

“Sinning Every Day?”

By Rabbi David Wolpe

Most Jews believe that Judaism encourages confession once a year on Yom Kippur. They are unaware of the confessional, which is part of the daily service.

Why must we confess our sins so often? Do we learn nothing? In his autobiographical novel, *The Way of all Flesh*, Samuel Butler writes of his religious education in England: “When I was young I used to think the Prayer Book was wrong in requiring us to say the General Confession twice a week from childhood to old age, without making provision for our not being quite such great sinners at seventy as we had been at seven; granted that we should go to the wash like table cloths at least once a week, still I used to think a day ought to come when we should want rather less rubbing and scrubbing at. Now that I have grown older myself I have seen that the Church has estimated probabilities better than I had done.”

We learn each day from the newspaper, and from our own lives, that age and experience are not the same as ethical awareness. Doing wrong is not confined to one time of year or one stage of life. We confess continually because we can always be better.