

Matthew 16:13-27: Confronting Our Confession

Attention

1. Who is Jesus of Nazareth? People answer this question many different ways.
 - a. Some believe that He was a prophet, a good man, a moral teacher, one of many holy men.
 - b. Many believe He was and is the Son of God, the Savior, the One who died and rose never to die again.
2. Many would confess faith in Jesus as God's Son, but do we understand the implications of such a confession?
 - a. Is it possible for someone to know who Jesus is, but not know the practical affect of that knowledge?
 - b. It is possible for us to believe in Jesus but fail to understand what believing really means. **Mt. 16:13-27**
[Proposition] *Confessing faith in Christ not only defines His role, it defines my role in relation to Him.*

I. Real Faith Believes in Jesus (13-20)

A. *Who is Jesus?*

1. Peter was the bold apostle. He was the one the rest could always count on to say something.
 - a) It is no surprise that Peter was the first on this occasion to confess his faith in Jesus.
 - b) Peter was bold, never bashful, which makes his later denial of Jesus all the more ironic.
2. Jesus asked two questions in this text: What do men say about Me? What do *you* say about Me?
 - a) We each must consider the evidence and make a personal decision about Jesus.
 - b) I want to hear all sides, but it doesn't really matter what anyone else thinks.
3. Each of us must decide for ourselves: What do I believe about Jesus, and why?
 - a) How we answer that question will determine the entire course of our lives.
 - b) One day I'll be judged by God; another's faith can't save me then; it will not save me now.

B. *Faith Involves Conviction*

1. Biblical faith believes in the unseen, but it is not a blind, ignorant faith.
 - a) Faith is based on evidence; it reasons from what is known to what is unseen but knowable.
 - b) Real faith is confident; it is not an insurance policy; faith is absolutely convicted of the truth.
2. There are only three logical possibilities: Jesus was a liar, a lunatic, or He is the Lord!
 - a) Are you convicted of the truth of Jesus? Do you *know* with all your heart that He is Lord?
 - b) Faith is the product of conviction, not convenience. *Why* do you believe Jesus is Lord?
3. Real faith believes in Jesus; the believer is convicted and convinced of who Jesus is; but also...

II. Real Faith Trusts in Jesus (21-23)

A. *Will You Accept What He Says?*

1. Peter said the right things about Jesus; he believed the right things.
 - a) But he did not fully understand the implications of what he believed and said.
 - b) Immediately after confessing Jesus as God's Son, the text says Peter began to rebuke Him!
2. Observing the scene as an outsider, it is easy to see Peter's error in trying to correct the Lord.
 - a) But imagining ourselves in Peter's sandals, would we have spoken or acted differently?
 - b) Do we ever see Jesus' words as idealistic or hyperbolic and feel the need to tone it down?
3. Jesus' words sound harsh; He refers to one of His closest, boldest disciples as *Satan!*
 - a) Peter wasn't focusing on God; he was deferring to his own sense of right, not the Lord's.
 - b) Worldliness is an offense to God; it is satanic; believers walk by faith, not by sight.

B. *Faith Involves Trust*

1. Biblical faith not only believes God, it believes what He says; it trusts His word is right.
 - a) Jesus said some things that are difficult to hear, things that not everyone will accept.
 - b) The way to life is narrow and difficult; God's wisdom is rejected by the "wise" of the world.
2. If Jesus is, indeed, God's Son, if He is the Lord, then we have no choice but to accept His truth.
 - a) I can cherry pick the words of philosophers, accepting some while dismissing others.
 - b) I cannot, must not, do so with God's words; it is all or nothing; if He is true, His words are.
3. Real faith believes in Jesus, it is a matter of conviction; real faith trusts Jesus; but also...

III. Real Faith Surrenders to Jesus (24-27)

A. *Will You Obey What He Commands?*

1. It is no coincidence that Jesus' very next words go to the heart of true discipleship.
 - a) What Peter believed was right; what Peter said was right, but Peter still didn't understand.
 - b) Peter still had too much of himself in view; faith not only identifies Jesus, it identifies me.
2. I must surrender self if I want to follow Jesus; if Jesus is Lord, then I am a servant, His slave.
 - a) Do not underestimate the importance of our confession – it is the key to the Christian life.
 - b) If I know who Jesus is then I know who I am and where I stand: at His feet, ready to serve.
3. If we are focused on this life, we cannot please God; we must lose our lives to live eternally.
 - a) Discipleship demands total submission of self to the will of God; we must fully surrender.
 - b) My life can no longer be my own; I am nothing; Christ is everything; my will is to do His.

B. *Faith Involves Obedience*

1. Man can only be saved by faith, but faith is only real when demonstrated in obedience to God.
 - a) From beginning to end this truth is affirmed: Abel, Noah, Abraham, Moses, Joshua, David.
 - b) Faith is not just words spoken; it is not merely a feeling in the heart; faith is a way of living.
2. There is no salvation without grace, no grace without faith, no faith without obedience.
 - a) It's not enough to know who Jesus is; I must accept what He says and act upon it.
 - b) It may be hard to accept; Jesus' words may offend me, like Peter, but faith puts self aside.
3. Conviction, trust, and complete surrender: These are the components of faith and its demands.

Action

1. Do you believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God? Have you accepted the implications of this confession?
 - a. Anyone can say they believe in Jesus, but those words are to forever change our lives.
 - b. If you believe He is the Lord, you must trust Him, trust what He says is best, and obey it.
2. Are you following Christ on your own terms, or have you fully and truly accepted His? **Mk. 16:16; 1Pe. 3:21**