

Text: Romans 10:8b-13

Theme: Confession and Faith

Grace, mercy and peace be to you from God our Father, and our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.

Boys and Girls I pray that you are doing well today. Did you know that the way to heaven is separated by only eight inches? Yep, it's the distance from your head to your heart. For many people, they believe in Jesus but it is only head knowledge, stuff up here that they know. It never gets to their hearts and shown in their daily lives. That is what Saint Paul is talking about today when he talks about confession. Have you ever heard of the word confession? You might have. We often use it when we are talking about our sins. We say that we confess them before God our Father. Saint Paul in our text for today, uses the word confession, but he is not talking about our sins. What does that word mean? The word confession means to make a formal statement, either about ourselves as sinners or about the faith that we have been given. How does Saint Paul use the word confession? How can we go from head knowledge to heart knowledge? Ponder these questions as you hear the rest of the sermon. You may go back to your seats and those who love you.

Confession: mean what?

Eight inches, not very long at all. Yet, that little amount is the difference between everlasting life and everlasting

death. Do we confess only with our heads or with our hearts as well? When Saint Paul uses the word confession, he is talking about the very essence of our faith. Our Doctrine, those things that we believe, teach, and confess. Confession and faith are very closely united. Those things that we believe in our hearts, we confess. Saint Paul says, “You confess with your mouth, and believe with your heart.” Those things that we believe in our hearts are shown in our lives through our thoughts, words, deeds, and actions.

Well, what kind of things do you show? Many people in our world today show who really is their Lord. Their Lord and God is their own desires and wants. They rush after the things of the world and confess that Jesus is not Lord of their lives. Rather, the world is their Lord. They look for worldly and earthly things. They are ruled by the money in their bank account, what this or that famous person says reigns over their lives. They desire power and authority, the ability to make decisions for themselves and have whatever they want. They want that new car, they get it, even if they have a perfectly good one already. Their lords are their own sinful desire.

How many times do we do likewise? We cannot say ‘Good riddance. I am glad that is not me.’ Many times, that is us as well. Or are all of you perfect and I just don’t know it? I doubt it. We all fall into this same terrible temptation of idolatry. We all fall into sin and the devils lies, and all the glittering things of this world. Rather than confessing Jesus is Lord, too often we confess that we are our own lords in following our sinful desires. We know well the temptations of our flesh, the world around us,

and the attacks of the devil to give into worldly pleasures and temptations.

Knowing all that is arrayed against us, we do confess. We gather here in worship, joining in the confession our sins. We confess to our Lord the facts. That yes, we are sinful and unclean in thought, word and deed. That we have not loved our Lord with our whole heart. That we have not loved those around us as we should. The fact that no matter how hard we try, we cannot save ourselves. We cannot stop ourselves from sinning but under our own power, we will give in time and time again. We make a formal statement about all of our wrongdoings, pleading for mercy from our God and Father.

In His mercy, our Father hears our confession and does have mercy and grace upon us. How? He sent His only Son, Jesus Christ. In His perfect life, Jesus carried all of our sins with Him as He goes to Jerusalem. There, He suffers, bleeds, and dies, paying in full the debt of sin that we owe to God. Rising again from the dead, He gives us life everlasting. Ascending to the right hand of the Father, Jesus sends us the promised Helper, the Holy Spirit.

Through the Holy Spirit, He creates in us a new life. He empowers us to resist our sinful nature, to fight against the devil, the world, and our sinful flesh. By the Holy Spirit working in us, we can say that the world is not the Lord but that Jesus is Lord. By this confession, we are confessing that everything Jesus did upon this earth, His miracles, suffering, passion, and death, and everything He will do when He comes again in glory, He does for me on my behalf.

Shown in daily life

So what Pastor, is not all of this just head knowledge? No, rather this confession is heart knowledge as well. This knowledge shows itself in our thoughts, words, deeds, and actions. Whenever we give to the panhandler sitting on the side of the road. When we greet people with a smile, ask how their day is going, and mean it. Whenever we do not give in to the temptations of the world to sin., when we say ‘No sin. I am not going to give into you today.’ When we do not seek after the brightest possession for worldly gain, looking towards heavenly gain instead. When we do these things and many more, we are making a confession with heart and head that Jesus is Lord. This confession is hard to make. I know it is hard to do, even our own flesh is against us. Yet, when we do so, we are confessing that Jesus Christ is Lord. By this confession, we are saved.

Confession saves us not because it is a work we do. Confession saves us because it is connected to faith in the work Christ that saved us. It is like the child whose parent tells him they will punish him if he does not clean his room. The child does the work and when dad asks, “Did you clean your room?” the child says, “Yes.” The child’s confession saves him from punishment because it is tied to the work he completed. God says he will punish us if we do not keep the law. When he asks us if we have kept it, we say “Yes, Jesus Christ did the work for us we cannot do.” Our confession of faith saves us because it clings to Christ’s obedience and punishment for us upon the cross.

May the Peace of God which surpasses all understanding,
guard and keep your hearts and minds in Christ Jesus. Amen.