

The Madisonville
Church of Christ
is proud to offer

- **What Does the Bible Say?**
Sundays at
8:30 a.m. on
WFMW (AM
730)
- Weekly clothing
and food give-
aways (call
church office
for days and
times)
- Four Bible cor-
respondence
courses
- Bible study
courses on DVD

Address:

1035 N. Main St.
Madisonville, KY
42431

Telephone:

270.821.3544

E-mail:

msop1989@
yahoo.com

Web Site:

www.madisonville
churchofchrist.org

Unless otherwise
indicated, every
article was written
by our preacher,
Russell M. Kline

THE PAPER PULPIT

A quarterly publication of Bible studies presented by
the Madisonville Church of Christ

CONFESSION: IT'S GOOD FOR THE SOUL

Volume 2, Issue 1

February, 2010

What Do We Confess?

That confession is an important part of the gospel plan of salvation, there can be no doubt. Romans 10:10 plainly declares, "*with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*"

Clearly, a verbal confession is something that carries us all toward the ultimate goal of salvation. But, *what* are we supposed to confess? Admittedly, this is a source of great misunderstanding, in the religious world. But, as usual, a closer look at the Scriptures will make the matter easily discerned.

In order to properly answer the question at hand, one must consider the full reading of Romans 10:9 and 10. "*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. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*" The American Standard Version of the Bible offers us a slightly different, yet more insightful reading of Romans 10:9, which says, in part, "*because if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord...*" This plainly tells us that, in order to be saved, we must confess our faith in the fact that Jesus Christ is the Lord! This is the very

same confession that the apostle Peter made, in Matthew 16, and it is the same confession that the Ethiopian eunuch made, in Acts 8. This the abiding principle upon which the Lord's church is founded (1 Cor. 3:11). So it is the case that we must confess the Lordship of Jesus today, if we desire salvation.

Some have the mistaken impression that we must confess all of our sins, prior to their being washed away in baptism. This, however, is an impossibility,

since the average person is not capable of remembering every sin that they have committed—especially if they are well into their adult years. Some argue that

James 5:16 requires a verbal confession of sin, but the context in which that verse appears is a discussion of what one who is already a Christian ought to do, when sin is ruining his life. Certainly, Christians ought to talk to each other about the spiritual challenges we face, so that we will be better able to bear one another's spiritual burdens (Gal. 6:2). The Bible does not teach that we have the power to absolve each other's sins. For that, we must confess our sins to God, and ask Him to forgive us (1 John 1:9).

**"...thou shalt confess
with thy mouth Jesus
as Lord..."**

—Romans 10:9 (ASV)



Quotable Quotations

"To openly confess Christ in those days of persecution was a trial of faith of the severest kind."

—B.W. Johnson

"To believe in Christ is to recognize him for what he is...to confess him is to pledge our allegiance to him."

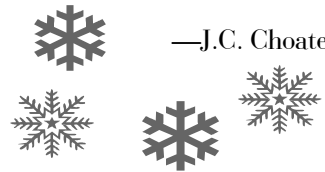
—Robertson L. Whiteside

"The open confession of Jesus as the Son of God leads on to the life of devotion to Christ Jesus that fits for salvation before God. Faith in God and courage to confess Christ is just as essential to salvation at every step through life down to death itself as they are in the beginning."

—David Lipscomb

"One must be willing to go on record that he believes that Jesus Christ is the Son of God. If he is unwilling to make such a confession then it means that he is not ready to obey the Lord, and neither can he obey the Lord under such circumstances."

—J.C. Choate



"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in Heaven."

**— Matthew
10:32,33**

To Whom Do We Confess?

The religious world is populated with many false ideas about the subject of confession. When it comes to the question of who ought to receive our confession, there are some who say that only a priest can hear such a thing, while others argue that confession must be made only to the Lord. What is the truth of the matter? As usual, the Bible has the answer.

When it comes to the confession of our faith in Christ, prior to becoming members of His church, it is obvious that we must make such a confession in the presence of other

people (Mat. 10:32,33). The confession of our faith in the Lord Jesus is supposed to be a matter of public record. We must never hide our faith from our fellow men (Mat. 5:13-16).

Once we have obeyed the gospel plan of salvation, and become Christians, it may be necessary for us to confess when we have sinned. James 5:16 says, "Confess your faults one to another, and pray one for another, that ye may be healed. The effectual fervent prayer of a righteous man availeth much." It must be pointed out that this verse

says nothing about making a confession to a priest, or about a priest granting absolution for sins. In the New Testament, every Christian is said to be a priest (1 Pet. 2:9), and God is the only one who can forgive us for our sins (Mat. 9:1-8). That is why 1 John 1:9 says, "If we confess our sins, he is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness." As Christians, we must confess our sins to God and appeal to Him for forgiveness. There is no human priesthood that can do what God does for us.

PP

How Do We Confess?

The title of this article may seem like an absurd question, but there are some preachers who teach that the confession of our faith in Jesus Christ is something that we do with our actions, rather than with our words. They contend that confession is not really one of the steps in the gospel plan of salvation, since it is something that we are supposed to **do** throughout our lives on Earth. Once again, we had better consult the Word of God on this subject.

Of a truth, the Bible teaches that the lives we live on Earth must reflect our faith in Christ for all to see (Phil. 1:21). That is what the apostle Paul was talking about, when he wrote, “*I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye*

present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service. And be not conformed to this world, but be ye transformed by the renewing of your mind, that ye may prove what is that good, and acceptable, and perfect will of God” (Rom. 12:1,2). Indeed, the very lives that Christians live are a confession of their faith.

But, that does not mean that the Lord does not require a verbal confession of our faith, as a part of our obedience of the gospel plan of salvation. Romans 10:10 is the key passage on this issue: “*For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation*” (emphasis mine; RK).

Clearly, there is a need for everyone to make a verbal confession of their faith in Jesus Christ, prior to becoming a Christian.

I am persuaded that a verbal confession of one’s faith in Christ was especially important in the early church. In the ancient Roman world, being a Christian was against the law, and the verbal profession of one’s faith could be dangerous. Only those who were truly committed to following the way of Christ would be willing to confess Him out loud, in front of witnesses. It was an act of supreme bravery and total commitment. Today, we may not face the same dangers as our ancient brethren, but the confession of our faith is still essential to our salvation. **P_P**

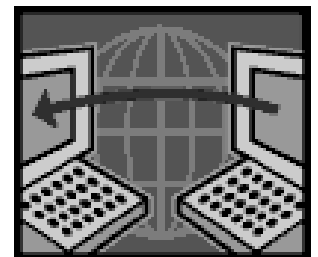
“For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.”

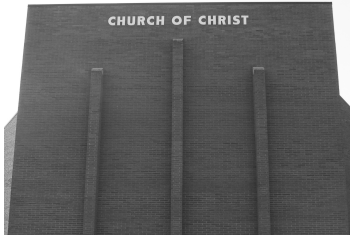
—Romans 10:10

Check us out online:

www.madisonvillechurchofchrist.org

- ⇒ Find out the latest news about what’s going on at the Madisonville Church of Christ.
- ⇒ Check out the speakers and topics posted for our next Bible lectureship.
- ⇒ Ask questions and get Bible answers in our Open Forum.
- ⇒ Read past issues of “The Paper Pulpit” at our Documents page.
- ⇒ Sign our Guestbook and tell us what you think of the site.





Madisonville Church of Christ

Sunday Morning Bible Study

—9:30 a.m.

Sunday Morning Worship

—10:30 a.m.

Sunday Evening Worship

—6:00 p.m.

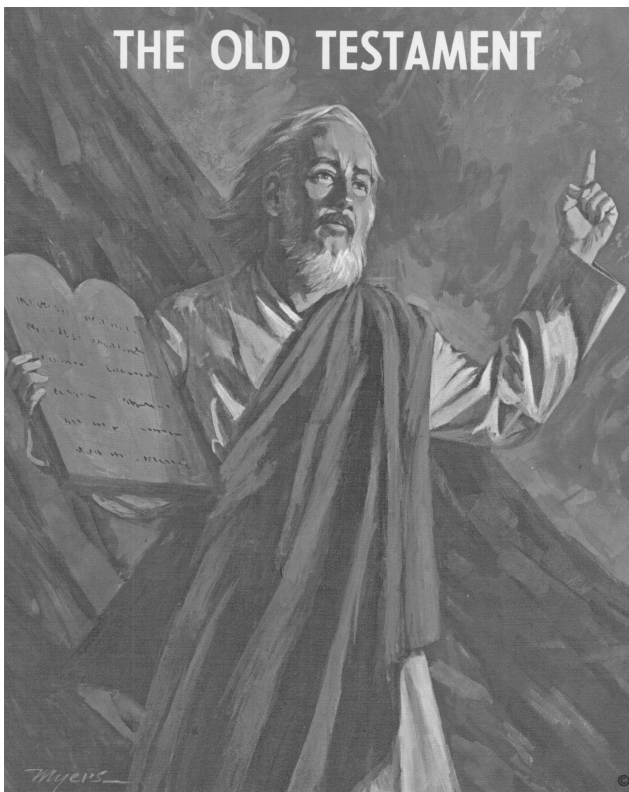
Wednesday Evening Bible Study

—7:00 p.m.

A Christ-Preaching, Bible-Teaching Church

What Do You Need?

People's wants and whims change every day, but people's needs tend to remain the same. That is why the Bible is still relevant in the modern world. While times may change and the wants of humanity may change, the spiritual needs of mankind stay the same. The Bible is the only thing that can satisfy the spiritual needs of man—even if it doesn't always supply us with all our wants. In a world where religion is bent more and more toward giving people what they want, the Madisonville Church of Christ is more concerned with giving people what they need. Why not come and see if we can help meet your needs?



LESSON ONE
BIBLE CORRESPONDENCE COURSE
BY JOHN M. HURT

FREE Bible Correspondence Course!

- ♦ A COMPLETE SURVEY of THE WHOLE Bible in eight LESSONS.
- ♦ Study in THE PRIVACY of YOUR OWN HOME AT YOUR OWN PACE.
- ♦ ABSOLUTELY FREE of CHARGE (we will NOT solicit you for any DONATIONS).
- ♦ CERTIFICATE PRESENTED upon completion.
- ♦ CALL OR WRITE TO THE MADISONVILLE CHURCH of CHRIST TO REQUEST ENROLLMENT.
- ♦ AN EXCELLENT aid to a PERSONAL study of THE SCRIPTURES.
- ♦ ELEVATES THE IMPORTANCE of THE Biblical TEXT OVER THE OPINIONS of MEN.