

Session 33: Confessing God's Name

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 33)

1 Kings 8:33 *When thy people Israel be smitten down before the enemy, because they have sinned against thee, and shall turn again to thee, **and confess thy name**, and pray, and make supplication unto thee in this house:*

When they 'confess God's name,' and turning from their sin, they were acknowledging who God was, that he had the ability to deliver them from their affliction.

So when Paul wrote Romans 10:9-10 and said, "thou shalt confess with thy mouth"...what?

They are to confess 'the Lord Jesus.' Hence this aspect of confession is not so much about confessing sin as it is acknowledging who Jesus is and what he can do.

In this case, it is acknowledging Jesus as the Lord. It is acknowledging that forgiveness of sins is in him; that the righteousness they need is obtained through faith in him.

In the Old Testament, when Israel needed to restore their relationship with Jehovah God, they were to 'confess God's name' as part of their prayer.

What was the solution to Israel's sinning against God and injuring their relationship with him? How could they fix that? Answer: they were to turn from their sin and confess his name.

So again, what does it mean to 'confess God's name?' First of all, confessing the name is not just saying the name. (It is not a magic phrase like 'abra kadabra' or 'open sesame' or clicking your heels together three times while saying 'There is no place like home').

When a guy accidentally bangs his finger with a hammer and he exclaims, 'Jesus!' he is not confessing the Lord's name; he is not justified unto eternal life because he said the name.

Second, confessing the name is more than just confessing that God exists. Satan believes God exists, but that does not save him.

To confess God's name means to confess something about him. To "call upon the name of the Lord" is to call upon God as the one who is 'gracious and merciful and forgiving, etc.,' to forgive and restore them. The issue of God's name is to acknowledge who God is and what he can do.

Hence, in Romans 10, Paul was not talking about them merely saying Jesus' name out loud. He was say they should confess something about him; something they knew about for 1500 years

because it was in their scriptures, which was why Paul said, "...it is in your heart and in your mouth."

Now turn with me to John's gospel. The Jews sought to kill Jesus because of who he claimed to be.

***Romans 10:8** But what saith it? The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth, and in thy heart: that is, the word of faith, which we preach;*

John 5:18** Therefore the Jews sought the more to kill him, because he not only had broken the sabbath, but said also **that God was his Father, making himself equal with God.

When we get to John 8, look at the conversation between Jesus and the people.

***John 8:23** And he said unto them, Ye are from beneath; I am from above: ye are of this world; I am not of this world. ²⁴I said therefore unto you, that ye shall die in your sins: for if ye believe not that I am he, ye shall die in your sins. ²⁵Then said they unto him, Who art thou? And Jesus saith unto them, Even the same that I said unto you from the beginning.*

The question is, "from the beginning" of what?

We already know who he said he was at the beginning of his ministry: the Son of God.

There is a bit of a twist to what Jesus said, in John 8, when the people asked him: "Who art thou?"

Jesus said he was the same that he said to them from the beginning. But this time, I want you to see that he could just as well have been pointing back to the beginning of their program: as proclaimed in the scriptures.

***John 5:39** Search the scriptures; for in them ye think ye have eternal life: and they are they which testify of me.*

Whenever they asked Jesus who he was, instead of answering directly, he kept pointing them back to their scriptures. He pointed them to the scriptures so they could see for themselves that he was the prophesied Christ (Messiah) of Israel.

In other words, Jesus prompted them to look at what their scriptures said about the Messiah and then they were to analyze what he said and what he did, and then come to a conclusion about who he was.

The problem was not lack of evidence that Jesus was the Christ. The problem was that Israel did not believe their own scriptures about their Messiah; therefore, they rejected Jesus.

John 8:58 *Jesus said unto them, Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am.*

That should make you think of Exodus 3 where God revealed his name.

Now just think about what that means. If Jesus existed before Abraham, then what did that mean? It meant he was eternal. And who was the only One who was eternal? God! Therefore, Jesus was making himself equal with God because he was God.

On top of that, Jesus comes along and uses the exact same name as the one God revealed to Abraham! The “I AM” was the issue of being eternal!

As we turn to John 20, let me remind you of what Paul was doing in Romans 10; he was exposing Israel’s heart condition of unbelief.

John 20:30 *And many other signs truly did Jesus in the presence of his disciples, which are not written in this book: ³¹ But these are written, that ye might believe that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God; and that believing ye might **have life through his name.***

Oh, look at that last phrase, “...and that believing ye might have life through ...” what – “through his name!”

Now, let us take this back to Romans 10.

In Romans 10, Paul was writing about unbelieving Israel. The time was during the dispensation of Gentile grace. Israel’s program had stopped and Israel was ‘diminishing.’ Romans 10 was written about the Acts transitional phase of Paul’s “to the Jew first” ministry.

No doubt, this was what Paul was preaching when he went into those synagogues.

Let us tie up all the loose ends and bring the doctrine together.

Romans 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 34: Confessing the Lord Jesus Romans 10:9-10

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 34)

Mike briefly reviews last week's notes and discussion for first 5:25 minutes.

Confessing the Lord Jesus is confessing that Jesus is the Lord; he is the Lord's Christ; he is the prophesied Messiah for Israel; he is the Redeemer; he is who he claimed to be; he is the One the Scriptures described. This confession set them apart from the unbelieving element in Israel.

Romans 10:9 *That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.*

Now, let us talk about this second phrase. Why does Paul put this phrase in there? I mean, if you confess that the historical Jesus of Nazareth is the Christ, is the Lord, then why should Paul include the issue of God raising him from the dead?

Well, they all knew that Jesus had been crucified and put to death. But remember, that after his resurrection, Jesus appeared to believers only. Since no unbeliever ever saw him after his resurrection, there were only stories they heard.

Nevertheless, all of the preaching from that point onward contained the fact of Jesus' resurrection. Therefore, when we get to Romans 10, Paul makes the resurrection part of what unsaved Israel was to believe in order to be saved.

The resurrection was not part of the gospel of the kingdom. The gospel of the kingdom focused on believing that Jesus was Christ.

I want you to understand something here, so let us turn to John 3. The common verse that many people think of today when it comes to being saved is John 3:16. It has been called 'the gospel in a nutshell.'

John 3:16 *For God so loved the world, that he gave his only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth in him should not perish, but have everlasting life.*

Genesis 12:1 *Now the LORD had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will shew thee: ² And I will make of thee a great nation, and I will bless thee, and make thy name great; and thou shalt be a blessing: ³ And I will bless them that bless thee,*

and curse him that curse him that curseth thee: and in thee shall all families of the earth be blessed.

Genesis 18:17 *And the LORD said, Shall I hide from Abraham that thing which I do; ¹⁸ Seeing that Abraham shall surely become a great and mighty nation, and all the nations of the earth shall be blessed in him?*

If we skip down just a couple of verses, we have the belief issue coming up again.

John 3:18 *He that **believeth on him** is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not **believed in the name** of the only begotten Son of God.*

There is the “name” issue again. Believing in his name was not only believing properly about who he was, but also about what he was doing.

It is important to understand that John 3:16 is not the gospel for today; it is not the gospel of the grace of God which Paul preached and which we believed. Because we know the gospel of Christ today, we read that understanding into this verse. But John is not preaching the death, burial, and resurrection of Jesus.

The book of John is focusing on the heart issue that will give Israel the power to become the sons of God.

John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that **believe on his name**:*

Notice the issue of “his name” again. To “believe on his name” is to believe Jesus was the prophesied Christ of Israel.

Space for personal reflection and notes

Session 35: Israel Thinks Differently

(Note: Mike refers to this under the old system as Establishment, Part 8, Session 35)

In John 3, Israel was informed that it was not going to be enough to be a physical descendent of Abraham, but they needed something spiritual to take place; the “circumcision of the heart” to take place. That was the ‘born again’ issue that came to them by faith.

John 1:12 *But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that **believe on his name**:*

However, there is another difference. When we think of eternal life, we think of ‘going to heaven when we die.’ But that is not how an Israelite thought of eternity.

For Israel, eternal life was life in a kingdom. They will be resurrected to live forever in a kingdom on this earth. That is why the land was promised to them forever. By the way, implicit in the promise that they will possess the land forever was the idea that they will live forever. God did not say they would possess the land for as long as they lived, but they would possess it forever.

What I am saying is that “everlasting life” is implied in the promise that God made to Abraham. So, for an Israelite, everlasting life was right here on the earth, as part of that “great nation.”

That everlasting life is going to be received “by faith.” What gives us eternal life is also obtained “by faith,” and that is the sense in which we are all ‘children of Abraham.’

Now, in either program, the way a man is to put his faith in what God says: is through God’s word. Do not confuse ‘faith’ with sincerity. A man may be sincere, but sincerely wrong. Faith requires believing, trusting, and resting in what God says to you.

For an Israelite in the days of the Messiah, God said to believe in his Son. For a member of the body of Christ today, God says to trust in the finished work of Christ as all sufficient to satisfy God’s wrath and give us eternal life.

Paul’s gospel was about the sufficiency of Christ’s death, burial, and resurrection to satisfy God’s justice against us. In response to our faith in Christ’s work, God forgives our sins, imputes God’s perfect righteousness to us and makes us ‘at one’ with God. All of those aspects of our new identity in Christ comprise our justification unto eternal life.

Because of what we already know about Jesus’ shed blood on the cross, we ‘read the cross into John 3:16, but that verse is not talking about the cross at all. John 3:16 is not asking anyone to believe in the death, burial, and resurrection or the shed blood of Jesus Christ. It is asking them to believe in him as the Christ: the Son of God.

Romans 11:7 What then? Israel hath not obtained that which he seeketh for; but the election hath obtained it, and the rest were blinded

Think of the time element of that narrative; what John recorded was taking place during the earthly ministry of Jesus. Jesus had not yet died on the cross and John was not asking anyone to look forward to the cross. What was John asking them to do? He was saying that whosoever believed in Jesus (as the Son of God; the prophesied Messiah) would have everlasting life.

However, what did John mean when he said, “believe in him?” He meant for them to believe that Jesus was who he said he was and doing exactly what the scriptures said he, as Christ, would do.

Let us go back to the issue of resurrection. For Paul said, “...believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved.”

Did Peter ever preach the resurrection? He did. When Peter preached the resurrection it was not about proclaiming the gospel of grace through the finished work of Jesus in his death, burial, and resurrection. It was about fulfilling the Old Testament prophecies that God would raise up his Christ to sit on the throne of David in the kingdom!

For example, when Peter was preaching on the day of Pentecost (following the ascension of Jesus back to the Father), Peter mentions the resurrection. But Peter does not talk about the resurrection like Paul does.

*Acts 2:29 Men and brethren, let me freely speak unto you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his sepulchre is with us unto this day. ³⁰ Therefore being a prophet, and knowing **that God had sworn with an oath to him, that of the fruit of his loins, according to the flesh, he would raise up Christ to sit on his throne;***

When Peter preached the resurrection, he did so to demonstrate that the prophetic scriptures concerning the Christ were fulfilled in Jesus. Sitting back in Psalm 16, David wrote of a promise that God gave concerning his Christ; that his flesh would not see corruption.

Couple this with what Peter said in Acts 2:30; that God swore an oath to David saying that he (God) would raise up Christ to sit on David’s throne.

If you heard that God would raise up Christ to sit on David’s throne, what did that imply? Or rather, what did it necessitate? In order to be “raised up,” one would first have to be dead.

In addition, if David said that Christ would not see “corruption,” what did that imply? When did a body see corruption? Answer: after it was dead. So the implication was that Christ was going to die and his body would be dead long enough for it to begin to corrupt; but the promise was that his body would not see corruption.

You see, if Israel had believed their own scriptures, they would have known that their Messiah was going to come to them; that he was going to die; that God was going to raise him from the dead. And when he did, Christ's body would not have seen corruption.

As Peter preaches in Acts 2, he quotes David in Psalm 16.

*Acts 2:31 He seeing this before **spake of the resurrection of Christ**, that his soul was not left in hell, neither his flesh did see corruption.*

Peter knows what Psalm 16 is about. He knows that Jesus' flesh did not see corruption because he saw it with his own eyes.

*Acts 2:32 This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof **we all are witnesses**.*

You know what Peter is doing? He is offering proof that Jesus of Nazareth was the Christ! He is demonstrating that what happened with him matches what the scriptures said concerning Christ.

Therefore, Peter ends his sermon with this:

*Acts 2:36 Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, **both Lord and Christ**.*

We understand that God has made Jesus to be Christ, but what does Peter mean that God has made him Lord? Just back up in Acts 2 and see it. Because if Peter says that Jesus is "Lord" then he is saying that he is very God.

*Acts 2:34 For David is not ascended into the heavens: but he saith himself, **The LORD said unto my Lord**, Sit thou on my right hand, ³⁵Until I make thy foes thy footstool.*

The LORD (the Father) said unto my Lord (the Son). David admitted that this Christ was his Lord and that God had made him Lord. In other words, Jesus was God in the flesh. That is exactly what John writes about in his gospel.

John 1:1 In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.

In John 3:16, they were not being asked to believe in Jesus' shed blood on the cross, they were being asked to believe that he was the Christ: the Messiah of Israel. That is not what we are asked to believe.

If all we believe today is that Jesus was the prophesied Christ, we are on our way to hell. We can believe that Jesus lived, we can believe he is the Son of God, and we can even believe that he died on the cross, but if we do not trust that his finished work on the cross is the only thing we

need to trust for our salvation, then we can believe all those things and still wind up in the lake of fire.

Today, in this dispensation of Gentile grace, the gospel of the grace of God asks us to believe something different from just believing he is the Christ.

Paul gives us our gospel in 1 Corinthians 15.

1 Corinthians 15:1 Moreover, brethren, ***I declare unto you the gospel which I preached unto you, which also ye have received, and wherein ye stand;*** ***2*** ***By which also ye are saved, if ye keep in memory what I preached unto you, unless ye have believed in vain.*** ***3*** ***For I delivered unto you first of all that which I also received, how that **Christ died** for our sins according to the scriptures;*** ***4*** ***And that **he was buried**, and that **he rose again** the third day according to the scriptures:***

When Paul preaches about Christ's resurrection, he talks about it differently than Peter. Peter said, Christ was resurrected to sit on David's throne. This all has to do with a kingdom – which is in perfect accordance with their program.

But when Paul preaches resurrection, he does not talk about its connection with the prophetic program and the Jewish kingdom which will be set up on the earth. Instead, he talks about it in connection with the dispensation of Gentile grace and what God is accomplishing for us through the resurrection of his Son.

Romans 4:24 ***But for us also, to whom it shall be imputed, if we believe on him that raised up Jesus our Lord from the dead;*** ***25*** ***Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification.***

Space for personal reflection and notes