

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • TV--401A

A television broadcast sermon delivered
SUNDAY, APRIL 21ST, 1991

by

HENRY T. MAHAN

Transcribed, edited and published
FEBRUARY 23RD, 2009

HENRY T. MAHAN TAPE LIBRARY

Zebulon Grace Church
6088 Zebulon Highway
Pikeville, KY 41501

Matthew 10:32-33

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.

I'm going to speak today, and I want you to listen very carefully to this subject: "**WHAT IS IT TO TRUST CHRIST?**" That is my subject.

I have two scriptural texts for this message. The first one is found in the **Book of Matthew Chapter 10 verse 32**. Our Lord says; "*Whosoever, therefore, shall confess Me before men, him shall I confess 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.*" This is the Master speaking.

In my second text, the apostle Paul wrote in Romans 10:9: "*If thy shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus Christ to be Lord, and shall believe in thine heart that God hath raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*"

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

My question is this; “What is it to confess Christ?” He said, “*If you will confess Me, whosoever, shall confess Me before men, I will confess him.*” Paul said; “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*” Here is the question: “What is it to confess Christ?” There can be no doubt as to whom we are to confess. The Master said; “*If you confess Me.*”

I’m not talking about just believing that there is one God. You may say; “I believe that there is one God.” James wrote this; “*Thou believest there is one God, thou doest well. The devil also believes there is one God.*” This is to confess Christ. He said; “*If you confess Me, I’ll confess you.*” He said; “*You deny Me, I’ll deny you.*” Paul said, “*If thou wilt confess with thy mouth Jesus Christ to be Lord.*” So, it is not just to confess that there is one God and it is not just to confess religion.

I have religion. Sure, everybody has some type of religion. This religion is not just to confess the Law of God or even to confess that I am a sinner. What we are talking about here is to confess Jesus Christ. That is the subject. We are to confess Him.

This is not to just adopt a religious form or to join a church or denomination. This is not to pick up religious traditions or to go through the form or to celebrate the Holidays and pay your tithes. This is to confess a person! Do you understand that? “*If thou wilt confess Me, before men, He said, I will confess you. You deny me, (whatever else you confess), I’ll deny you.*” Do you understand that?

First, it is to confess Him. The whole issue here is Jesus Christ. What is it about Him that we are to confess? What are we to confess concerning Jesus Christ? Paul tells us, he says, “*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus Christ to be Lord.*” He is saying, “Your Lord and every man’s Lord. He is talking about the Lord of the dead and the living and He is the Lord of heaven and earth. Thomas summed it up when he fell on his knees before the risen Redeemer.” He said, “*My Lord and my God.*”

The angels said when they announced the birth of Jesus Christ, “*Call His name Jesus, for He shall save His people from their sins.*” The name Jesus is the Old Testament word, Joshua. This word means Saviour or Jehovah my Saviour. This same angel said; this is a fulfillment of Isaiah’s prophecy. “*Call His name Emanuel,*” (God with us). He is my Lord and My God.

Now, who is He? Do you remember when Moses went to Mount Mariah and God appeared to him in the burning bush? God told Moses that He was sending him down to Egypt to deliver the people of Israel. He talked to Moses about this and Moses had several objections. Finally, Moses said, “*When I go down there and tell them that the God of Abraham, Isaac, and Jacob sent me down here, they’ll say; what’s His name? What shall I say?*” The Lord replied; “*Moses you tell them I Am have sent thee. I Am That I Am.*”

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Do you know that this is the way the Lord Jesus Christ identified Himself? I'm talking about Jesus of Nazareth, the one who lived on the earth and died on the cross. He was buried and rose again. He called Himself, "*I Am.*" On occasion after occasion, and numerous times He called Himself, "*I Am.*" They said; "You're not 50 years old." Christ said, "Before Abraham was *I Am.*"

When they came to arrest Him in the garden, the soldiers said; "We seek Jesus of Nazareth." He said two words, "*I Am,* and they fell backward." And again He said, "If you believe not that I Am you will die in your sins." In John there are seven times that He says, "*I Am.*" He said, "*I Am the bread of life. I Am the door; by Me if any man enter in He shall be saved. I Am the light. I Am the good shepherd. I Am the true vine. I Am the way, the truth and the life. I Am the resurrection and the life. He that hath seen me hath seen God.*"

That is what Isaiah said about Him. Isaiah prophesying hundreds of years before Jesus of Nazareth was born on this earth, said; "*Unto us a child is born, unto us a Son is given. The government shall be on His shoulders and thou shalt call His name Wonderful, Counselor, the Mighty God, the Everlasting Father, the Prince of Peace.*" Who is He? Thomas summed it up. He said, "*My Lord and my God.*"

We're going to be talking about confessing Christ. We have to find out what it is we confess. Who is He? Now, what did He do? Well, Paul said, "*He came into the world to save sinners of whom I am chief. He took upon Himself the likeness of sinful flesh and the habit of a servant and was made in the likeness of our flesh.*" The scripture says; "*He was tempted in all points as we are, yet without sin. He bore our sins in His body on the tree.*" He arose from the grave victorious over sin and death and hell. Yes, what did He do? He came into this world, born of a woman, made under the law to redeem sinners.

Why did He do this? This is what we confess. You don't confess a half of a Christ, or part Christ. We confess all that He is; Prophet, Priest and King in all that He is and in all that He has done. Why did He do this? Well, the scripture says that He did it that, "*We might made the righteousness of God. He was made sin for us who knew no sin that we might be made the righteousness of God.*" He died that we might have in Him, the forgiveness of sins and redemption; that God may be just and justifier. That He might be Lord of the dead and the living. That is why He did it. This was the only way. There is no other way.

You see, the law is given to man and man has to keep that law if he is to have any dealings with God. There is God's justice; "*The soul that sinneth shall surely die.*" God said, "*I will by no means clear the guilty.*" Somebody has to die for sin.

Where is He now? Who is He? He is my Lord and my God. What did He do? He became a man, walked this earth, obeyed God's law, and died under God's wrath and justice for sin. Where is He now? "*He is seated at the right hand of the Majesty in the heavenlies. There is one Mediator between God and men.*" Paul rejoiced, he said; "*Who can condemn*

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

me, the Christ has died, yea rather is risen again who is even at the right hand of God who ever liveth to make intercession for us."

You see, my friends, God the Father appointed Him, ordained Him and sent Him into the world. *"As My Father sent Me into the world, so I send you."* The Father said, *"This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear ye Him."*

The angels worshipped Him. The Hebrew writer wrote; *"Let all the angels of God worship Him."* They told the shepherd; *"Unto you is born this day in the city of David, a Saviour, Christ the Lord. To Him give all the prophets witness."* He said, *"Abraham saw my day." Abraham was glad and he rejoiced to see My day."* They said, *"We read after Moses."* He said, *"Moses wrote of Me. If you would have believed Moses you would have believed Me. Moses wrote of Me."*

What I am saying is that this is serious business. If you and I wish to know God, if we wish to worship God, and if we wish to be in the kingdom of God, we will confess Christ. That is the only way. John wrote on in **First John 5:20**; *"And we know that the Son of God is come and hath given us an understanding that we may know Him that is true, and this is the true God, and this is eternal life."* Do you understand how serious this is? What is it to confess Christ?

I'm not saying that you have to be a scholar, theologian or to know all there is to know about the Bible. What I am saying is, if you confess Christ, you have to confess the right Christ. You have got to confess the real Christ. You have to confess the true Christ and know in your heart who He is. Who is it your confessing and what did He do and why did He do it? Why was this necessary and where is He now? I'm talking about the true Christ.

My friends, there is no way of knowing God except to know Christ. Just perish the thought and banish the thought. You are not going to know God. How are you going to know God? Listen to the scripture; *"No man knoweth the Father save the Son and He to whom the Son will reveal Him."* The disciples said; *"Lord, show us the Father."* We would like to see God. He said, *"He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father."* There is no way of knowing God except in knowing Christ.

There is no way of approaching God except through Christ. Didn't He say that? *"No man cometh to the Father but by Me."* That is what the Word says. *"No man cometh to the Father but by Me."* There is no way of having eternal life in heaven except in Christ. The scripture says; *"This is the record, God hath given us eternal life and this life is in His Son and He that hath the Son of God hath life; and He that hath not the Son of God hath not life."* There is no way to have any part in the first resurrection except in Christ. The reason is because He said; *"I am the resurrection, I am the life. He that liveth and believeth on Me, though He were dead, yet shall he live."*

All right, now we are coming to the answer of that question; what is it to confess Christ? How does one confess Christ? Here are four areas in which those who believe Christ,

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

confess Christ. You remember what I have said. These things are vital and imperative when I ask, who is He, and what Christ am I confessing? It is not just a name, but also a person that goes by that name. We need to know what He did, why He did it, and where He is now. We need to know about the glorious attributes, which are attained in Him. What is it to confess Christ?

First of all, it is to confess Him in my own heart. There is no need for my mouth confessing something that I don't believe. That is hypocrisy. Listen, Paul said, "*If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus to be Lord, and believe in thine heart that God raised Him from the dead thou shalt be saved; for with the heart man believeth unto righteousness and with the mouth, confession is made unto salvation.*"

My friends, we don't need all of this high-pressure evangelism and coercion and persuasion that are going on today. Preachers will count to three and get people to raise their hands and hurry down the isle. They want them to hurry and make a profession and strike while the iron is hot. I'll tell you what we need. We need to preach the gospel, the Word of God. We need to preach Christ Jesus and the gospel of God's grace and glory. We need to wait for the Holy Spirit to reveal it to the heart of the sinner. Do you see what I am saying?

When God sent Phillip to preach to the Ethiopian Eunuch, he joined him in that chariot. He got up into the chariot and joined him. He sat by him and preached Christ to him. He began at the same scripture (Isaiah 53) and preached Jesus. When he finished preaching to him, he didn't have the Eunuch raise his hand or sign a card. Phillip did not put any pressure on him, whatsoever. In fact, they came to a certain body of water and the Eunuch asked Phillip; "Sir, what doth hinder me from being baptized?" The preacher didn't ask him to do it; he asked the preacher to baptize him.

The preacher did not give him a prayer to pray. This man asked out of his own soul. He believed with all his heart. Phillip said; "*All right, I will baptize you if you believe with all your heart.*" He replied, "*I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God,*" and Phillip baptized him. This is where a true confession of Christ begins; it begins in the heart. "*With the heart man believeth unto righteousness.*"

I hear the gospel and I don't need anyone to twist my arm. I don't need anyone to drag me down the isle. I don't need anyone to tell me what to say, to pray or to do. I need to hear that gospel and be persuaded and convinced in my own soul and in my own spirit and heart, the truth of that gospel. Leave me alone! Let me contemplate and consider and count the cost and allow the Holy Spirit of God to do what only He can do.

I know I'm a sinner. I know I can't justify myself. "*I believe the record that God hath given concerning His Son.*" I believe that He is the Christ. I believe those things. That is where confession starts. I confess it to myself. I confess it to God.

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

Now, what is next? To confess Christ is to follow Him in baptism. Now listen to me. Our Lord Himself was baptized to fulfill all righteousness. He went down to John and John baptized Him. *“When He came up straightway out of the water, the Spirit of God descended upon Him in the form of a dove.”* He commanded His disciples to preach the gospel and to baptize those that believe. He said, *“You go into all the world and make disciples. Baptize them in the name of the Father, the Son and the Holy Spirit. He that believeth and is baptized shall be saved.”*

There were 3,000 converted at Pentecost. They were all baptized confessing Christ. All through the New Testament, the Eunuch, Saul of Tarsus and Lydia. *“Arise and be baptized,”* Ananias said to Saul of Tarsus. There was the Philippian jailer, Cornelius and all of these people followed the Lord in baptism. You see; a confession of Christ is to know who He is and be persuaded in your own heart.

Don't be baptized prior to believing. *“He that believeth and is baptized”* is what the scripture says. Baptism is not to confess what I might get someday; it is to confess what has taken place. *“Christ died for my sins and was buried and rose again.”* Baptism is identification with Christ in His death, burial and resurrection. Baptism is a confession that *“I'm crucified with Christ, dead to this world, buried and risen to walk in newness of life.”*

The way to confess Christ, my friend, is not walking an isle. It does not say in the Bible that we are to walk an isle. Back then; they didn't even have isles to walk. Confession is not raising my hand or signing a card or going to a room and talking to a professional soul-winner. Confessing Christ is to follow Him in baptism. That is exactly right! You need to confess His death, burial and His resurrection. We are buried with Christ in baptism.

Don't confess what you don't believe. If you believe in your heart then confess Christ in baptism. That is the way to confess Christ. That is the New Testament way of confessing Christ. That is the scriptural way of confessing Christ. I'm not ordering you to do anything. I'm not even trying to convince you of doing anything; I am telling you what the scripture says. Confessing Christ is following Him in baptism.

Thirdly: Those who believe in their hearts believe that Christ is all that God says He is. God is the only Redeemer and Saviour. They confess Christ in this way and they are identified with the church of the Lord Jesus Christ. That's right! They are identified with the things of Christ on this earth.

You see; we are pilgrims here and sojourners. We are just walking through this world. We confess Christ every day. We do this especially when we are identified with His people. If Christ has a church on this earth and if I am one of His own, I will be identified with Him. If the Lord Jesus Christ has a people in my town, those who know Christ, preach Christ, love Christ and honor and glorify Christ, I want to be identified with them.

If they are persecuted, I want to be persecuted. If they are blessed by God's presence, I want to be there when God blesses them with His presence. If God has a true preacher in

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

town that is preaching the gospel of God's grace, those who are confessing Christ will be identified with that man. I am not confessing Christ if I refuse to be identified with His true gospel, His true church, and with His true people. That is exactly right!

Our Lord has no secret disciples. Somebody might say; "Well, I believe these things but I don't want to be identified, I don't want to be called a fanatic or a radical:"

Jesus, shall it ever be
A mortal man ashamed of Thee.
Ashamed of Thee whom angels praise
Whose glory shines through endless days?

Paul was in prison for preaching the gospel and he wrote to young Timothy. Timothy was a young pastor. Paul said; "*Timothy, don't you be ashamed of the testimony of our Lord and don't be ashamed of me, His prisoner.*"

You can read the **Book of Acts Chapter Two** and you will find these people who were converted at Pentecost. This is what it says about them. They confessed Christ. They heard the Word, they received it and they were baptized. They continued in the apostle's doctrine, the truth and in the fellowship with one another and in prayer and in breaking of bread. They were together and had all things common. They watched over one another, took care of one another and saw that no one lacked or needed. This is the body of Christ. This is the church and this is the fellowship of true believers. This is not just talking about religious and social organizations. I am talking about believers. "*They continued steadfastly in one accord.*"

That is exactly what I have been saying. What is it to confess Christ? Confessing Christ is to hear the gospel. Read **Acts Chapter Two**, where Peter talked about the Lord Jesus Christ. He talks about who Christ is, what He did, why He did it, and where He is now. "*God hath made this same Jesus both Lord and Christ.*" They heard it and they received the Word in their heart and they were baptized. They continued in the apostle's doctrine and fellowship with one another. They broke bread and prayed. "*They were together and had all things common.*" That is the family of God. If I wear the name, I am going to associate with the Father and with the rest of the children.

Last of all, to confess Christ is to confess Him daily in my walk, in my talk, and in my works. I confess Christ by letting my conversation be seasoned with grace. "*My walk is not after the flesh but is after the Spirit.*" My conversation and my behavior and attitude and dealings with other people, adorns the doctrine of God my Saviour. Continue in that faith, continue in that walk until He calls me to go and be with Him. "*As you have received Jesus Christ your Lord, so walk ye in Him.*"

The Word of God tells us, "*Speak those things which become sound doctrine.*" When you are carrying on a conversation with your neighbors or with your friends or the men you work with, do you sound like a believer? Do you sound like a child of God? Do you speak

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

MATHEW 10:32-33 • HENRY T. MAHAN

those things that become sound doctrine? Do you speak those things that your conversation is seasoned with the grace of God?

When you have a business dealing with someone, do you treat him or her like a child of God would treat them or the Lord would treat them? “*Let your light so shine before men that they can see your good works and glorify your Father in heaven.*” Then, Paul said to Timothy, “*Adorn the doctrine.*” That means to not just hold to a doctrine, adorn it, garnish it, and beautify it with good works.

All right, “WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?”