

Inside Out – Study 9 – Transformative Power of Testimony

Following on with our 'Inside Out' series, having paused for Easter celebrations, we continue to consider 'transformation'.

Read Psalm 32

In this psalm David's dialogue rotates between (1) addressing those worshipping with him in the sanctuary, (2) speaking to God, and (3) he is himself addressed by the priest in the sanctuary. Notes in the NIV study bible summarize this psalm as 'A grateful testament of joy for God's gift of forgiveness towards those who with integrity confess their sins and are receptive to God's rule in their lives'.

1a. 'A grateful testament of joy' is not a record of saying everything is okay and singing praise all the time. Or is it? Are there differences?

1b. David (writer of psalm 32) uses the word blessed in verses 1 and 2 in his testament. What other words do you think would be suitable to describe the feeling he is expressing?

1c. In your daily witness, in what ways do you demonstrate by actions or express in words your certainty that you are forgiven?

Formal confession is particularly associated with the Roman Catholic church, but confession does not necessarily need to be formal. Indeed, it is not restricted to 'religious' matters alone. It is surely about breakdown in and restoration of relationships.

2a. If you know you have done something wrong, what do you see as the benefits and drawbacks of making a confession? Should you always confess? Does your answer change if the broken relationship is with God?

Most of us find the hearing of a personal testimony in church to be powerful and moving - just as this psalm/testament is.

3a. What do you see as the elements within this psalm that make it so powerful?

3b. Everyone has a personal testimony about their journey of faith, but not everyone believes their story would be interesting to others. Having identified the key elements of a powerful testimony, consider/reflect upon whether your journey is so different from that described by David.

3c. What were the key stepping stones along your journey of faith; those people or events that helped moved you further along the path, building your relationship with Jesus?

3d. Is there someone in the group who would be prepared to (have a go at) give their testimony to the group now?