

Psalm 51: Miserere (Repentance)

Have mercy on me, God, in your kindness.
In your compassion blot out my offense.
O wash me more and more from my guilt
and cleanse me from my sin.

My offenses truly I know them; my sin is always before me.
Against you, you alone, have I sinned;
what is evil in your sight I have done.

That you may be justified when you give sentence
and be without reproach when you judge.
O see, in guilt was I born,
a sinner was I conceived.

Indeed, you love truth in the heart;
then in the secret of my heart teach me wisdom.
O purify me, then I shall be clean;
O wash me, I shall be whiter than snow.

Make me hear rejoicing and gladness,
that the bones you have crushed may revive.
From my sins turn away your face and blot out all my guilt.

A pure heart create for me, O God, put a steadfast spirit within me.
Do not cast me away from your presence, nor deprive me of your Holy Spirit.



"Cleaning Up" is definitely easier...
when you think of it as deciding what to keep,
rather than deciding what to throw away.

Life is too short to spend weekends "Cleaning Up..."



As you Start to walk on the way,
The way Appears.
Rumi

Clarity doesn't come before Action.
It comes from Action.

Do Not be Afraid:

Week 1:

OWN UP

O - **Observe**
W - **Welcome**
N - **Name**
U - **Untangle**
P - **Possess**



OWNING UP can be difficult... Many of us think that OWNING UP has to do only with our SHAME, but we need also to OWN UP to our PAIN. We need to be honest with ourselves, the sadness that we carry can be transformed, the dis-ease within us can be healed, the emptiness and insufficiency that we have lived with for so long can be REDEEMED by the love and mercy of God...

Do Not be afraid to OWN UP... is the call this Lent – Let's begin today, allow God to see what is happening in your secret place.

O - **OBSERVE**

Observe yourself in action – especially in situations that you find overwhelming. Become your own Inner Observer. This may be uncomfortable at first, for it may reveal that you are uncomfortable and may need to change. Nevertheless, embark upon this process gradually...

Don't try and analyse or explain – just observe. You may want to keep a note of what you observe – especially the way you react in different situations. I yelled at the kids... I feel insecure... I am angry when my plans have to change... I feel like a failure... I'm anxious about the future...

W - **WELCOME**

Welcome these observations with openness and without judgment. Our normal response to unpleasant emotions is to do whatever we can to push them out of our awareness... We have become masters of distraction... Distracting ourselves and others with relative ease.

Now various things can happen in the welcoming phase, some of which are not helpful:

- *Justifying our actions and behaviours (Blame others)*
- *Excusing them... "That's just who I am".*
- *Steeped in guilt and self-judgment.*
- *Hand them to God and distance our self from them.*

Friends, these are not healthy... we are encouraged to rather welcome and OWN UP that this is where we are at, as uncomfortable as it may be. This welcoming phase nurtures an open heart and mind and a willingness to change. Invite God to be with you in the midst of your experience and your feelings... God is close to you – Welcome God in too.

N - NAME

Often, we misdiagnose ourselves... in our pain and desperation we quickly want to put a handle on things, so that we can control them. The process of OWNING UP takes time – it cannot be rushed. Consider getting yourself an "Emotions Wheel" see the vast array of emotions... settle with one that most accurately describes what you are feeling.

I found this quote most helpful...

*"I sat long enough with my Anger...
– until she told me her name was GRIEF.*

U - UNTANGLE

*O time, thou must untangle this, not I.
It is too hard a knot for me to untie.*

Shakespeare

We are complicated! We are a tangled web of hardwiring and history, wounds and praises, thoughts, emotions, instincts, perceptions and knowledge, blind spots and brilliance.

Untangle – involves the process of narrowing down the list of what we have observed, welcomed and named in order to sort out what seems to have the strongest hold on us. It is identifying more precisely where our attention is focussed – what is draining my energy and affecting me negatively. Once you have a sense of the main chain that is binding you – present it to the Lord, he came to set you free... You will need to LET GO!

P - POSSESS

This is simply and profoundly about possessing who you are as a child of God... It is about hope; it is about living into who God created you to be...

A summary of God's Action in our lives from ancient times, will help here:

1. God offered the Promised Land to us... it had to be possessed one step at a time.
2. God delivered the people from slavery and brought them through a desert to a land of milk & honey.
3. As the People took Possession of the Land that was promised to them – God removed the obstacles that hindered them from living fully in the land that he had promised them...

Adapted from Self to Lose – Self to Find
Marilyn Vancil

Do Not be Afraid... OWN UP

A monk once said:

*"Imagine being bitten by a snake,
and instead of focusing on healing from the poison,
You chase the snake to understand why it bit you
and to prove that you didn't deserve it."*

We have all been bitten by pain or shame –
Isn't it time to own up and be healed.



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