

4/28/2024

**WHO DO YOU SAY THAT JESUS IS, and ARE YOU WILLING TO ADMIT IT? Matthew 28:26-33**

**Sermon Summary:**

**Matthew 28:26** “So do not be afraid of them, for there is nothing concealed that will not be disclosed, or hidden that will not be made known. 27 What I tell you in the dark, speak in the daylight; what is whispered in your ear, proclaim from the roofs. 28 Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy both soul and body in hell. 29 Are not two sparrows sold for a penny? Yet not one of them will fall to the ground outside your Father’s care. 30 And even the very hairs of your head are all numbered. 31 So don’t be afraid; you are worth more than many sparrows. 32 “Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. 33 But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny before my Father in heaven.

What does it look like to acknowledge God before others? Acknowledge: To recognize, to accept, to admit, to agree with something in a definitive way. In the context of these verses, essentially: “Whoever agrees with me that I am who I say I am... the Messiah, savior, Son of the Living God...”

In the original text, the word acknowledge is actually the Greek word *homologeō*. *hom-ol-og-eh'-o* (*hama - le - ge - ō*) While this word carries the same sentiment of recognition and agreement, it carries with it a sense of declaration, or profession. It actually translates closer to our word confess. At times, when the time comes to open our mouth and actually confess, (use our words and declare outwardly our belief in Jesus), that is a different thing.

Things can be VERY different depending on the environment that you’re. In church vs in the workplace or sitting here now vs before someone who doesn’t know the Lord.

**Mark 8:27** Jesus and his disciples went on to the villages around Caesarea Philippi. On the way he asked them, “Who do people say I am?” 28 They replied, “Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, one of the prophets.” 29 “But what about you?” he asked. “Who do you say I am?” Peter answered, “You are the Messiah.”

It was relatively ‘easy’ for Peter to confess in front of Jesus and his fellow disciples. It was something entirely different for him to stand firm in Matthew 26.

**Matthew 26:69** Now Peter was sitting outside in the courtyard. And a servant girl came up to him and said, “You also were with Jesus the Galilean.” 70 But he denied it before them all, saying, “I do not know what you mean.” 71 And when he went out to the entrance, another servant girl saw him, and she said to the bystanders, “This man was with Jesus of Nazareth.” 72 And again he denied it with an oath: “I do not know the man.” 73 After a little while the bystanders came up and said to Peter, “Certainly you too are one of them, for your accent betrays you.” 74 Then he began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, “I do not know the man.” And immediately the rooster crowed.

His 'confession' looks a lot more like a denial or (in some translations disowning), when his feet were to the fire. Simple silence can be as dangerous as speaking, the word in our text today for denying or disowning is as active as our word for confessing.

Arneomai: ar-neh'-om-ahee (arr - nay - ō - my) (Roll the 'r')

"He denied it before them all, saying, "I do not know what you mean."

"Again, he denied it with an oath: "I do not know the man."

"He began to invoke a curse on himself and to swear, "I do not know the man."

Remember though this happened BEFORE the coming of the Holy Spirit at Pentecost. We get to live WITH the power of the Holy Spirit. Look at Peter after the Holy Spirit came:

**Acts 4:1**The priests and the captain of the temple guard and the Sadducees came up to Peter and John while they were speaking to the people. 2 They were greatly disturbed because the apostles were teaching the people, proclaiming in Jesus the resurrection of the dead. 3 They seized Peter and John and, because it was evening, they put them in jail until the next day. 4 But many who heard the message believed; so the number of men who believed grew to about five thousand. 5 The next day the rulers, the elders and the teachers of the law met in Jerusalem. 6 Annas the high priest was there, and so were Caiaphas, John, Alexander and others of the high priest's family. 7 They had Peter and John brought before them and began to question them: "By what power or what name did you do this?" 8 Then Peter, filled with the Holy Spirit, said to them: "Rulers and elders of the people! 9 If we are being called to account today for an act of kindness shown to a man who was lame and are being asked how he was healed, 10 then know this, you and all the people of Israel: It is by the name of Jesus Christ of Nazareth, whom you crucified but whom God raised from the dead, that this man stands before you healed. 11 Jesus is "the stone you builders rejected, which has become the cornerstone. 12 Salvation is found in no one else, for there is no other name under heaven given to mankind by which we must be saved."

What are the implications of confessing and denying? Everything Jesus said was on purpose and had a purpose. In our verses today he includes a promise with both statements:

"Whoever acknowledges me before others, I will also acknowledge before my Father in heaven. But whoever denies me before others, I will also deny before my Father in heaven."

First, we must recognize the authority He has to make the statement:

**Philippians 2:6** Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be used to his own advantage; 7 rather, he made himself nothing by taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself by becoming obedient to death—even death on a cross! 9 Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, 11 and every tongue acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

**1 Timothy 2:5-6** For there is one God and one mediator between God and mankind, the man Christ Jesus, who gave himself as a ransom for all people. This has now been witnessed at the proper time.

God has appointed Jesus as the mediator between us and God. Jesus has reconciled us to himself and speaks on our behalf before the father. What does it mean for Jesus to acknowledge us before the father?

**2 Timothy 4:7-8** I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day—and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.

**Matthew 25:23** 'Well done, good and faithful servant! Come and share your master's happiness!'

So we can see the response Jesus will give when we seek him and confess Him.

But what does the denying or disowning Jesus before men look like?

**Matthew 7:21** "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 Many will say to me on that day, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name and in your name drive out demons and in your name perform many miracles?' 23 Then I will tell them plainly, 'I never knew you. Away from me, you evildoers!'

Why is Jesus so emphatic about this?

He is impressing upon them the reality of what hangs in the balance. Jesus is saying I'm sending you out into this world and you are going to be amongst wolves and you're going to be persecuted, hated. He encourages them to not be afraid of those that would come after them, for one reason: Eternity. He was sending out the disciples to teach and preach, to heal and drive out demons for one reason: Eternity. Perhaps this verse sounds like "If you acknowledge me before men?":

19 Therefore go and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, 20 and teaching them to obey everything I have commanded you.

What does this mean for us today?

The mission hasn't changed. MillCity Church, go make disciples. Go out into the marketplace, into the community, into the dark places of the world, and acknowledge Jesus before men. Confess that Jesus is Lord.

Who do you say that Jesus is? Are you willing to declare that to a broken suffering world, deeply in need of the Good News of the Gospel of Jesus? Are you willing to go out beyond these walls and beyond safe conversations with those that think and speak like us? The world cannot afford for us to simply discuss Jesus among ourselves. Is that important? Yes.

Talk about Jesus and sharpen one another, but for a purpose, to go out and to confess Jesus in front of the world. Pastor Tim Timberlake tells us that you can't fulfill your calling from your comfort zone.

Randy Alcorn tells us "The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven."

Do you believe that He is who He says he is? Have you convinced yourself that you can sit quietly and believe in Jesus but not take that out into the world? You can, but the Bible is clear on what our job is as His sent ones. Are you fulfilling the great commission? Are you running the race? Are you being the light in YOUR world?

"There is only one answer bigger than the question of evil and suffering: Jesus."

- C.S. Lewis

### ***Discussion Questions:***

1. Who is the person you would most trust to tell others about you? Why? How would they describe you? Would people want to know you based on the description? Would they be shocked at the description or would they say "that fits with the person I have seen"? How did that person get to be the one "who could best describe you"?

2. If you have "never met a person you didn't know", how much of your talking with them is about superficial topics and how much is about deeper meaning topics? Do you tend to fill up the conversation or leave space for others? Do you leave space for the holy spirit to work and speak through you? How can you re-think and transform your language to be less about you and superficial topics and more about Him, to acknowledge Christ and share that with others?

3. The disciples witnessed (acknowledged) who Christ was, in word (sharing scripture), deed (living consistent lives that point to Christ) and signs (miracles). Which one of those was most instrumental in getting you to "check out this Christianity thing"? How are all 3 needed for us to show a total acknowledgement of who God is? When you think of those three, which are you most comfortable with and least comfortable with? When was the last time you were out of your comfort zone in acknowledging and/or sharing Christ?

4. Randy Alcorn tells us “The best of life on Earth is a glimpse of Heaven; the worst of life is a glimpse of Hell. For Christians, this present life is the closest they will come to Hell. For unbelievers, it is the closest they will come to Heaven.” How does that statement impact you? Does it cause you to think of anything changes you need to make as you continue to walk out your faith walk? Do you look for ways that God is working in your everyday life, or do you tend to limit Him to certain places and times? How might you be more open to seeing yourself as “sent” ones to a dying world?