

Saved: God's Plan of Salvation

Week 5: Confessing Jesus as Lord -- Romans 10:8–13; Matthew 10:32–33

There is a moment in every great story when the hero must step into the open and be counted. The disciple who has followed at a distance, the soldier who has hidden in the ranks, the friend who has loved in secret, sooner or later must say out loud what has been true in the heart. Faith, by its nature, does not stay underground forever. What we truly believe eventually reaches our lips. “The word is near you,” Paul says, “in your mouth and in your heart.” Salvation is not meant to be a secret kept behind a closed door. It is meant to be confessed.

Paul puts it as plainly as it can be put: “If you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.” Notice the two together, the heart and the mouth, the inward and the outward. What the heart believes, the mouth confesses. A faith too embarrassed to speak is a faith not yet sure of its Lord. And what we confess is not merely that Jesus is nice, or wise, or historical. We confess that He is Lord, the risen King to whom every knee will one day bow. To say “Jesus is Lord” is to say “and therefore I am not.”

This is no small thing, because the word “Lord” has always had rivals. In the first century, Caesar demanded that title, and Christians died rather than give it to him. In our day the rivals are quieter but no less real: the lordship of self, of comfort, of public opinion. To confess Jesus as Lord in a world that wants you to keep your faith to yourself is still an act of courage. And Jesus does not treat it as optional. “Everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father,” He says, “but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny.”

So this week we come to the good confession, the third great motion of a living faith. Having heard, believed, and turned, the believing heart now opens its mouth and owns its Lord. This is not a one-time performance to be filed away; it is the beginning of a whole life lived out loud for Jesus. Read these verses slowly, and ask yourself whether the faith in your heart has truly reached your lips, and your life.

Group Discussion: Paul says salvation involves confessing “with your mouth that Jesus is Lord” (Romans 10:9). Why do you think God designed faith to be confessed openly rather than kept entirely private? What does it say about a faith that is never willing to be spoken aloud?

Personal Reflection: Think honestly about the places in your life where you are most tempted to keep quiet about Jesus, at work, with certain friends, online, around family. What is really behind that silence, and what would it look like to let your confession of Christ be heard there this week?

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Study Questions

1. Paul says that “if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord... you will be saved” (v. 9). What does it actually mean to confess that “Jesus is Lord,” and why is this confession far more than admitting a historical fact about who Jesus was?
2. To confess Jesus as Lord is to surrender the throne of your own life to Him. Where in your life are you still quietly holding onto the throne, an area where you say “Jesus is Lord” with your mouth but rule as your own lord in practice?
3. Paul joins the heart and the mouth: “with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved” (v. 10). Why does God connect inward belief and outward confession so closely, and what does this teach us about the nature of a genuine, whole-person faith?
4. For many believers, faith stays comfortably internal and private. Is your faith mostly a private matter of the heart, or is it something others around you actually hear you confess? What is one specific way your inward faith could become a visible, spoken confession this week?
5. In Matthew 10:32, Jesus says, “everyone who acknowledges me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father.” What does it mean to acknowledge Jesus “before men,” and why does Jesus tie our confession of Him so directly to His confession of us before the Father?
6. Jesus also warns, “whoever denies me before men, I also will deny” (v. 33). We rarely deny Christ outright, but we often deny Him quietly, through silence, going along with the crowd, or hiding our allegiance. Where are you most tempted to deny Him in these subtle ways, and why?
7. Throughout the New Testament, confessing Jesus as Lord stands as a vital part of coming to salvation, the good confession a believer makes (see Acts 8:37; 1 Timothy 6:12). Why is this open confession a fitting and necessary expression of saving faith, and how does it prepare the way for baptism into Christ?
8. Confessing Christ has always carried a cost, from Caesar’s empire to our own culture. What has confessing Jesus cost you, or what do you fear it might cost you? How does the promise that He will confess you before the Father reframe that cost?
9. To confess “Jesus is Lord” is to make the most total claim a human being can make, that the risen Christ has absolute authority over all of life. How does this confession both express saving faith and lay claim to everything we are, so that it is neither an empty word we say to be saved nor a work we perform to earn salvation, but the wholehearted owning of the Lord we have trusted? And how does genuine confession then shape the whole of the Christian life, not just its beginning?
10. Look back over both passages, the nearness of the word in heart and mouth, and the promise of Christ to acknowledge those who acknowledge Him. Name one specific way Jesus is calling you to confess Him more truly this week, whether by making the good confession for the first time or by living more openly as one who has already owned Him as Lord.

Now or Later

Reflect on these passages: Acts 8:35–38, the Ethiopian’s confession of faith and his baptism; Philippians 2:9–11, every tongue confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord; 1 Timothy 6:12–13, the good confession in the presence of many witnesses; Matthew 16:15–18, Peter’s confession of the Christ; 1 John 4:15, whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him.