

Making the Good Confession

INTRODUCTION

- A. Illustration about Afra confessing her faith to Gaius, the judge of Rhoetia, Germany, 6,000 Classic Sermon Illustrations, 7390, p. 156.
- B. Although we don't face the same circumstances as Afra, we are too often fearful to confess our faith in Christ.
 - 1. We're embarrassed to pause before we eat in a restaurant and give thanks.
 - 2. When a co-worker asks us about our faith, we beat around the bush rather than answer directly.
 - 3. When a friend encourages us to go fishing on a Sunday morning, we go along with it rather than saying, "I can't. I'm going to church, because I'm a Christian."
 - 4. Like Peter, we often look for way out of confessing our faith in Jesus.
- C. Yet, the fact remains that confessing our faith in Christ is a prerequisite for our salvation.
 - 1. "Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven" (Mt. 10:32).
 - 2. "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).
 - 3. "Every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Phil. 2:11).
 - 4. "Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also" (1 Jn. 2:23)
 - 5. "Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God" (1 Jn. 4:15).
- D. Jesus blesses those who confess their faith in him.
 - 1. When Peter first confessed his faith in Jesus (Mt. 16:16), Jesus replied, "Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah" (Mt. 16:17).
 - 2. After Nathaniel confessed his faith in Jesus (Jn 1:49), Jesus told him that he would see great miracles (Jn. 1:50-51).
 - 3. Martha was promised that she would never die when she confessed her faith (Jn. 1:25-27).
 - 4. Have you confessed your faith? Has Jesus blessed you?
- E. This morning, we want to examine what the Bible teaches us concerning confessing our faith.

THE MEANING OF THE TERM "CONFESS"

- A. "Confessing" is the opposite of denying.
 - 1. Mt. 10:32-33.
 - 2. "He confessed, and did not deny, but confessed, 'I am not the Christ'" (Jn. 1:20).
 - 3. When Peter denied Jesus, he said, "I do not know the Man!" (Mt. 26:69-75). Instead of admitting that he knew Jesus, he claimed that he did not know him.
- B. "Confessing" refers to declaring something, acknowledging something.
 - 1. The term is often used for declaring sin.
 - a. "Confess your trespasses to one another" (Js. 5:16).
 - b. "If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness" (1 Jn. 1:9).
 - c. Confessing sin means that we acknowledge our sins, that we make them known.
 - 2. Confessing faith in Christ means that we acknowledge that we believe in him, that we make it known rather than hide it.
 - a. Timothy made the good confession in the presence of many witnesses (1 Tim. 6: 12)—Instead of hiding his faith, he told others of his faith.
 - b. Jesus made the good confession before Pontius Pilate (1 Tim. 6:13).
 - c. Confessing Christ involves others hearing that we believe—it's the opposite of hiding our faith.

WHAT IS TO BE CONFESSED?

- A. We are to confess Jesus as the Christ.
 - 1. Jesus said that we should confess him before men (Mt. 10:32).
 - 2. The Jews agreed that if anyone confessed that Jesus was the Christ, he would be put out of the synagogue (Jn. 9:22).
 - 3. "If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved" (Rom. 10:9).
 - 4. When Jesus walked on the water, his disciples confessed, "Truly You are the Son of God" (Mt. 14:33).

5. The centurion and those who guarded Jesus at his crucifixion, said, “Truly this was the Son of God!” (Mt. 27:54).
 6. “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God” (1 Jn. 4:15).
 7. “Simon Peter answered and said, ‘You are the Christ, the Son of the living God’” (Mt. 16:16).
- B. What are we not to confess?
1. We’re not to confess our sins.
 - a. Obviously, there is a time and a place to confess our sins—one who is already a Christian must confess his sins.
 - b. But, the confession we are to make at our initial salvation has nothing to do with our sinfulness.
 2. We’re not to confess that God for Christ’s sake, has forgiven us of our sins.
 - a. The whole “plan of salvation” upon which this confession is based puts salvation before our confession and before our baptism—something Scripture never does.
 - b. This confession cannot be found in Scripture; therefore, what gives me the right to make it part of my salvation?
- C. Have you confessed your faith in Christ?

BLESSINGS ATTACHED TO THE CONFESSION

- A. Christ will confess the confessor before his Father and the angels.
1. “Whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven” (Mt. 10:32).
 2. Jesus will confess us as one of his, as his disciple.
 3. The fact that Jesus would confess us before his Father has great benefits, for he is our Advocate.
 - a. Jesus is often referred to as our Advocate or Intercessor.
 - 1) “If anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous” (1 Jn. 2:1).
 - 2) “He is also able to save to the uttermost those who come to God through Him, since He always lives to make intercession for them” (Heb. 7:25).
 - b. As our Advocate, Jesus stands before the Father and pleads with him on our behalf.
- B. Confession is in order to salvation.
1. “With the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation” (Rom. 10:10).
 2. Confession is in order to receive salvation
 - a. We cannot be saved without making this confession.
 - b. Contrary to what some might teach, this confession is not all that’s necessary for salvation. Proper confession follows proper faith that always produces obedience.
- C. God dwells in the confessor and he in God.
1. “Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God” (1 Jn. 4:15).
 2. The one who confesses has a special relationship with God—he is God’s child.
- D. These blessings are not based upon confession alone. Proper confession is always followed by immersion.
- E. Do you have these blessings confession brings?

OBLIGATIONS IMPOSED BY THE CONFESSION

- A. After we confess our faith in Christ, we are required to fight the good fight.
1. 1 Tim. 6:12.
 2. We, as Christians, are engaged in a battle.
 - a. “For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against principalities, against powers, against the rulers of the darkness of this age, against the spiritual hosts of wickedness in the heavenly places” (Eph. 6:12).
 - b. Because we are engaged in battle, we must fight.
 - 1) We must stand firm against temptation and resist it with our entire being.
 - 1) We must stand firm against false doctrine and defend the truth.
 3. We cannot take this fight lightly, or we’ll lose.
 4. Are you fighting the good fight?
- B. Confessing our faith in him makes Jesus our apostle and high priest.
1. “Consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Jesus Christ” (Heb. 3:11).
 2. As our apostle, we are bound to Jesus’ word. Just as every word the apostles spoke was true (when they were speaking for God), every word that Jesus spoke is true, and we’re obligated to obey.
 3. As our high priest, we are bound to Jesus’ blood. Just as the Levitical high priests would offer sacrifices on behalf of the people, Jesus offered himself as our sacrifice.
- C. Confessing our faith in Christ, we are required to hold fast to what is confessed.
1. The Bible calls upon us to hold fast our confession.

- a. “Let us hold fast our confession” (Heb. 4:14).
 - b. “Let us hold fast the confession of our hope without wavering, for He who promised is faithful” (Heb. 10:23).
2. Holding fast our confession means that we don’t quit being a Christian.
 - a. We don’t say, “It’s so hard to be a Christian that I’m just going to give up.”
 - b. We don’t stop worshiping when someone hurts our feelings.

CONCLUSION

- A. This confession was made by the Father (Mt. 3:17).
- B. The Apostle Peter made this confession (Mt. 16:16).
- C. The truth of this confession is the foundation for the church (Mt. 16:18).
- D. Do you need to confess your faith in Jesus this morning?