

Confession

Int.

1. Aim: To explain from the verses in the Bible what it means to confess Christ.
2. Romans 10:10 "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth **confession** is made unto salvation."
 - a. The Greek word confess means to acknowledge - it also has the meaning of "to concede the truth or validity of".
 - b. The word "confess" comes from a compound Greek word, homologeo.
 - i. The roots are: homo, "same," and lego, "to speak."
 - ii. The term carries the idea of agreement, assent.
 - c. Our English word has the idea of "to admit" or "to make known"
3. Acts 8:37 "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." - this is an example of the confession - the Eunuch made the confession that saves
4. The word confess is found 47 times in the Bible - includes the words confession, confessing, confesseth
5. Confession is used in two ways in the Bible:
 - (1) Confession of faith in becoming a Christian
 - (2) And Confession of sins
6. This lesson will be about the necessity of making the confession of faith.
7. In 1 Timothy 6:12-14 Paul commended Timothy for having made "the good confession"

Discussion

I. WE MUST CONFESS CHRIST TO BE SAVED

A. Romans 10:8-10 "But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 9 That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. 10 For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."

1. V. 8

- a. Nigh = near
- b. Quote from Deut. 30:14 "But the word is very near you, in your mouth and in your heart, that you may do it."
- c. Faith in Christ does not depend on the personal presence of Christ on this earth.
- d. The word is near you - it is easy to believe because of the witnesses - it is easy to be understood

2. V. 9

- a. Confess that Jesus is the Lord
- b. Confess that God raised Him from the dead
- c. This is the Gospel - death, burial, resurrection.
- d. 1 Cor. 15:3-4 "For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that Christ died for our sins according to the scriptures; 4 And that he was buried, and that he rose again the third day according to the scriptures:"

3. V. 10

- a. Heart believes unto righteousness
- b. Mouth confesses that which leads to salvation

- c. God has made the confession a requirement for salvation; that we express our belief in Jesus as the Son of God. And we look forward to salvation through the name of the one confessed.

B. To confess Christ is to confess that he is the Son of God

1. Matthew 16:13-16 "When Jesus came into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, saying, Whom do men say that I the Son of man am? 14 And they said, Some say that thou art John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. 15 He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am? 16 And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God."
 - a. Jesus was asking them what other men thought about him.
 - b. There were several different opinions
 - c. He was wanting them to think about their own view of him.
 - d. Peter then makes the confession that Jesus was the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
2. Jesus was the Christ
 - a. He was the long expected deliverer
 - b. The prophets had written about the deliverer - the Messiah
 - c. "The Christ" is Greek for "the Messiah"; Messiah is the Hebrew for anointed, and means the anointed of God as the Redeemer of the world.
 3. Jesus was the Son of the Living God
 - a. The Jews had not expected the messiah to be the son of God.
 - b. This confession denotes the divinity

- c. Nathaniel was the first to make this confession in John 1:49 "Rabbi, thou art the Son of God."
 4. Jesus then stated that he would build His church on this truth that Jesus was the promised Messiah, the Son of the living God. V. 18
 5. This statement by Peter is the "Good Confession"
 6. Acts 8:37 is an example of a man making this confession before baptism.
 - a. "And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." v.37
 - b. Philip had preached to him about Jesus - v. 35
 - c. He must have preached to him about faith, repentance, confession and baptism.
 - d. Because when he requested to be baptized then Philip told him that he could be baptized if he believed with all his heart.
 - e. That is when he made this confession. "I Believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."
- C. The Confession is not...
1. Some dream or experience that we have had.
 2. It is not a personal testimony of our feelings
 - a. In some denominational churches a person must come down to the front of the audience and give their experience or testify.
 - b. There is not one example in the N.T. of a person giving an experience or testifying before their salvation.

3. It is not the statement that: "God for Christ's Sake has pardoned my sins."
 - a. This is not a scriptural confession.
 - b. It is contradictory to the teaching of Scripture in that one must be baptized in order to be pardoned of his sins. - Acts 2:38

D. Matthew 10:32-33 "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. 33 But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven."

1. Christ will not confess us unless we confess him. Deny = disavow, reject
2. Illustration:
 - a. A few years ago a man in Indiana requested to be baptized.
 - b. The preacher asked the man: "Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God.?" The man said: "No."
 - c. The preacher then asked him why he wanted to be baptized. The man said "to get those two ladies (pointing to members of his family) off my back."
 - d. The preacher refused to baptize him.
3. The preacher did the right thing because unless we confess Christ He will not confess us.
4. Paul said that "with the mouth confession is made unto salvation". Rom.10:10

E. John 12:42,43 "Nevertheless among the chief rulers also many believed on him; but because of the Pharisees they did not confess him, lest they should be put out of the synagogue: 43 For they loved the praise of men more than the praise of God."

1. These people had conviction but not confession.

2. Their confession of Him would have shown their allegiance and they were not prepared to do this.
3. They would not make their faith public - because they would not confess.
4. They feared man and sought honor of man.
5. This is proof that faith alone will not save.

F. It took a great deal of courage in the First Century to Confess Christ.

1. Confession today might cost one his popularity.
2. But in the First Century it could cost a person their life.
3. It is reported that Polycarp, who was acquainted with some of the apostles, was arrested at age 86 because of his Christianity.
4. Because of his age, the soldiers tried to get him to say the words, "Lord Caesar", and then sacrifice to the gods so his life might be spared.
5. To this he replied, "For eighty and six years have I been his servant, and he has done me no wrong, and how can I blaspheme my king who saved me?"
6. He was then burned at the stake.

II. EVIDENCE FOR TRUTH ABOUT THE CONFESSION OF CHRIST

- A. What is the evidence for making this Confession that Jesus Christ is the Son of God?
1. God does not ask us to exercise faith without giving us evidence for our faith
 2. The New Testament records the words of His friends and of His enemies, of good and bad men, hypocritical and indifferent men, rulers of the state and characters of the underworld. What did these of his day have to say of Him?

B. Angels - - At the head of the list of witnesses are the angels of heaven.

1. The angel of the Lord said to Joseph, "... fear not to take unto thee Mary thy wife: for that which is conceived in her is of the Holy Ghost. (21) And she shall bring forth a son, and thou shalt call his name JESUS: for he shall save his people from their sins." (Matthew 1:20-21)
2. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary with the same message. Luke 1:26
3. Angels sang at Jesus' birth, - Luke 2:10; A host of angels appeared and sang - Luke 2:13
4. Angels ministered to Him in the wilderness of Temptation, and later in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43).
5. Angels kept watch at His tomb when He arose from the dead, rolled away the stone from the door of the tomb, and then announced His resurrection to His disciples (Matt 28:2; Luke 24:4, etc).
6. The testimony of the angels of God is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

C. New Testament Characters

1. Among men, one of the first witnesses is the aged Simeon,
 - a. It had been revealed that he should not die until he had seen God's Anointed One.
 - b. He held Jesus in his arms as an infant and thank God that he had seen God's salvation. Luke 2:29-32. (Vs. 25-35)
2. John the Baptist came preparing the way for the Messiah.
 - a. He pointed to Jesus and said, in John 1:29; "Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world."

- b. He explained to his own disciples, whom he was encouraging to follow Jesus, that he had recognized the Christ by the Holy Spirit descending upon Him from Heaven like a dove on the occasion when he had baptized Jesus. (John 1:31-34).
 - c. John concludes, "And I saw, and bare record that this is the Son of God."
3. John's disciples, who had been pointed to Jesus by John himself, concluded, "We have found him, of whom Moses in the law, and in the prophets did write, Jesus of Nazareth,... Rabbi, thou art the Son of God; tho art the King of Israel." (John 1:45, 49).

D. Other Witnesses

- 1. Pontius Pilate
 - a. When Pontius Pilate had tried him, he stood at the head of the long stairs and pronounced final judgment against Jesus contrary to his own conscience and verdict, for he had already said, "I have found no fault in this man" (Luke 23:14).
 - b. While Pilate wrestled with the most important decision of his life, his wife sent to him the message, "Have thou nothing to do with that just man: for I have suffered many things this day in a dream because of him." (Matt. 27:19)
- 2. The blind man Bartimaeus, who couldn't see the things of the world, could see this great truth,
 - a. He exclaimed, "Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me." (Mark 10:46-48)
 - b. This was just another way of calling him the Christ; "thou Son of David."

3. Judas Iscariot is a pitiful witness of the Good Confession, but a powerful one.
 - a. If there had been any skeletons in Jesus' closet of private affairs, Judas as one of the twelve should have known.
 - b. But he confesses that he had betrayed innocent blood.
4. One of the thieves crucified alongside Jesus observed, "This man hath done nothing amiss." (Luke 23:41) If there had been any secrets in the criminal underworld about Jesus, such a character as this thief would have known them.
5. Also at the crucifixion, the centurion in charge of execution said, "Truly this was the Son of God." (Matt. 27:54)

E. The Most Important Witness

1. Jesus Christ Himself confessed to the woman at the well and again before the High Priest that He is the Son of God, and because of this confession He was crucified. (John 4:25-29; Mark 14:61,62-64). "(61) But he held his peace, and answered nothing. Again the high priest asked him, and said unto him, Art thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed? (62) And Jesus said, I am: and ye shall see the Son of man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven." (Mark 14)
2. God Confessed that Jesus is His Son
 - a. At his baptism and at His transfiguration, God Himself confessed Jesus as His Son from Heaven
 - b. (Matt. 3:17; 17:5) "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased."

- c. "While he yet spake, behold, a bright cloud overshadowed them: and behold a voice out of the cloud, which said, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased; hear ye him." (Matthew 17:5)

- F. The evidence for the truth of the confession is overwhelming
1. Jesus died for this truth
 2. Many of the apostles also died for their witness to this truth

III. When is The Confession To Be Made ?

- A. From Acts 8:37 we read that the Eunuch made it after Philip explained Isaiah 53 to him.
1. This produced belief, and definitely he would have repented or changed his thinking toward his former life and the Jewish religion as is required.
 2. And then we read of his baptism.
- B. Jesus says, "He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved." Mark 16:16
1. It follows that confession precedes baptism and it would have to follow faith, for how could one confess something that he didn't know, and how could he give the oath of allegiance to Christ if he had not turned from the world - repented ?
 2. "For it is with the heart man believeth unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." Romans 10:10
- C. This shows clearly that when one makes the confession, he accepts Jesus as Lord, thereby putting himself under obligation to observe all the laws coming from Him as Head of the church built upon the truth he confesses.

CONCLUSION

1. Not only do we confess Christ with the mouth to become a Christian, we continue to confess him every day we live.
 - a. We confess him in conversation
 - b. We confess him in our conduct.
 - c. We confess him by whether or not we let him be our example.
 - d. In every walk of life, we confess or deny Christ as the Son of God.
2. We make the initial confession in becoming a Christian, but there must be that continual daily confessing of him by the life we live.
3. Jesus said to his disciples "Ye are the light of the world" [Matt. 5:14]
 - a. By confessing Christ in our lives we become the light of the world.
 - b. As we follow in his steps, as we become more like him by adopting and strengthening ourselves in the character traits of him, people can see him and his word in us.
4. There is much more to confession than just saying "I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Those words must be backed up by a life lived for him !
5. Confession is not limited to the lips; it includes the life.
6. Have you confessed that Jesus Christ is the Son of God and been buried with him in baptism for the remission of your sins? If not, then why not repent, and then you will gladly confess Christ and be baptized.

Sources Consulted

1. Gospel Advocate Commentary - Matt. 16:16
 2. Files on Confession
 3. Sermon by Bobby Duncan on Confession
-
-

Sermon by Arthur Pigman - Sunday Evening - January 15, 2012
 Evans Church of Christ
 515 Gibbs Road
 Evans, Ga. 30809
 706-855-1249
 evanscoc@bellsouth.net
 www.evansgachurchofchrist.org