

Spilling Secrets

By RLD Editorial Team

for use as
STEP 1 

Lesson 5**Focus:**

Confess your sins to God.

Lesson 5**Bible Basis:**

Ezra 7—10

Lesson 5**Memory Verse:**

Whoever conceals their sins does not prosper, but the one who confesses and renounces them finds mercy.
—Proverbs 28:13

Students will discuss secrets they've kept as they explore confessing sins to God.

Materials:

- Internet access

Everyone has secrets. Sometimes, a secret can be something as innocent as a planned surprise for a friend, or a joke that only a few people would understand. But when a secret involves something wrong—or it hurts someone else—it can be a big problem.

- **Have you ever kept a secret when you knew you shouldn't? What made you do it?** (Accept all reasonable responses. Possible answers may include: I was scared of what might happen or of what people might think.)
- **What happened when the truth came out?** (Answers will vary.)
- **How did you feel once everyone knew the truth?** (Accept all reasonable answers without comment—some students may say they felt relieved or glad while others may express feeling embarrassed.)

In his 2022 book *The Secret Life of Secrets*, researcher and author Michael Slepian wrote about how “on average, we are keeping as many as thirteen secrets at any given time.” That’s a lot of secrets! His research also showed that thinking about the secrets we keep is linked to lower well-being and health.

Although the thought of other people knowing our secrets might be embarrassing, having them out in the open can also improve our well-being. Keeping secrets, hurts, or sins hidden can destroy relationships and leave us crippled with guilt. Good thing there’s a solution! Let’s find out what it is in our lesson today.

Information Sources:

<https://michaelslepian.com/>

<https://spsp.org/news-center/character-context-blog/problem-keeping-secret>

(Continue on to Steps 2 and 3 in your teacher's guide; your Step 4 appears below.)

Spilling Secrets

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STEP 4 

Lesson 5**Focus:**

Confess your sins to God.

Lesson 5**Bible Basis:**

Ezra 7-10

Lesson 5**Memory Verse:**

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—Proverbs 28:13

Materials:

- Index cards (1 per student)
- Pens/pencils (1 per student)
- Whiteboard and marker (or screenshared document)
- Optional: Colored markers

If your class is meeting online, invite students to bring supplies with them to class.

Confessing their sins and pledging to serve God put the people of Israel back on the right path.

➤ **What were the sins the Israelites confessed?** (Answer: Intermarrying with idolatrous tribes.)

No one here has ever married someone from an idolatrous tribe, but just because our specific situation is different doesn't mean we don't have things to confess as well. When we acknowledge that we have made a mistake and set out to do what is right, God hears us and gives mercy...not just forgiveness for what we've done wrong, but help in continuing to do what is right instead.

It can be difficult, though, to remember to confess our sins to God. Confession isn't easy to do! One way to remember to confess to God is to make it a part of our daily routine. Write the acronym ACTS: "adoration," "confession," "thanks," and "supplication" on your whiteboard or screenshared document. Distribute supplies (or invite students to have them ready at home). **When we pray, we should include praising God or "adoration," along with "confession," "thanks," and "supplication"—that means asking God for things we need.**

Instruct students to write out the acronym, along with what each word stands for, on their index card. Then, give students a moment to pray using the acronym. When the students have finished, challenge them to use their card this week to confess their sins as they enter into a time of prayer. Encourage them to use this format daily so that they keep lines of communication open with God.

To close, lead them in an ACTS format prayer. **Dear Lord, You are amazing! You give us a way to obtain mercy and get rid of our guilt. We confess that we have not always come to You with our struggles, our temptations, and our failings. Thank You for giving us this opportunity, and please help us to run to You when we need to confess our sins.**

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