

LET THE
BIBLE SPEAK...

about

CONFESSION



Prove all things...
Hold fast to that which is good

Confession is a vital Biblical study. The New testament notes two types of Confession: (1) The Confession of Faith, and (2) the Confession of Sins.

CONFESSIO OF FAITH

In **Matthew 16.13-14** we read of a discussion between Jesus and His Apostles on the subject of His identity. He asked, "*Who do men say that I the Son of Man am?*" They answered, "*Some say John the Baptist; some, Elijah; and others, Jeremiah, or one of the prophets.*" Then He asked, "*But who do you say that I am?*" Simon Peter answered, "*You are the Christ, the Son of the living God.*" Jesus answered and said, "*Blessed are you, Simon Bar-jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven. And I say to you that you are Peter, and on this rock I will build my church...*"

It was not on Peter that the church was built, as some erroneously teach, but on the great confession that Peter made. The entire Christian system is embraced in this statement. Everything from creation pointed forward to Jesus; and everything since His coming points back to Him, the Son of the living God.

This same confession was made by God at the baptism of Jesus. "*And behold, a voice out of the heavens, saying, 'This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.'*" (**Matthew 3.17.**) This confession was repeated at the Transfiguration (**Matthew 17.5.**)

Jesus Himself witnessed this same good confession before Pilate: *"and the governor asked Him saying, 'Art thou the King of the Jews?' And Jesus said unto him, 'Thou sayest.'"* (**Matt. 27.11.**) Later Paul wrote to Timothy reminding him of the good confession he made in the presence of many witnesses, and of Christ Jesus, *"who testified the good confession before Pontius Pilate."* (**1 Tim. 6.12-13.**)

During His personal ministry Jesus taught: *"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before My Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before My Father which is in heaven."* (**Matthew 10.32-33.**) *"For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation."* (**Rom. 10.10.**)

In **Acts 8** we find Philip preaching to the Ethiopian eunuch. As they rode by a certain water the eunuch said, *"See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized?"* Philip said, *"If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest."* And the eunuch answered and said, *"I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God."* (**Acts 8.37/KJV.**)

For Jesus, the good confession meant death; for us, it leads to life eternal. Sooner or later you will confess Jesus as the Son of God — if not now, then in eternity! Paul says that all men will be compelled to confess Christ at the end of time: *"that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those who are in heaven, and on earth, and under the earth, and that every tongue should*

confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” (Philippians 2.9-11.)

Confession of Faith in Christ is a necessary part of the New Testament Plan of Salvation. To be saved, we must Believe, (**John 8.24,**) Repent of our sins, (**Luke 13.3,**) Confess our Faith in Christ before men, (**Romans 10.10,**) and Be Baptized for the forgiveness of sins. (**Acts 2.38. Mark 16.16.**)

CONFESSIO *OF SINS*

We now turn from Confession of Faith to Confession of Sins.

Confession of sins takes various forms: (1) To God alone, (2) To one's neighbor when he has been wronged (**Luke 17.4, James 5.23**), (3) To one's friend or advisor as the confession of David to Nathan (**2 Samuel 12.13**), and, (4) To the entire congregation where sin has created a public scandal to the church. The Bible clearly teaches that every known sin, of whatever nature, must be confessed to God. Any sin, every sin, not repented of, establishes a barrier between God and the sinner. David said, "*If I regard iniquity in my heart, the Lord will not hear.*" (**Psalm 66.18.**) "*If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive our sins...*" (**1 John 1.9.**) God graciously forgives every erring child who has genuinely repented and acknowledged his sin. Forgiveness is dependent on confession of sin by those who

stumble and fall. If the heart is impenitent, confession will not follow; and without it there is no forgiveness.

A confession of sin is an expression disowning the sin. When a person has genuinely repented of sin, he or she is anxious to denounce and disown that sin. So the confession of sin should be as public as the sin itself. *“Confess therefore your sins one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed.”* (**James 5.16.**) Sins known only to God should be confessed only to God; sins known only to one or a few, should be confessed to only one or a few, as the case may be. Public sin known to all should be confessed before the church. Confession should be as public as the sin but not more so.

We all have need, in becoming a Christian, to make the good confession that Jesus made before Pilate—the confession of Faith. (**1 Tim. 6.12-13**, see also **1 Peter 3.15.**)

We all also have need, as we seek to live the Christian life, to confess and renounce the sins we commit from day to day. (**1 John 1.8-9.**) Jesus, however, never needed to make a confession of sins for He had none. (**Hebrews 4.15.**) Instead Jesus died on the cross to provide forgiveness of sins to all who are obedient to His commands. (**Luke 6.46, Hebrews 5.8-9.**)

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Published by Gospel Tracts International
A Ministry of Baldwin Church of Christ, U.S.A.