

*Therefore confess your sins to
each other and pray for each
other so that you may be healed.*

—James 5:16



DEVOTION:

What is the solution to the temptation to be popular, successful or impressive? There are no easy answers to that question. Our society values achievement and does not make much room for sin and failure.

Nouwen writes that the misconception exists that good leadership requires a "safe distance" from those who are served. This attitude cannot work for those who fulfill the ministry of Christ. When we lay down our lives for others, like Jesus did, God's unconditional and eternal love flows through us to them.

To lay down your life, Nouwen says, is to stand beside each other through joy and sadness, faith and doubt, hope and despair. When Christian leaders and people in the community of faith are honest about their wounds, it opens the way for confession and forgiveness. Only then do we really love and serve each other.

The light of God's grace in the Christian community shines brightest when we listen to each other's confession of brokenness and failure, and pray for one another in the spirit of forgiveness.