to share my story with someone safe.

Lead me into the freedom that comes from walking in the light.

*In Jesus Name,
Amen.*

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STEP FIVE

CONFESSION & FREEDOM

“Admitted to God, to ourselves, and to another human being the exact nature of our wrongs.”

Key Scripture:

¹⁶ Therefore confess your sins to each other and pray for each other so that you may be healed. The prayer of a righteous person is powerful and effective.

James 5:16

⁵ Then I acknowledged my sin to you and did not cover up my iniquity. I said, “I will confess my transgressions to the LORD.” And you forgave the guilt of my sin.

Psalms 32:5

A simple guide to understanding Step 5 through the lens of confession, honesty, and spiritual freedom.

1. The Courage to Speak the Truth

Step 5 takes the honesty of Step 4 and turns it outward. It is the moment we stop carrying our secrets alone.

Confession means:

- Naming the truth without excuses.
- Sharing our story with God and a trusted person.
- Breaking the power of secrecy.
- Allowing grace to reach the hidden places.

Key Idea:

What we hide controls us. What we confess loses its power.

Self-Inventory:

Check any that apply:

- I fear being judged if I share my story.
- I've carried secrets for years.
- I struggle to admit my wrongs out loud.
- I want healing but fear vulnerability.
- I long to be fully known and fully loved.

Reflection:

- What part of your inventory feels hardest to speak?
- What do you hope will happen when you share it?

2. Confession in Scripture

David wrote:

"I acknowledged my sin to You... and You forgave the guilt of my sin."

Psalms 32:5

John wrote:

"If we walk in the light... the blood of Jesus purifies us from all sin."

1 John 1:7

Scripture teaches that confession leads to:

- Forgiveness
- Cleansing
- Healing
- Freedom
- Restoration

Key Idea:

Confession is not about punishment — it is about release.

Scripture Engagement:

Read Psalm 32:1–5 and 1 John 1:5–9.

Underline any words that speak to freedom.

Reflection:

- How have you experienced the relief of confession before?
- What does "walking in the light" mean for you today?

3. Sharing With Another Person

Step 5 requires a safe, trustworthy person — someone who will listen with grace, confidentiality, and compassion.

Sharing with another person means:

- You are no longer alone.
- Your story is honored, not judged.
- Your shame loses its grip.
- Your healing becomes relational.
- Your recovery becomes grounded in truth.

Key Idea:

Healing happens in the presence of God and the presence of another.

Confession Inventory:

Rate 1–5 (1 = not true, 5 = very true):

- ___ I have someone safe I can share with.
- ___ I believe God will meet me in this step.
- ___ I am willing to speak honestly.
- ___ I trust that confession leads to healing.
- ___ I want freedom more than secrecy.

Reflection:

- Who is the right person to hear your Step 5?
- What support do you need as you prepare?
- What do you hope God will do through this step?