

SALVATION MADE SIMPLE

Romans 10:9-10

Salvation is needed by all. It is offered to all who will receive it. The Jew, the Gentile, the American, the European, the Asiatic, the African, and the man from the islands of the seas may be saved by grace through faith in Christ. One does not need an unusual education, extensive knowledge, extraordinary talent, or exceptional ability to become a Christian. Men, women and children, from the earliest days of accountability to the last hours of mortal existence, are cordially invited to receive Christ as their Saviour, and will be saved when they do. The way of salvation is simple, clear and understandable. We are not saved by our opinions, theories, churches, ordinances or works. We are saved by Christ. He is the only Saviour.

Some people think they can be saved by respectability, morality and culture, but they are sadly mistaken. That idea is strictly the product of their own imagination. They are like the old Spaniard, Ponce de Leon, who hunted around among the Florida Everglades and thought he was going to find a fountain that would give him perpetual youth when he drank the waters. He believed that drinking from that fountain would smooth out the wrinkles, cause the gray hair to become black, and straighten up the stooped shoulders. But he did not find it. Why? Simply because such a fountain of youth was only the hallucination of a deluded imagination. It was only in his mind. Some of you, who are not saved, imagine you are going to find salvation for your souls in staying out of jail, being decent, and paying your debts, but you will never be saved until you believe on Christ as your Saviour.

I. What Does It Mean To Believe With The Heart?

Paul said, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness." There is a difference between head belief and heart belief. You may believe many things with your head, and not believe them in your heart. With your head you may believe many things that you do not welcome. Your judgment may be convinced, and you may give an intellectual assent to certain propositions, and even say, "It is true, but I wish it were not. It is a fact, but I am sorry that it is a fact." But, when you believe with your heart, you receive some truth, and you are glad that it is true. Time and again you have sung, "Jesus loves me, this I know, For the Bible tells me so." Are you glad that Christ loves you? Do you want Him to love you? Frequently a person is entirely indifferent to the affections of another. There is a possibility that you love somebody who does not love you. Does your heart respond to this by saying,

"I am so glad that our Father in heaven
Tells of His love in the Book He has given.
Wonderful things in the Bible I see;
This is the dearest that Jesus loves me."

Are you glad that the Bible has told you that you are a sinner? Are you glad that it has told you that God has provided a way whereby your sins can be forgiven? Are you willing to receive Christ as your Saviour? The reception of Christ as Saviour really involves the surrender of the heart and the life to Him. How few of those who call themselves Christians today really give any evidence that they have made Christ their Lord! They seldom, if ever, speak of Him in their business, social, recreational or religious activities. They can go for months and years without bearing any testimony

to Him at all. They can spend a lifetime without introducing a soul to Christ. It is such church members who are free with their criticism of the church and talk about how few baptisms their church has. If all the members were like them, there never would be a baptism. It is the privilege and duty of every child of God to lead others to Christ, to baptism, and to church membership. The most useful Christians do it. Those who complain about it not being done merely advertise the fact that they do not even attempt to do any of it.

The person who believes in his head, but not with his heart, is the one about whom Christ was talking when He said, "Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Luke 6:46). The person who believes in his heart and then confesses with his mouth is the one who delivers the goods.

A belief in the heart always manifests itself in an absolute trust in the object of its faith. You can believe all that you want to about Christ and go out into eternity, but not to heaven, with your head full of belief like that. It is belief on Christ in your heart that leads you to trust Him and to commit yourself to Him in order to be saved.

Alexander the Great had a favorite doctor who accompanied him in all his battles. Somebody, who was jealous of this doctor and wanted to get him out of the way, wrote Alexander a letter saying that his doctor was going to put poison in his cup the next morning. He thought the great general would order the doctor put to death at once, but the very next morning when they were all together Alexander read the letter to them and before the doctor could reply he seized the cup and drained it before their eyes to show his friend, the doctor, that he believed on him with all his heart and was ready to trust his life in his hands. A man can believe in his head and you will never know it unless he tells you, but when a man believes in his heart his life will speak louder than any words can sound.

What is one to believe in his heart? That Christ died for our sins, that He was buried, and that God raised Him from the dead and out of the grave. Since the resurrection of Christ is the very heart and climax of the gospel, and the keystone of the Christian faith, it is not surprising that Satan has been doing his best to get people to doubt and to dispute the fact that Christ arose. On the basis of the fact that Christ arose from the dead, and that His living presence and power may be known and experienced by those who will repent of their sins and receive Him as their Saviour, those who receive Him and yield themselves to Him are happily saved.

II. What Does It Mean To Confess With The Mouth?

It does not mean to confess Christ with the mouth as a mere man, or as a great teacher, or as the supreme example, but to confess that He is now your Saviour and Lord. What sort of Lord? Lord of all and over everything.

1. Why should we confess Christ with the mouth?

(1) It is a duty.

- a. Faithfulness to Christ demands it. Most people do not trust and love Christ. They are ashamed to be considered as His disciples. To them becoming a Christian is a mark of weakness. Fidelity to our Lord in this

Christ-rejecting world demands that Christians openly and constantly confess themselves as belonging to Christ and being on His side. If you do not confess that you are His, the world will count you as belonging to it. Faithfulness to Christ demands an open confession of Him as Saviour and Lord.

- b. In Matthew 10:32-33 our Lord tells us plainly that we must confess Him before men or be denied by Him at last before His Father. "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." One should count it the highest honor to be able to acknowledge publicly, "I belong to Christ." It would be better to be able to say that truthfully than to confess having royal blood in the veins or great riches in the bank. It is often the fear of being an object of ridicule that keeps a person from confessing Christ. In other cases it is a fear of social exclusion that keeps one from it.
- c. Gratitude demands it. For us Christ left all, became poor, toiled, wept, suffered, bled and died. Because He gave His all for us, gratitude demands that we confess Him everywhere and always.

(2) It is a necessity.

- a. As an accompaniment of salvation. Confession of Christ is an evidence of saving faith.
- b. As a means of spiritual development.
 - (a) Confession brings deeper convictions of God's favor.
 - (b) Confession causes an increase in faith.
 - (c) Confession increases our love for Christ.
 - (d) Confession helps to keep us separated from the world.

(3) It is a privilege.

- a. In that it confers honor upon the one who confesses Christ.
- b. In that it enables us to assist in winning others to Christ.
- c. In that it leads to rewards.

III. How Does Christ Expect Us To Confess Him?

(1) With our lips.

Confessing Christ is to acknowledge to others with the lips that He is our Saviour and Lord, that we have been saved by Him and that we are His disciples. It is a personal acknowledgement of the Lordship of Christ.

(2) In baptism.

In our baptism we proclaim that Christ was buried and is now risen. It also implies that we have buried the old life of sin and have been raised to walk in newness of life in Christ Jesus.

(3) By joining the church.

Christ wants those whom He has saved to unite with the church, therein to be taught and trained for useful Christians. When united in fellowship and efforts with those whom the Lord has saved and added to the church we can do far more for Christ in preaching the gospel, teaching Christians, helping the needy and winning the lost.

(4) By consistent Christian living.

Words without works will be recognized quickly by the world as being only a sham.

IV. Where Should We Confess Christ?

(1) At home.

(2) In the church.

(3) At our work.

(4) In our recreations.

(5) Wherever we go.

This we ought to do for our own sakes, for the sake of others and for the sake of Christ Who has saved us.