

AGGRESSIVE CONFESSION

By

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The popular concept of Christian faith is that of a religion that is tranquil, satisfying, and congenial, something that lulls to rest our anxieties and give to all a mantle of neutrality.

This concept is the absolute antithesis of true Christianity. The Christian faith is a religion of conflict and self-denial; of bloody crucifixion and ugly persecution; of holy saints in prison and their leaders with their heads on the chopping block. Christ was the center of controversy, sometimes being thrown out of the community in shame and disgrace. After only three and one half years of ministry the world considered Him to be worthy of death, the shameful death of crucifixion. Jesus said, "Everyone therefore who shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father who is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father who is in heaven" (Matt. 10:32–33). This expression came upon the heels of Christ's warning that they would be persecuted as He was and that they should not be afraid of those who would kill them. Obviously Jesus was not simply referring to making the good confession in front of the membership of the church as one is received into its fellowship. Jesus was talking about aggressive confession in the face of a hostile world, not merely to other Christians but to those who are antagonistic to Christ. Not something confined to the saints assembled on Sunday morning, but a confession of your faith and of your Christian ethics at the Monday morning conference table, at the business meeting, at the sales counter.

A prominent politician made a public statement that he had his own faith between himself and God and that's where it would stay. He certainly would not try to impose it upon anyone else. This line of thought has seeped into the church so that its members feel no compulsion to take a stand for their faith in the office and in the marketplace or among their friends in society. The best way to prove you are a good Christian is to keep quiet about it !!

We must not think that we will be respected and honored for our stand as we now honor Stephen, Paul, Peter and the rest of them. At the time they were making their confession they were looked upon as fools, unpatriotic, and as enemies of the community. Only a handful of people mourned the untimely death of John the Baptist. Most citizens probably thought that he got what he deserved. The same is true of Peter and Paul and other Christians of the first century. For confessing Christ in the face of the popularity of neutrality and humanism of our present society one need not expect glory and honor from those about him.

It may not seem practical to **always** confess Christ and to bring His commandments to bear upon **every** situation. However, we do not live by pragmatism, but by faith, so we confess Christ in all circumstances and know this is right, because it is what He said to do.

The good confession is not merely a confession that you believe in Jesus; it is a confession that you are His disciple, that you will follow Him against the current of the world and that His teaching and judgment is true.

It is not easy to apply the confession that “Christ is Lord” to our pluralistic society. The general cop-out is to say that He is “my personal Lord” which sounds like saying that He is my “pet Lord.” One then can bow to the state, to the school, to the club, to one’s peers or whatever, and still confess that Jesus is his Lord. But what Christ claims is that He is Lord over all and His law applies to the state, the school, the club and all society. Either they operate by His commandments or they are in rebellion against Him and opposed to those who confess Him as Lord.

The antichrists have tremendous power and influence in our day. They control the media, and have the largest lobby in government. One of their best devices is to convince everyone that he should keep his religion to himself, especially if he is a Christian. But how can one be a Christian engineer or a Christian salesman, or a Christian teacher and not be a witness to his faith as it applies to that particular profession? It is right there, where you earn your bread, where you rub shoulders with atheists, where you meet with them mind-to-mind, where your expertise in your own field is examined, — it is right there in the midst of the pagan world where you are to be salt and light a witness to your faith in Christ. And if one will not confess Christ there, then he has denied Him.

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