

Profession and Confession

by Daniel Steele

The sermon highlights the necessity of confessing Christ as our complete Saviour and the importance of living out that confession in our daily lives.

Scripture: Matthew 10:32, Romans 10:9, Philippians 2:11, Hebrews 4:14, 1 John 4:15, Revelation 5:12

Topics: "Christ Our Savior", "Sanctification And Peace"

Description

Daniel Steele emphasizes the importance of confessing Jesus as the complete and perfect Savior, rather than focusing on self-righteousness or personal achievements. He highlights the need to acknowledge Christ as the source of sanctification, peace, and joy, and to proclaim His greatness to the world. Steele underscores the significance of testifying to the indwelling presence of Christ in believers' lives, demonstrating His power to save and transform. He urges advanced believers to boldly declare the perfection of Christ as the ultimate Savior, worthy of eternal praise and adoration.

Transcript

THERE is in the Christian Church a strong aversion to a profession of entire sanctification. It is easy to ascribe this to the depravity still lingering in Christian hearts, to prejudice, or to a misapprehension of the subject. All of those things aggravate the evil, but they are not an exhaustive statement of the causes. From the whole tenor of the Scriptures, Christians derive the impression that there are only two things to be confessed -- our sins and our Saviour.

Jesus is to be confessed by the penitent seeker as a needed Saviour. Jesus is to be confessed as a pardoning Saviour. This is deemed a vital point. Every skillful pastor urges on the convert this confession by baptism and the Lord's Supper, and by a constant declaration by the tongue of Christ's forgiving grace. Jesus, as a complete Saviour, able to save to the uttermost from fear and doubt and indwelling sin, is to be confessed to his honour, to the praise of the Holy Ghost, the efficient Agent, and to the glory of the Father. Christ should be the direct object of our confessions, and not self as justified, nor self as cleansed, nor self as filled with the Holy Ghost. St. Paul, to be sure, does seem to put self first in his confession of perfected holiness, but he puts self first as nailed to the cross, and then he magnifies Christ, the inward, living and almighty Saviour. "I am crucified with Christ; it is no longer I that live, but Christ liveth in me." There is needless offence given when we profess sanctification instead of humbly confessing Christ, "made unto us sanctification."

If our peace is as the Amazon, deep, broad, and continuous in its flow, it is a great mistake to isolate it from its source, and in our testimony to eclipse Christ, by thrusting our emotions between the hearers and "the light of the world." Thus did not St. Paul, who, though caught up into Paradise and hearing heavenly things unlawful (impossible) to utter, never forgot, to say of Jesus, "He is our peace," He is "the Lord of peace."

The separation of the gift from the Giver, and the exaltation of the gift of purity while leaving the Purifier in the shade, is the fruitful cause of much of the distaste for professions of holiness among good people. Moreover, there is lurking in the words "profess" and "profession" a meaning of pretence, which is not found in the word "confess" and "confession." It is unfortunate, that the words "profess" and "profession," as relating to our acknowledgment of Christ, were not in the New Testament translated "confess" and "confession," since there is but one set of words in the original Greek.

To the confession of Christ there can be none but captious objections: Christ needed, Christ found, Christ saving from sin "unto the uttermost," Christ dwelling within, Christ keeping from falling, Christ the bread of life -- not a crust, but the "whole loaf," as Rutherford confesses -- Christ the well of water in the heart, and Christ a perfectly satisfying portion. But why confess Christ a perfect Saviour? For the same reason that he is to be confessed at all. If he is enthroned within and reigns after all his foes are expelled, let him have the laurels of a conqueror wreathing his brow. This is especially obligatory, since the devil has loudly professed that he has so intrenched himself in the human soul that he is inexpugnable till death's power is added to that of the Son of God. Why not let people find out by our lives instead of our lips that Christ is made unto us sanctification? Why not by the same method let the world discover your apprehension of the forgiving Christ? The answer in both cases is, that Christ himself has appointed the instrument by which he shall be confessed, namely, the mouth, while the life confirms what the lips utter. In this use of the mouth lies the test of our loyalty. The more we find in Christ, the higher this test becomes. There is a philosophy of confession which Jesus did not see fit to develop. He grounded this requirement on his own authority, and not on our discovery of his reasons. Nevertheless, he had reasons which constitute the philosophy of confession.

His Messiahship, his kingship, must be acknowledged. This can no more be done by an upright life than such a life in time of rebellion can evince loyalty to the reigning monarch with no act or word indicative of such loyalty. Jesus was not satisfied with men's good and beautiful lives. He was everywhere propounding the question: "What think ye of Christ? Who do men say that I, the Son of Man, am?" He went about seeking recognition, hungering to be acknowledged in his true character and claims. "If any man confess me before men, him will I confess before my Father."

To the unbelieving world He is dead and buried, and, like Cesar, rules the world only through history, through the train of influences originated by Him, and through the words left behind Him, and not by His personal presence. Yet He promised to be present with believers: "Lo, I am with you alway," -- and not only to be present with us, but also to manifest Himself unto us. This prophecy is false, if there are no witnesses of this spiritual manifestation, no attestation of the incoming of the personal Christ into consciousness, addressing Himself to our spiritual perception. A good outward life cannot convince the world of this fact. Morality can be exemplified on the plane of nature. Thousands are outwardly as pure as Christians while utterly ignoring Christ's claims. But has the risen Jesus made Himself known to any soul by infallible proofs? Bring him to the witness stand. He has important testimony: Let Him open his lips and give to the world proof that its Saviour is invisibly yet gloriously present, that He gives victory over sin, that He is the soul's sanctification, peace, and joy. "The inner life," says Lacordaire, "is the whole man, and

forms all the worth of man. Happily, and thanks to God there are orifices through which our inner life constantly escapes, and the soul, like the blood, hath its pores. The mouth is the chief and foremost of these channels which lead the soul out of its invisible sanctuary; it is by speech that man communicates the secret converse which is his real life." Can any one testify of an indwelling Christ manifesting Himself in the soul's inner life as the purifier of silver? Let him speak and confound an infidel world while he confirms the promise of Christ to make his abode with those who love Him. Let him speak, for there are thousands groaning over the dross discovered within, who are longing to find one able to refine them instantaneously in the consuming fire of His love, without the slow fire of adversity here, or of purgatory hereafter. Let him, by his testimony, make known to an unbelieving Church "the exceeding greatness of Christ's power to us-ward who believe." If the great Physician has thoroughly healed any soul, let him stand forth so that a world full of paralytics may see him, and be induced to apply to Him, and be made "every whit whole."

Therefore all the motives of gratitude to Jesus, and of benefaction to men, conspire to impel advanced believers to seize a speaking-trumpet, mount the housetop, and proclaim to a blind world the greatness of its Redeemer, and to a despairing Church the perfectness of her Saviour, who has demonstrated in their consciousness that He "is able also to save them to the uttermost that come unto God by Him." So long as Jesus, the adorable Son of God, is the object of our confession, we cannot be excessive, for He is the object of eternal confession in heaven. "Worthy is the Lamb that was slain to receive power, and riches, and wisdom, and strength, and honor, and glory, and blessing."

"Jesus is God! If on the earth

This blessed faith decays,

More tender must our love become

More plentiful our praise.

We are not angels, but we may

Down in earth's corners kneel,

And multiply sweet acts of love,

And murmur what we feel."

-- Faber.

Source: <https://sermonindex.net/speakers/daniel-steele/profession-and-confession/>

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