

# The Blown Pitch

Confession and Repair • 1 John 1:9 (NIV)

## THE SITUATION

Slide four carried the wrong totals, and the client found them before you did, with the CFO in the room and your whole team listening.

So you said something about the export, which wasn't true, and everyone at that table knew the export had nothing to do with it.

Three days later, three apology emails are parked in your drafts folder, and you have lost count of how many times you have run the room back. Two voices keep trading turns. One says you were careless and then shifted the blame. That is accurate. The other says you are a mistake, which describes nothing that happened in that room.

## BIBLE ANALYSIS

***"If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just and will forgive us our sins and purify us from all unrighteousness" (1 John 1:9, NIV).*** John is old, writing about what to do with sin already committed. Confession means agreeing with God about something specific: the figures went unchecked, and the export took the blame for a human failure. Saying that in those words, to the people who heard the excuse, is plain accuracy.

Confession never stands alone in that verse. God is faithful and will forgive, because Christ has already carried the judgment that belonged to this. Absolution leaves slide four wrong and the consequences standing. What it removes is the condemnation, and whoever trusts that word stands right with God for Christ's sake.

God's law names the specific sin and exposes the sinful heart beneath it. What it does not say is that Christ's forgiveness is unavailable or that repair is pointless. Despair takes the accusation and uses it to deny the gospel. The gospel throws out the excuse and the despair together, because Christ forgives the actual sin and sends you back toward the people it landed on.

Repair has to be proportionate, and decent people go wrong in two directions. Some apologize so extravagantly that the injured party ends up doing the comforting. Others offer one vague sentence and expect the relationship to reset by Monday.

A useful apology names the action, its impact, and the correction, with no excuse attached. Then it gives the other person time, and the silence is not punishment. If the error touched a decision, find out who got the wrong number and what they did with it. Absolution and accountability run on different tracks. God's pardon is complete for Christ's sake, and your client may still need restitution and a changed procedure.

## ACTION PLAN

**The Decision.** Today, before a fourth apology email joins the drafts folder, send the short one and let the first line do the work: “The totals on slide four were wrong, and I blamed the export instead of owning it. Corrected figures are attached, along with the checking process we will use going forward.” Then build that process: a source-data check, a teammate’s eyes on the numbers, and a ten-minute margin before the meeting.

**The Inner Person.** Reviewing the meeting and replaying it feel identical from the inside, but reviewing hands you something to use next time. By the tenth pass you have stopped learning and started hurting yourself. A believer can be fully absolved and still dread the next presentation; the promise the dread argues with was true before the feeling arrived. So you present again with your stomach still unsettled.

**Try This.** Pray it in two halves tonight. Name the sin in the words you would use to a person: the figures went unchecked, and you blamed the export. Then read 1 John 1:9 out loud as God’s answer to that exact sentence, because absolution is meant to be heard. Put the next presentation on the calendar before you go to sleep.

### THREE TAKEAWAYS

- Confession names the actual wrong, with no decoration and no excuse.
- The forgiveness Christ won lifts condemnation without erasing consequences.
- Repair means truthful communication with a better process behind it.

## APPLY IT

*Which failure have you replayed most this week, and who could say the absolution to you out loud?*

## PRAYER

Father, we come to you in the name of Jesus, your Son, and we confess our carelessness and our habit of shifting blame onto anything that will hold it. For his sake, forgive us. Send us back to the people we harmed, with courage to repair what we broke and to work more carefully, without pretending and without despair. Amen.

**Going Deeper.** Mark A. Jeske, James, Peter, John, and Jude, *The People’s Bible* (Northwestern Publishing House), on 1 John 1:5-10. Luther’s Catechism, rev. ed. (Northwestern Publishing House, 2017), on confession and absolution.