

Talking the Walk

True Confessions of a Trusting Heart

August 22, 2021

Normally we focus on walking the talk, but today we're talking about talking the walk, or, true confessions of a trusting heart. But before we get to *that*, ask yourself *this*: **Is your faith worth confessing?** I'm not talking about confessing our sin, but our Savior. Are you aware that there are *two types of confessing Christ*? First, there's the Good Confession:

If you *confess* with your *mouth*, "Jesus is Lord," and *believe* in your *heart* that [He has power over death, since] God raised Him from the dead, *you will be saved*. For it is with your *heart* that you *believe* [Jesus is the Lord of life] and are *justified*, [made acceptable to call on God] and it is with your *mouth* that you [make the call, and] *confess* [what's in your heart] and are *saved*. As the Scripture says, "Anyone who *trusts* in Him will *never be put to shame*." – Romans 10:9-11 NIV



So *that's* the Good Confession that receives salvation. But then **we're called to confess our Good Confession to others**, as a *public* confession of faith. Jesus having said:



"Whoever confesses *Me* before *men*, him *I* will also *confess* before My *Father*" [As opposed to "I never knew you; depart from Me" (Mt 7:23)] – Matthew 10:32 NKJ

"Also I say to you, whoever confesses *Me* before *men*, him the Son of Man also will *confess* before the *angels* of God. – Luke 12:8 NKJ

It's normal to be fearful regarding confessing Jesus as our Lord to those around us, but we must fight the *Good Fight of faith* and overcome our *fear* of sharing our *Good Confession*, because:

"He who *overcomes* shall be clothed in white garments, and I will not *blot out* his *name* from the Book of *Life*; but I will *confess* his *name* before My *Father* and before His *angels*." – Revelation 3:5 NKJ

[Paul encourages Timothy to] Fight the *good* fight of *faith*, lay *hold* on eternal life, [really own that] to which you were also called and have [owned up to it, having] confessed the Good Confession in the presence of many witnesses. – 1 Timothy 6:12 NKJ

On the flip side, many of the *rulers* who *believed* in Jesus (as the Christ/Messiah, but refused to confess Him as Lord in front of their peers for fear of losing their *positions* and *popularity*).

[John says that] Among the *rulers* many *believed* in Him, [as the Christ, the Messiah] but because of the Pharisees they did not confess Him, [lit. they confessed no confession] lest they should be put out of the synagogue; ["For the Jews had already agreed that anyone who confessed Jesus to be the Messiah (the "Good Confession") would be put out of the synagogue." (Jn 9:22 NRS); therefore, even though they believed in Him they *shuddered*

at the thought of *publically confessing* Him] for they loved the praise of *men more* than the praise of *God*. [Whose approval do you most desire?] – John 12:42-43 NKJ



Don't get 'em *wrong*; they *loved* the praise of *God* ... they just loved the praise of peers *more*. Because their peers had that **“zeal without knowledge”** we talked about. But these non-confessors had something *worse*: **knowledge without zeal**. But then, we can probably assume, if you have no zeal to confess your faith, your faith likely isn't *worth* confessing. They are the example of those who believe in Jesus, and “think” the Good Confession, but keep their mouths shut for fear of offending those whose approval they dysfunctionally desire more than their Creator's. But **it's not called the Good Thought, or the Good Feeling. It's called the Good Confession**. So *these* fearful leaders tried believing without confessing; but did you know there were some foolish religious rulers who tried *confessing* without *believing*! Funny story. You see, the ...

[Seven sons of Sceva, a Jewish chief priest] tried to invoke the name of the *Lord Jesus* over those who were demon-possessed. [But they couldn't say “the Lord Jesus”, so] They would say, “In the *name* of Jesus, whom *Paul* preaches, I command you to come out.” ... One day the evil spirit *answered* them, “Jesus I know, and I know about Paul, but who are you?” Then the man who had the evil spirit ... gave them such a beating that they *ran* out of the house *naked* and *bleeding*. ... and the *name* of the *Lord Jesus* was held in *high honor*. *Many* of those who *believed* now came and *openly confessed* their *evil deeds*. A number who had *practiced sorcery* [began practicing *righteousness* and] brought their scrolls *together* and burned them *publicly*. ... *In this way* the Word of the Lord *spread widely* and *grew* in *power*. – Acts 19:13-20 NIV

The most powerful way to share is to show the difference Jesus is making in our lives when we make Him our Lord. And our openness demonstrates our faith in the love of the Lord who makes us unafraid and unashamed to be transparent – in stark contrast to the bondage of this world. I like calling it *confessing* Christ. Because it not only carries the idea of offering the Good News about Jesus, but also of *admitting* the faults and flaws that we're not proud of. **Christianity's greatest proof is the new person it's producing**. “But what if they don't see it as good news?” How's that *your* business? **We're responsible for the presentation, not the response**.

I used to work with a woman who practiced sorcery. She was a self-proclaimed white witch. Like Glinda on the Wizard of Oz! This was back when I was going to college and I used to work with feet. I was in charge of children's shoes at Bullock's Department store in Sherman Oaks. The sorceress worked in children's clothing, next to me. I've always *enjoyed* being around *unbelievers*. I'm not *threatened* by *unbelief*, or *offended* by *worldly ways*, **I'm curious and fascinated and concerned**. And if you're a practicing *witch*, I have questions. *Lots* of questions! I was *genuinely* interested in finding out what *she* believed and why.

And at some point she began asking what I believed and why. And I readily shared, along with my faults and flaws and fears. I was only there a few months. And it didn't appear that I was having *any* impact. But when I told her I was leaving, the "witch" told this Christian college boy that I was one of her only *real* friends. And asked why I had to go.

To lighten the moment, I said, "The Lord said my work here is done." And she broke into tears and said, "I prayed for the first time, last night, and asked the Lord to give me whatever it is you have." Then, I broke into tears. So much for lightening the mood!

That demon story is comical because *that* thing had more *faith* than the guys trying to cast it out!

[Brother James says] Even the *demons believe*—and *shudder!* – James 2:19 ESV

And [get a load of *this*, Luke writes that] demons also came out of many, *crying out* and saying, "You are the Christ, [a.k.a. *Messiah*] the Son of God!" – Luke 4:41 NKJ

Not only do the demons believe, they weren't afraid to publically confess Jesus as the Christ! So what's the *difference*? And how do I know that I'm doing more than the demons? In a word: *TRUST*. Notice the *one* title they left out? *LORD!* **You can believe without trusting.** Like the fearful. **You can confess without trusting.** Like the phonies. But **you can't trust without truly believing and openly confessing.** First we gotta walk the talk. But then we gotta talk the walk! Because **it's vital that we verbalize our faith.** Because that's what makes it *our* faith!

Scripture says, "Anyone who trusts in Him will never be put to shame." (Rom 10:11)

Oh, people will *try* to shame you. Jesus said:

"If the world hates you, keep in mind that it hated Me first." – John 15:18 NIV

Oddly comforting. Because, try as they *might*, I *can't* be put to shame for my trust in Christ! That's the difference between me and the demons. I believe and trust. They "believe and shudder". So I hope *you* don't shudder at the thought of being *shamed* for sharing your faith, because **a trusting heart is eager to make a true confession.** Know why? Because ...

Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved. [That's the whole goal. And now Paul reverse engineers it] How, then, can *they call* on the One they have not believed in? And how can they *believe* in the One of whom they have not *heard*? And how can they *hear* without *someone preaching* to them? And how can they *preach* unless they are *sent*? As it is written, "How beautiful are the *feet* of *those* who bring good news!" [Who's being sent and who's doing the sending?] – Romans 10:13-15 NIV

[Jesus said] "As the Father has sent Me, I am sending you." [Oh] – John 20:21 NIV



So sharing what He's doing, as Lord of your life, isn't an *option*, it's an *assignment!* Because **the responsibility of salvation is to pass it on.** That's our faithworks. And that's how faith works.

"In this way the Word of the Lord spread widely and grew in power."

We *can't* be *ashamed* to politely proclaim the Lord of our life, because there's no such thing as a *secret* child of God. Has your curiosity and concern matured into a desire to see them saved?

How beautiful are your feet? I can tell you what size shoe you need, but your foot appeal is between you and Jesus ... and of course the lost He's seeking.

[Paul is quoting Isaiah; here it is in context] How beautiful upon the mountains are the feet of Him who brings Good News, who proclaims peace, who brings glad tidings of good things, who proclaims salvation – Isaiah 52:7 NKJ

Notice the difference between Isaiah's "feet" and Paul's? Paul changes "the feet of *him*" to "the feet of *those*". Isaiah is referring to *the* messenger of the "Good News" "who proclaims salvation", which Isaiah follows with his most famous and detailed prophecy of Jesus' death and resurrection. And Jesus' *name* in Hebrew, Yeshua, is the word "salvation". "How beautiful ... are the feet of Him who brings Good News ... who proclaims Yeshua". Which the Father sent Yeshua to do; and Yeshua did, and now sends His followers to follow in His footsteps.



So **how beautiful are your feet?** It's got nothing to do with aesthetics. The One who brought the Good News traveled on foot, sometimes bare, sometimes sandals. No arch supports. His dogs were quite likely calloused and scarred. But beauty here is truly in the eye of the beholder.



This rusty old boat isn't much to *look* at, but if it took a risk and rescued you from certain death, and brought much needed relief in the process," you'd later tell the story, saying, "That boat was the most beautiful thing I'd ever seen!" Because **true beauty is based on the life that we bring.**



Those stompers inside your boat shoes might not be much to look at, but if they're bringing someone who's offering genuine relief from guilt and shame, and real rescue from sin and death, not to mention love and joy and peace, they are a sight to *behold* ... according to *Nahum*.

Behold, on the mountains the feet of him who brings *good* news, – Nahum 1:15 NAS

Know why God leaves us here *after* we're saved? Well, **there are two things we can't do in Heaven: sin; and share our faith with those who need relief.**

And He sure didn't leave us here to *sin*!

On any given Sunday there are three types sitting in church: 1) **Confessors who aren't believers**, and 2) **Believers who aren't confessors**, and 3) **God's children**. You see, confessors *must* believe in their heart; and believers *must* confess in their world. Because:

To *all* who received Him, [with the Good Confession] who believed in His name, [Jesus Christ my Lord] He gave *power* to become *children* of God ... – John 1:12 NRS

... who are ready and raring when it comes to sharing the *true* confession of a *trusting* heart.