



GOAL

Youth identify the four aspects of *Confess* in the story of Zacchaeus and take steps toward repairing their own lives.

- A** Art
- AM** Active/Movement
- AT** Abstract Thinking
- C** Conversation
- CT** Concrete Thinking
- D** Drama
- G** Game
- M** Music
- QC** Quiet/Contemplative
- S** Service
- T** Technology
- X** Extra Prep

Note: bit.ly addresses are case-sensitive.



PRAYER

Holy God, thank you for the opportunity to lead this group as we discuss the practice of repair. Show me how to model it in my own life. Amen.

THIS SESSION

Repair is the fourth aspect in the practice of *Confess*. If someone takes my toy and realizes they were wrong, confesses to me, and promises never to do it again, I am still left without my toy unless they return it. It is not enough to feel sorry for our sins. We should move to repair the effects, even if we cannot totally fix it. Reparations may be made on individual and communal levels as the residual effects of sin can be far-reaching and systemic. Attending to the four aspects of this practice—See Sin, Confess, Repent, and Repair—is a lifelong journey because human beings are never in complete harmony with God or with one another.

THE BIBLE STORY

Luke's Gospel story about Zacchaeus, the tax collector, and his encounter with Jesus shows the transformation that occurs when Zacchaeus recognizes the dishonesty of his actions (Luke 19:1–10). His response includes an endeavor to amend his ways and deal honestly with others. Zacchaeus takes an additional step in reparations when he offers to pay back more than he owes to those whom he cheated. In paying out additional monies, he acknowledges that his initial cheating exacted a higher cost to his clients than simply paying higher taxes.

CONNECTIONS WITH YOUTH

Youth will connect with the aspect of *repair* on a personal and social level. They are negotiating how to be friends with others and often make mistakes and wish to make amends (*repair*). Most are highly motivated to do this as relationships with peers are of utmost importance in adolescence. On a social level, most youth are passionate about fairness and may be eager to direct energies to one of the causes listed in the session or found in your community.

SESSION PREPARATION

- Post the four sheets of newsprint from session 1 (the three that list sins, the *Confess* sequence, and God's desires; and the one with Psalm 51).
- "Review Infographic" (p. 28): Use the *Confess* infographic poster ([bit.ly /FMInfographicPosters](https://bit.ly/FMInfographicPosters), Year 1 Set).

Depending on the options you choose:

- "Contact Political Representatives" (p. 30): Gather the names and contact information for local, state, and federal representatives.
- "Reduce, Reuse, Recycle" (p. 31): Invite a church leader to share ways the congregation is engaged in climate repair or to brainstorm possibilities.

GETTING STARTED

- Clay of different colors
- Plastic knives

HEARTS OF CLAY

A



Some may remark that not all sins can be repaired. When we hurt someone's feelings, for example, we can say we are sorry, but it may be impossible to repair the damage done to them. We may not be able to repair them, but we can confess and apologize and try to make them feel better.

Before participants arrive, set out enough clay for each to create a small heart. Keep one unique color hidden to use in the second part of the activity.

Welcome youth as they arrive and invite them to use just one color of clay to make a small heart. When hearts are made, instruct them to use the knife and cut their heart in two. Bring out the hidden color of clay and have them use this color to repair the clay heart.

Comment that today's theme is *repair*. When we sin and hurt something or someone, we confess, we change, and we attempt to repair. But like repairing broken hearts, when we try to repair damaged relationships, things are not exactly the same. But we try to restore as much as we can.

Pray this prayer or one of your choosing:

Gracious Creator, thank you for this chance to be together and reflect on confessing. Open our hearts and minds as we learn ways to be your disciples. Amen.



INTRODUCING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or both options.

- Confess* infographic poster

REVIEW INFOGRAPHIC

C

Gather around the *Confess* infographic poster and discuss the theme of *repair* as it is portrayed in the poster. Ask youth to explain how the four aspects discussed so far connect under the overall theme of *Confess*.

- Three sheets of newsprint from sessions 1–3

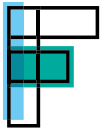
REVIEW NEWSPRINT

C

Call attention to the posted newsprint and discuss these questions:

- ➔ The middle sheet of newsprint lists the four aspects of *Confess*. What is an example you have seen where all four aspects happen?
- ➔ Is it a genuine confession if no repair is made? Why or why not?

Invite the youth to create a definition of *repair* and post it under “Repair” on the middle sheet of newsprint.



FINDING THE PRACTICE IN THE BIBLE

Choose one or both options.

WATCH VIDEO ABOUT ZACCHAEUS



Watch the YouTube video “Zacchaeus the Repentant Tax Collector” (bit.ly/FMZacchaeus, 3:02). Lead a brief discussion about the video and see if youth can name the four aspects of *Confess* in the story.

Read the story of Zacchaeus in Luke 19:1–10 and discuss any differences between the video story and the biblical story. Reaffirm the four aspects of *Confess* we see in Zacchaeus.

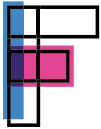
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- Internet-connected device
 - Bible

READ THE BIBLE STORY IN PAIRS



Form pairs or groups of three and ask someone in each to read Luke 19:1–10 aloud to their group. Instruct them to identify the four aspects of *Confess* in the story. Return as a large group and discuss where the four aspects are found. Talk about Zacchaeus’s acts to *repair*. Did he just give back what he had taken or offer more? Why might that be important when we seek to repair what we’ve done?

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- Bibles



FINDING THE PRACTICE THEN AND NOW

Choose one or more options.



If you do not have a way to show a movie clip in your location, watch the videos and describe them to your group. Bring a list of the links for them to watch at home after the session.

REMOVING CONFEDERATE MONUMENTS



Watch the YouTube video “Protesters Call for the Removal of Confederate Monuments” (bit.ly/FMProtestMonuments, 1:52), a *CBS Evening News* clip from June 2020, when monuments were being removed after the police killing of George Floyd.

For a more detailed explanation of the history of monuments, watch the YouTube video “Why Are There SO Many Confederate Monuments?” (bit.ly/FMMonuments, 10:41).

Walk through the three previous aspects that happened for many leading up to this act of *repair*. Discuss some of these questions with the group:

- ➔ Many people previously uninvolved in racial justice got involved in efforts to remove these monuments. What did it take for them to see the sin of these monuments that had been around for several generations?
- ➔ How is removing Confederate monuments an act of *repair*?
- ➔ Are there Confederate monuments in your area, and is there a group working to remove them?

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- Internet-connected device

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- Internet-connected device

REPARATIONS FOR JAPANESE CITIZENS

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Watch the YouTube video “The US Has Paid Reparations before. . . So Why Not Now?” (bit.ly/FMJapaneseReparations, 2:11). Discuss some of these questions:

- ➔ Was it right for the US government to pay reparations to Japanese American citizens? Was it enough?
- ➔ What are ways other groups who have been hurt by this government should be repaired? (For example, you might mention Native Americans and immigrant children held in camps without their parents on the US-Mexico border or descendants of enslaved Africans.)
- ➔ How can individuals be involved in repairing large-scale sins like these?

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- Internet-connected device

CLIMATE REPAIR

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Watch the YouTube video “Climate Change - We Are the PROBLEM & the SOLUTION (Animated Infographic)” (bit.ly/FMClimate, 8:42). The video explains what climate change is and describes ways to repair the climate. After watching the video, discuss the three actions of Reduce-Reuse-Recycle and ask for examples youth have seen of people taking these actions. Discuss what your church currently does to repair climate change.



PRACTICING THE PRACTICE

Choose one or more options.

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- Internet-connected device
 - Paper
 - Pens

WRITE AN APOLOGY

M T QC

Watch the YouTube video “Andrew Peterson - I Want to Say I’m Sorry (Official Lyric Video)” (bit.ly/FMSorry, 3:02). Give participants a piece of paper and a pen and invite them to think about writing an apology to someone, which they may or may not send. Some may know exactly who they wish to address. If they need help, suggest they write an apology for their role in some social situation. Maybe they didn’t speak up when they should have. Challenge them to include how they might repair the situation they are sorry for. Encourage them to send the letters or keep them to view later.

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- Names and contact information of local, state, and federal political representatives
 - Paper and pens

CONTACT POLITICAL REPRESENTATIVES

X CT C

Discuss local and national situations that need repair. Select one or two and talk about the four aspects of *Confess* and how they connect with youth’s role in the situation. Tell youth they will be writing a letter to individual political representatives asking that the representative repair the situation. Ask what tone the letter should take and what should be included. Encourage youth to include confessing their own role in the situation and name actions that they feel need to happen to repair the situation. Either write a letter as a group and send it or have participants spend some time writing their own letter that can be sent as an email or through the mail. Provide contact information for the people who should receive the communications.

REDUCE, REUSE, RECYCLE



- Internet-connected device (optional)
- Paper
- Pens



If your church is actively working to reduce, reuse, and recycle, invite an adult involved in those acts of repair of the environment to come and tell the group what is happening and how they can be involved. If your church is not doing anything, invite a leader to come and brainstorm with the youth ways the church might do something.

If you did not watch the video in “Climate Repair” (p. 30), show it to the group now. Distribute paper and pens and invite youth to a quiet time of reflection. Have them write “reduce, reuse, and recycle” down the left side of their page. Ask them to write things they can do to reduce, reuse, and recycle. After a while, invite participants to call out things they named. Challenge them to carry through and make some changes to help repair the environment.



FOLLOWING JESUS

Take a few minutes to give an overview of the four aspects of *Confess* explored in this unit. Use the newsprint lists that have been building since the first session. Invite youth to comment or ask questions about everything discussed. Invite additions to the lists and remind youth that the act of *Confess* is integral to our lives as followers of Jesus. There will always be things we can do to live more faithfully.

Thank them for their participation and close with a time of prayer using this prayer, the posted verses from Psalm 51, or one of your choosing. If using the prayer below, tell youth there will be brief moments of silence for them to think of specific things they confessed. Every time you say “God of grace,” they will say “forgive us.”

For failing to love others as you have loved us . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

For wasting your gifts and hoarding our goods . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

For plundering the earth and abusing the planet . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

For fearing those who are strange to us and ignoring those in need . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

For losing heart and abandoning hope . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

For all the ways we turn from you . . .
God of grace, **forgive us.**

We offer our prayers in the name of the One who saves us,
Jesus Christ. **Amen.**¹

1. *Book of Common Worship* (Louisville, KY: Westminster John Knox, 2018), 61.

