

# **The Good Confession**

## **Written by Harvey C. Bream, Jr.**

### **Mistaken Ideas about the Good Confession**

Would you be amazed to discover that it is not the confession of one's sins in the ear of a priest? A search of the New Testament does not reveal one command or example of such a practice. It originated with man is not of divine origin.

Perhaps you have thought it was the admission of one's sins before the church. The Bible does not teach this as a requirement for salvation.

What this good confession is, how and when and by whom it should be made, and its place in God's plan for your salvation are questions that can be answered only by examining the Word of God, the Bible.

### **Where the Expression Is Used**

The apostle Paul wrote Timothy: -...lay hold on eternal life, to which you were also called and have confessed the good confession in the presence of many witnesses. I urge you in the sight of God who gives life to all things, and before Christ Jesus who witnessed the good confession before Pontius Pilate,- (1 Timothy 6:12,13).

### **The Divine Origin**

God spoke from heaven, after Jesus' baptism when He came up out of the waters of the Jordan River, saying: -This is My beloved Son, in whom I am well pleased.- (Matthew 3:17). On the mount of transfiguration God spoke again: -This is My beloved Son in whom I am well pleased. Hear Him!- (Matthew 17:5).

Jesus affirmed the divine origin of the good confession. He asked His disciples, -But who do you say that I am?- When Peter answered, -You are the Christ, the Son of the living God,- Jesus answered him, -Blessed are you, Simon Bar-Jonah, for flesh and blood has not revealed this to you, but My Father who is in heaven.- (Matthew 16:15-17).

It is authorized by Jesus. -Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven.- (Matthew 10:32). This confession is not only to be made with the lips but by committal of life: not

only at the time of one's baptism but all throughout life.

### **The Significance and Scope**

Everything from the dawn of creation pointed forward to the Christ; everything since His coming points back to Him. He is the center of Christianity.

Confessing Jesus as the Christ is to acknowledge Him as -the anointed one- which is what the term -Christ- means. Three classes of rulers were anointed in Old Testament times: prophets, priests, and kings. When you confess Jesus as the Christ you own Him as your Prophet-teacher, Priest-intercessor, and King-ruler and authority.

As the Son you acknowledge Him not as -a son- as we all are sons, but the -only begotten Son,- the divine Savior of the world.

Confessing Him to be the Son of the living God you differentiate between lifeless idolatry, invented by men, and the true Maker and Creator of all things, -the living God.-

### **How Is the Good Confession Made?**

With the mouth. -That 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. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation- (Romans 10:9,10).

Before witnesses. There are the examples of our Lord before Pontius Pilate (1 Timothy 6:13); Peter (Matthew 16:216); Ethiopian eunuch (Acts 8:37); Timothy (1 Timothy 6:12).

### **When and by Whom is the Confession Made?**

It comes after faith or it would be a false confession. With the mouth you confess what your heart believes about Jesus (Romans 10:9,10).

It comes before baptism, Jesus said, -He who believes and is baptized will be saved; but he who does not believe will be condemned- (Mark 16:16). Acts 8:37,38 indicates the early practice of the church in asking for confession of faith preliminary to baptism. It is a test of the fitness of the candidate for baptism.

### **Its Importance.**

Jesus assures Peter that on this grand unshakeable truth His church is to be built (Matthew 16:18; see also 1 Corinthians 3:11).

This fact attested by God and confessed by Peter and all who became Christians is the truth to be believed in order to overcome the world (1 John 4:15,5:5).

There is the same connection between continual confession and salvation that there is between faith and righteousness (Romans 10:10).

This confession served to distinguish followers of Jesus from His enemies (Matthew 10:32,33; John 9:22).

In the grand proposition of the good confession rests the salvation of the world and in it are centered all hopes which mortals can have that reach beyond the grave. It underlies the whole scheme of man's redemption, for if He be not the Son of God. He was an imposter, the Bible is a fable, and no man was, is, or ever will be under obligations to believe in or obey Him. On the contrary if this is true, His pretensions were real. His claims are just, and every man who professes to believe it puts himself under obligations to accept the terms He imposes.

### **Mistakes of Men**

Men have thought this too simple. Gradually they added human creedal statements; required of candidates a period of catechism; examined candidates with a demand for a -saving experience-; required agonizing prayer at the altar or -mourner's bench-; substituted the raising of the hand or the placing of the hand on the Bible or radio.

Men do not have the right to change this divine instruction. This is the only confession demanded. We depend upon the Bible as our guide. The Word of God is perfect. Let us come to it and be satisfied with in, (see 2 Timothy 3:16,17).

### **Summary**

The Bible says that the good confession is the statement of the fact that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of the living God. It is of divine origin. It is made by man after faith, with his mouth, before witnesses, prior to and a condition of his baptism into Christ thus precedent to his salvation and coming into the fellowship of the church of Christ.

It is the all-embracing fact of Christianity and the foundation upon which

Jesus built His church.

The good confession should be made for one's own good. One is strengthened in his determination by the public announcement of his convictions and intentions. Consider its influence upon others. There is no secret discipleship. One must encourage and win others. It honors Christ.

### **Questions**

Have you made this confession with your mouth before witnesses unto your salvation? If you do not, it will someday be made to your eternal condemnation (See Philippians 2:10,11; Romans 14:11).

Believe on Christ, repent of your sins, confess Him, be baptized into Him and be saved by Him today.

*All information in this article has been provided by The Christian Restoration Association and is copy righted by them.*