

Confidentiality in the Local Church

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Openness

²⁵ Adam and his wife were both naked, and they felt no shame.

Genesis 2:25



Openness

Now I know in part; then I shall know fully, even as I am fully known

1 Corinthians 13:12



Openness

There is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. ³ What you have said in the dark will be heard in the daylight, and what you have whispered in the ear in the inner rooms will be proclaimed from the roofs.

Luke 21:2-3



Openness

All things have been committed to me by my Father. No one knows the Son except the Father, and no one knows the Father except the Son.

Matthew 11:27



Hiddenness

They realised that they were naked; so they sewed fig leaves together and made coverings for themselves.

Genesis 3:7



Hiddenness

The LORD God made garments of skin for Adam and his wife and clothed them.

Genesis 3:21



Hiddenness

Jesus warned them not to tell anyone about him.

Mark 8:30



Hiding and openness

	Negative	Positive
Hiding		
Openness		

Hiding and openness

	Negative	Positive
Hiding	A cloak for evil	
Openness		

Hiding and openness

	Negative	Positive
Hiding	A cloak for evil	A guard against pride
Openness		

Hiding and openness

	Negative	Positive
Hiding	A cloak for evil	A guard against pride
Openness		Trust through shared lives

Hiding and openness

	Negative	Positive
Hiding	A cloak for evil	A guard against pride
Openness	Power through artificial intimacy	Trust through shared lives

Confidentiality

Doctors shall preserve absolute secrecy on all he knows about his patient because of the confidence entrusted in him.

World Medical Association
International Code of Medical Ethics
1949



Confidentiality

- The myth of confidentiality



Confidentiality in the family

1. Free flow of information
2. Deliberate concealing of information
3. Permitted exchange of information
4. Unbalanced exchange of information
5. Immature revealing of information
6. Progressive disclosure of information



Confidentiality in the church

- A bias toward openness
- A familial model
- An emphasis on trust
- A community of grace



A life example to engage with

- A 40 year old man confesses to you that he has been having an affair for 3 months, but that he is repentant and the affair is definitely over. He begs the pastor not to tell his wife who has been severely depressed because he fears it will tip her over the edge. He promises you that the affair is over and that he is determined to make the marriage work again.
- Who will you tell? Anyone?



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- Suppose you decide not to tell his wife. Now suppose that four months later the wife approaches you for advice and tearfully reveals that she has just been diagnosed with a sexually transmitted disease. She feels terrible shame and guilt because she is convinced this must be the result of a previous partner from before she was married. What should you do now?



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