

Coming to Christ

*A study of the Problem of Sin, Faith, Repentance,
Confession, Baptism, Christian Living*



Lesson 4 --- Confession

Confession

In our previous lessons, we have said that faith and repentance are conditions for salvation. In this lesson we see confession of faith in Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour as a third condition. Romans 10:9-10 says, "...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

We often ask people; especially before baptism, to make the same confession that the Apostle Peter made in Matthew 16:16 where he said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

1. What do the following verses teach about the importance of confession and the content of our confession?

Matt 10:32-33 --

1 John 2:23; 4:15

2 Cor 9:13

Heb 3:1

2 John 1:7

There are at least three types of confession seen in the New Testament.

1. **Confession of sin.** 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness."

*We note that confession of sin is to God here and not to others. (See also Psalm 51:1-4.)

Since the word confession means: "to say the same thing or to agree" we can conclude that confession means that we agree with God verbally that we have sinned. Forgiveness is not possible until we agree with God about our sin.

*Sometimes it is necessary to confess our sins to others. James 5:16 instructs us: "Therefore, confess your sins to one another and pray for one another, that you may be healed..."

2. In what circumstances ought we to follow the instruction of James 5:16?

2. **Confession as a Way of Life.** This means that we make Jesus the object of our worship daily. Note Matt 10:32,33 is not a one-time confession, but a daily lifestyle.

In "A Commentary on the Gospel According to Matthew" by H. Leo Boles, pg. 233, writes that the confession of Matt 10 "is ongoing and can stand for the Christian's entire life. Jesus said, "He that overcometh...I will confess his name before my Father, and before his angels" (Rev. 3: 5).

Greek word for Confession

homologeō -- from homo which means the same and legō which means to speak. Together the meaning is to say the same thing or to agree.

3. Confession of Jesus as the Christ.

Romans 10:9-10 makes clear that confession is necessary for salvation. It is one of the conditions upon which salvation hinges. The word "if" shows the conditional nature of salvation. One who expects God to accept him, must be willing to confess his faith in Jesus as the Christ, the resurrected Son of God. Note that this is an **oral** confession that is made publicly (Matt 10:32,33).

Romans 10:9-10

"...if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved."

This confession comes after one believes on Jesus or a true confession cannot be made. It comes following repentance because one cannot truly confess Jesus as Lord if they are unwilling to repent of the sin that separates them from God. Confession precedes baptism since baptism is the point in which a person "puts on" Christ (Gal 3:27) and as such is a prerequisite for baptism.

3. *What does it mean to confess Jesus as Lord? (See also John 9:22)*

4. *Peter said, "You are the Christ, the Son of the Living God" (Matt 16:16). What does it mean to call Jesus the Christ? What was meant by calling Jesus the Son of God? (See also 1 John 4:15)*

One of the rules for properly interpreting the Bible is this: Whatever meaning the text originally conveyed to its first readers is the proper meaning. Imagine what it meant for a Jew in the first century to say that Jesus was the Christ. This was to say that He was the promised Messiah. He was deity. He was God in flesh.

5. *What do we know about Timothy's confession (1 Tim 6:12)? What do we know about the confession of Jesus before Pilate (1 Tim 6:13)? (Refer to John 18:33-37)*

6. *What did the confession of Thomas entail? (John 20:28)*

7. *What confession will everyone ultimately make? (Phil 2:11)*

To confess Jesus as Lord conveys the idea of ownership and deity. Therefore to confess Jesus as Lord means that we are saying that He owns us. Furthermore we are saying that He is fully divine; that He is God.

8. *Have churches in the past always stressed clearly the implications of confessing that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the Living God? --- If not, what do we need to convey to a person before they confess Christ as Lord?*