

## Confessing Christ



David Wilkerson November 10, 2014

"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).

What does it mean to confess or deny Christ before men? The Greek word for confess here means "covenant" or "assent." Jesus is speaking of an agreement we have with him. Our part is to confess, or represent, him in our daily lives. We do this by trusting in his promises to care for us and by testifying of it through how we live.

The Lord had just told his listeners, "Are not two sparrows sold for a farthing? And one of them shall not fall on the ground without your Father" (10:29). He was saying, "Think of the billions of birds throughout the earth. To this day, not one has died without the heavenly Father knowing it. Do you think your God cares less for you?"

Christ then pointed out, "The very hairs of your head are all numbered" (10:30). He was emphasizing, "Your Father knows so much about you it's beyond your ability to comprehend. You can never grasp how detailed his care for you is."

Jesus summed it all up by commanding, "Fear ye not therefore, ye are of more value than many sparrows" (10:31). In other words: "Think of what I've just revealed to you about the Father's care. You're to confess this truth to the whole world, leading a life that declares, 'God cares for me.'" We may state our belief in Jesus, worship him and even preach his name, but if we live in fear we are not testifying to the world of his care.

Finally, Christ promises, "Him will I confess also before my Father" (Matthew 10:32). On judgment day, Jesus will take us by the hand, lead us to the Father's throne and state, "Here is one who believed my Word. He lived before men with absolute confidence that I valued him, demonstrating that I cared for him in every detail. He knew I had reasons for allowing everything that happened in his life. And even in his most difficult times, he cast all his cares and fears on me, proclaiming to the world that I cared for him. He trusted me all the way through."

Now, what does it mean to deny Christ before men? "But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven" (Matthew 10:33). When it comes to denying Christ, most of us think of Peter. We wonder, "How could someone so close to the Lord deny him?" Yet even the most devout among us can be guilty of the same sin.

### **We deny Jesus when we don't trust him in our overwhelming trials.**

Many Christians feel they can no longer bear the trial they're facing. Day after day they hide their agony, stifling deep cries of hurt. Their minds are overcome with fear, and in their hearts they don't want to go on. Does this describe you? As you struggle to put your hurt into words, even your friends don't understand. Worse, a piercing question lingers in your mind: "Is the Lord judging me for something I've done?"

David fought the battle of self-doubt when he was overwhelmed. He prayed, "Enter not into judgment with thy servant: for in thy sight shall no man living be justified" (Psalm 143:2). He was saying, "Answer my cry, Lord, but,

please, don't judge me. It's bad enough that I'm suffering. I couldn't face it if I'm paying for doing wrong."

Beloved, that is not the way our Lord works. He doesn't try to win your love by hurting you. What kind of man tries to woo a woman by wounding her? Jesus woos our hearts with mercy, loving kindness and his good news. So don't blame God for your woes. And don't blame yourself. Jesus desires only one thing from you: a cry to him for help. He wants you to reach out for him. When you do, he promises to come quickly.

I have to ask you: Does the world know you to be a lover of Christ? If so, are you seen as downcast and forlorn? Do you constantly talk about the things that go wrong? Have you lingered in this condition without appropriating Christ's promises? According to Jesus' own words, you are denying him before men. First, you're dismissing his love for you, and second, you're neglecting to confess him for who he is: your Savior, protector and provider. You're refusing to acknowledge his faithfulness.

I realize depression or a downcast spirit can be caused by something other than unbelief. Often physical factors may be involved, such as a chemical imbalance, a depletion of serotonin, a bi-polar disorder or some other infirmity. These are very real physical problems. I am not addressing saints who suffer from these things. I'm talking about the overwhelming troubles we all face, the trials of everyday life. Either God's promises are all true, or life itself is one big lie. As Paul says, if there is no resurrection we might as well give up hope. We're all wasting our time.

The message of the Psalms is clear: We're to trust the Lord at all times, in all circumstances. All David could do at times was cry, but he also made this powerful statement to downcast believers: "Many are the afflictions of the righteous: but the Lord delivereth him out of them all.... The Lord redeemeth the soul of his servants: and none of them that trust in him shall be desolate" (Psalm 34:19, 22).

### **We deny Christ before men when our evil deeds betray his holiness.**

"Unto the pure all things are pure: but unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled. They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:15-16).

When Paul says all things are pure to the pure, he's speaking of believers whose minds aren't defiled. A holy purity flows out of their conversation and lifestyle, and they won't allow anything to pollute this pure stream. They don't listen to filthy talk. They don't sit in front of a TV or computer drinking in impurity. They quickly walk away from all gossip. Instead, they see all people through eyes of love.

But there is another kind of servant: "Unto them that are defiled and unbelieving is nothing pure; but even their mind and conscience is defiled" (1:15). This person's mind is polluted with filth, and his conscience is defiled by the sin he hides. To him nothing is pure. He drinks in vile images from movies and TV. He laughs at filthy jokes that no servant of Jesus should put up with. And everywhere he looks, he sees sin in others and gossips about them freely.

Yet an evil heart is exposed by its evil lies. Millions in the world ignore and reject Christ, but the most blatant, grievous denial of Jesus is the one described in Titus: "They profess that they know God; but in works they deny him, being abominable, and disobedient, and unto every good work reprobate" (Titus 1:16).

I want to speak to every lover of Christ who's hiding a bosom sin. You know your heart is defiled. And, yes, the Bible says your sin will find you out. That's the most heartbreaking aspect of hidden sin, when it's made public. We reproach God's name before the world, denying who he is. But the Lord doesn't want to expose you; his greatest desire is to set you free. He wants to forgive you, cleanse you and cover your past. That is his loving heart toward you; he refuses to let you go. But you have to experience his conviction and cry out to be free. Otherwise, there remain only these dreadful words: "If we deny him, he also will deny us" (2 Timothy 2:12).

### **We deny Christ before men by our worldly pursuit of personal security.**

As I was preparing this message, God showed me a virus, a diseased knot lying at the root of all our hearts. It's a seed of fear, and it has to do with our personal security. As I write this [2002], a great cloud of fear is hovering over the earth. People are being plagued by a deep sense of insecurity. In 1974, in my book *The Vision*, I warned that an awful economic storm would come upon the whole earth. I prophesied that business people would turn vicious,

trying to make financial killings. Meanwhile, employees would be laid off by the thousands and investors would be cheated.

It's beginning to happen just as I prophesied. One stockbroker confirmed to me, "Everybody on Wall Street knows the crash is coming. They're grabbing everything they can, building nest eggs and heading for the exits. All we hear now is, 'I've got mine.'"

Meanwhile, the disease has taken root even in Christians. Many quake with fear, worrying, "How will I make it if the economy crashes? How can I feed my family?" They're being defiled by fear. Some even strive for dishonest gain, leaving faithfulness behind. Their mad scramble is causing the greatest denial of Christ in history.

How will you face the coming storm? Will you panic, weep and despair? Will you scheme and scramble for money alongside the rest of the world? In these times, there must be a people of God whose lives confess Jesus as their provider. He's the Rock that withstands all winds and floods. And when the storm comes, we will need to confess him with more than mere words. We need to enter his rest fully to find our soul's peace in him. He must become our refuge, our supply, our security.

Some of the most precious letters our ministry receives are from widows in their eighties and nineties. They live on small Social Security checks, some less than \$600 a month. They write, "God has kept me. He supplies all my needs, stretching my money every month. And he has never failed me. I've never lacked anything I really needed." Jesus says he will confess such servants before the Father.

Would you confess Christ before men? Hide this Word in your heart: "God is our refuge, a very present help in trouble. Therefore we will not fear, though the earth be removed, and though the mountains be carried into the midst of the sea...There is a river, the streams whereof shall make glad the city of God...God is in the midst of her; she shall not be moved: God shall help her, and that right early" (Psalm 46:1-5).

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