

THE GOOD CONFESSION (#2)

1. Just as clearly as God has required faith, repentance and baptism to be obeyed from the heart, He has also required an open acknowledgment of one's faith in His Son before men.
 - a. The Apostle Paul wrote, "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." (Romans 10)
 - b. Paul had this confession in his mind when he commended Timothy for having made "*the good confession.*" I Timothy 6:12-14

"12 Fight the good fight of faith, lay hold on eternal life, whereunto thou art also called, and hast professed a good profession before many witnesses. 13 I give thee charge in the sight of God, who quickeneth all things, and [before] Christ Jesus, who before Pontius Pilate witnessed a good confession; 14 That thou keep [this] commandment without spot, unrebukeable, until the appearing of our Lord Jesus Christ:" (1 Timothy 6)
 - c. The good confession which had been made by Timothy was the good confession which had been made by Jesus, and for which they crucified Him; His statement that He was the Son of God. [Matt. 26:63-66; 27:11; Luke 22:70; John 19:7]

WHAT THE GOOD CONFESSION MEANS

2. There could hardly be anything connected with Christianity that means more than the good confession. There is no greater truth than that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.
 - a. This confession sums up the core of Christian teaching. When one confesses that Jesus is **the Christ**, he is confessing that Jesus is the anointed Messiah, the Redeemer whom God had promised time and again to send through the O.T. prophets.
 - b. When one confesses that Jesus is **the Son of God**, he is rising above popular opinion which has often held Him as a great leader while denying his divinity and incarnation.
 - c. When one confesses Jesus Christ as **the Son of the Living God**, he is contrasting the LORD God [or the ETERNAL] with the dead idols which men have often worshiped.
3. This good confession is so filled with meaning that we understand why his enemies during his personal ministry passed a law "*that if any man did confess that he was Christ, he should be put out of the synagogue*" (**John 9:22**).

THE EVIDENCE FOR ITS TRUTH

4. What is the **evidence** for making this good confession? God does not ask us to exercise faith without giving us a basis for our faith. Let us examine the testimony of the Scriptures to His divinity.

- a. The great question of the ages is "*What think ye of Jesus Christ; whose Son is He?*" (Matthew 22:42).
- b. 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?

5. THE WITNESS OF NEW TESTAMENT CHARACTERS – Angels

At the head of the list of witnesses of His true identity are the angels of heaven.

- a. 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)
- b. The angel Gabriel appeared to Mary with the same message. Luke 1:26
- c. Angels sang at Jesus' birth, - Luke 2:10; A host of angels appeared and sang - Luke 2:13
- d. Angels ministered to Him in the wilderness of Temptation, and later in the Garden of Gethsemane (Luke 22:43). 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).
- e. The testimony of the angels of God is that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God.

6. THE WITNESS OF NEW TESTAMENT CHARACTERS

- a. Among men, one of the first witnesses is the aged Simeon, to whom it had been revealed that he should not die until he had seen God's anointed One.
 - 1) 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)
- b. John the Baptist came preparing the way for the Messiah. He pointed to Jesus and said, in John 1:29; "*Behold the Lamb of God, which taketh away the sin of the world.*"
 - 1) 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).
 - 2) John concludes, "*And I say, and bare record that this is the Son of God.*"
- c. 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).

THE FOUNDATION TRUTH OF CHRISTIANITY

7. Such a study as this makes obvious the fact that **the central truth** of all the Bible is that Jesus Christ is the Son of the Living God. No wonder God commands that men confess this truth openly in becoming His children.
- a. When His apostles had returned from a preaching tour, He took them into the coasts of Caesarea Philippi, and inquired of them who the people thought He was.
 - 1) The apostles answered, "Some [say that thou art] John the Baptist: some, Elias; and others, Jeremias, or one of the prophets. (Matthew 16:14)
 - 2) Then Jesus asked them to confess who **they** thought him to be. "He saith unto them, But whom say ye that I am?" (Matthew 16:15)
 - 3) "And Simon Peter answered and said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God." (Matthew 16:16)
 - 4) Jesus then said that this would be the rock upon which His church would be built. Without faith in this fundamental fact -- the deity and Sonship of Jesus, no one can have hope of deliverance. "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." (John 3:18)

OTHER WITNESSES

8. There are many other witnesses to the truth of the Good Confession in the N.T.
- 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).
 - 1) 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)
 - b. Even the blind Bartimaeus, who couldn't see the things of the world, could see this great truth, and he exclaimed, "*Jesus, thou Son of David, have mercy on me.*" (Mark 10:46-48)

This was just another way of calling him the Christ; "*thou Son of David.*"
 - c. Judas Iscariot is a pitiful witness of the Good Confession, but a powerful one. If there had been any skeletons in Jesus' closet of private affairs, Judas as one of the twelve should have known. But he confesses that he had betrayed innocent blood.
 - d. 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.
 - e. Also at the crucifixion, the centurion in charge of execution said, "Truly this was the Son of God." (Matt. 27:54)

THE MOST IMPORTANT WITNESS

9. In such a list of witnesses as this, we have not yet included the most important ones.
- a. **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)
 - b. At his baptism and at His transfiguration, **God Himself** confessed Jesus as His Son from Heaven (Matt. 3:17; 17:5) "And lo a voice from heaven, saying, This is my beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased." (Matthew 3:17)

"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)
 - c. Even the **demons** confessed Him!
 - 1) The demons He cast out of the man which then went into a herd of swine in Matt. 8:28-34; had said to Him, "*What have we to do with thee, Jesus, thou Son of God. art thou come hither to torment us before the time?!*"

WHY CALL IT THE "GOOD" CONFESSION?

10. But why do we call this confession of Christ's divine Sonship **the good confession**?
- a. First of all, the evidence for the truth of the Confession is overwhelming; Jesus-- and many of the apostles-- died for their witness to its truth.
 - b. Second-- It is a good confession because it leads to everlasting life.
 - 1) Remember the Apostle's words "... *and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" (Rom. 10:10)
 - 2) 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.
 - c. It is also **good** because the name of God is behind the decree that every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess this great truth.
 - 1) Philippians 2:9-11.
 - 2) This means that **you** are going to eventually make this confession. If you wait until the final judgment day, it will be too late to be saved by such a confession, but you will still bow before the great truth.
 - d. Fourth-- this confession is called the good confession because it contains a summary of the whole truth of the Christian religion, name, that Jesus is the Christ of God, and that in Him is the fulness of the Godhead, and that in Him are all spiritual blessings, including the redemption of our transgressions.

ARE YOU WILLING TO CONFESS HIM?

11. What do **you** say? Whose Son is He? It is not enough to know what Pontus Pilate thought about Jesus, or to know what the demons and Judas Iscariot thought about Him, but what is the Gospel *according to you*?

12. There are two kinds of “confessions” spoken of in the New Testament.
 - a. The confession of the alien sinner of his faith in Jesus as the Son of God
 - b. And the confession of sins made by the erring Christian (James 5:16)
 - c. An example of the first is the confession in Acts 8 by the Ethiopian Treasurer. (Also see Romans 10:9-10)
 - d. An example of the confession of sin and requesting prayer is also found in Acts 8 by Simon the Sorcerer in Acts 8:20-22.

13. What the “confession” in the Scriptures is NOT:
 - a. Are you ready to confess Him and obey Him openly? This is not a confession "that God has for Christ's sake already pardoned your sins" **before Gospel obedience**, but a confession that you believe in Jesus as the Son of God.
 - 1) And that you will therefore complete your obedience to the Gospel by being baptized into the name of Christ for the remission of yours sins.
 - b. These are His simple commands:
 - (1) that men believe in Christ with all their heart; (Heb. 11:6; John 8:24)
 - (2) turn away from sin in genuine repentance, (Acts 17:20; 2Pet. 3:9)
 - (3) and confess this earnest faith in Christ as God's Son before men; (Matt. 10:32-33; Rom. 10:9-10)
 - 4) and be buried with Him in baptism for the forgiveness of sins. (Rom. 6:3-6)
 - c. Jesus said, "(32) 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." (Matthew 10)

14. Today you may have your choice: make the good confession now and live, or wait until men are crying for the mountains and rocks to fall on them and make it any way, only at that time you will make it to your eternal sorrow because you did not obey Him in this world. Become a Christian today!