

WHY MAKE A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH IN JESUS?

Acts 2:37-47

(Not entirely original with me)

Introduction: It would seem a bit strange for a person to refuse to identify publicly his/her faith in Jesus Christ, yet there are many who refuse to stand before others and profess faith in Jesus. Why make a public profession of faith in Jesus anyhow? There are countless who have publicly admitted that they have been saved and have faith in the Lord Jesus Christ and are publicly baptized. What's the difference in believing in Jesus and admitting it publicly and believing in Jesus and keeping it quiet?

I. WHAT DOES IT MEAN TO MAKE A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH IN JESUS?

1. It is a public statement of confidence and belief in what the Gospel reveals about Jesus.
2. It is a public surrender of everything to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - It implies a dependence upon Jesus.
 - It implies a confession of one's sins.
 - It implies that he/she has been saved by the works of Jesus Christ alone.
 - It is a public separation from love of the world to love for Jesus.
 - It is declaring publicly that Jesus is one's God and Savior.
3. It is publicly declaring to be a representative of Jesus Christ.
 - It is declaring that one has received the Holy Spirit and is going to live under the leadership of the Holy Spirit.
 - It is declaring that one will boldly tell others about his/her relationship with Jesus.

II. WHY SHOULD ONE MAKE A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF HIS/HER FAITH IN JESUS?

1. It is simply being honest.
 - Not to publicly make a profession of one's faith in Jesus is wrong to one's own soul, to God and to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - To be saved, one has to be bought and is no longer his/her own but belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - No person can call him/herself honest who refuses to openly, publicly the Lord Jesus Christ as being his/her Savior.
2. It is something that is essential to one's self-respect.
 - To not publicly profess one's faith in the Lord Jesus Christ denies a person's ability to have self-respect but will cause one to be ashamed of him/herself.
 - It is essential to one's true peace of mind for to not do that which one knows he/she should do will bring shame and a lack of peace of mind.
3. It is something that is due the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - Jesus "tasted death for every person" and those who believe that should have no trouble in publicly acknowledging it.
 - Sadly many forget what Jesus has done for them and what God gives them daily.
 - If Jesus had not done what He did, then there would be no hope for anyone.
 - To realize what Jesus has done for a person, saving him/her from hell surely deserves public acknowledgment.
4. It is only right and reasonable.
 - Being saved by what Jesus has done for a person places that believing person under great and lasting obligations to the Lord Jesus Christ.

5. One owes it to him/herself.
 - Every person has influence over someone else and to publicly profess Jesus Christ is to show others who are watching/looking, listening that they, too, need Jesus Christ in their lives.
6. It is something owed to God's Church.
 - Church members pray for people to be saved and whenever one is and publicly professes Jesus as his/her Lord and Savior, those who have been praying will know that their prayers have been answered.
7. It is something owed to the whole world.
 - It is a witness to the world that there is really something about Jesus Christ that everyone should know.
8. It is useful to the one making his/her profession of faith in Jesus public.
 - It helps to close one's heart to sin and temptation.
 - It helps close one's mind to those things which might lead him/her away.
 - It is publicly identifying with other believers, a commitment which others have also made.
9. It is something which indicates one's reliance upon the Lord Jesus Christ to watch over him/her and by God's grace to secure his/her salvation.
10. It is making one's self a channel through which the Lord Jesus can work.
11. It is being entirely honest with one's self and with God and therefore can have peace with God.

III. WHY DO SOME NOT WANT TO PUBLICLY PROFESS FAITH IN JESUS CHRIST?

1. Some say that "they are not really a Christian."
 - Such thoughts and beliefs do not give anyone an excuse, it only deepens one's guilt.
2. Some say that they would bring disgrace upon the Lord Jesus and His cause.
 - To not publicly profess Jesus as one's Lord and Savior is to bring dishonor upon Him.
3. Some say that they are afraid of all the responsibility.
 - There is a greater thing to fear and that is of publicly denying the Lord Jesus Christ.
 - It is to refuse to obey the Lord and to take sides with enemies of the Lord Jesus.
4. Some say it is such a deep and solemn thing.
 - It is more solemn to refuse to make a public profession of faith in the Lord Jesus than to publicly profess faith in Him.
5. Some say that they can be saved without making a public profession of faith in Jesus.
 - To say that is to be ashamed of Jesus before others.
 - It is not recognizing God's authority in anything.
 - It is to neglect, it is refusal to acknowledge what Jesus has done.
6. Some say that they are awaiting evidence that they have been accepted by God and are still in disobedience by not publicly professing faith in Jesus.
7. Some say that they don't want to publicly commit themselves.
 - Obviously one's heart is not right if that is the attitude.
 - They don't want to be "picked out" or counted as "one of those kind of people."
 - They don't want to have anything expected of them.
 - Some think that they might be persecuted.
8. Some say that if they made a public profession of faith in Jesus, then they would be expected to support the Church and Missions.
9. Some say that it would put too much restraint on them.
 - Some friends, some places, some enjoyments would have to be given up.
10. Some say that they fear that they might be sorry if they did.
 - They don't want to have to try to live such a life that would be demanded.

11. Some say that they wouldn't know which Church to "join."
12. Some say that they can live a Christian life without making a public profession of faith.
 - They think that they are living a life pleasing to God without Jesus and therefore they don't owe Jesus anything.

IV. WHAT IT MEANS TO NOT MAKE A PUBLIC PROFESSION OF FAITH IN JESUS

1. It is a public denial and rejection of Jesus Christ.
 - It is a denial of dependence on Jesus or any obligation to Him.
 - It is declaring that one doesn't have or want any part of religion.
 - It is denial of the truth about Jesus.
 - It is public acknowledgment of unbelief.
 - It is declaring that Jesus Christ is a nobody, an imposter.
 - It is a show that one is on the other "side."
2. It is a public profession of unwillingness to repent as well as unbelief.
 - To not make a public profession of faith in Jesus is to make a public declaration against Jesus.
 - It is declaring that one is an enemy of the Lord Jesus Christ.

CONCLUSION:

1. Those who believe in the Lord Jesus Christ and have publicly professed their belief should watch over each other with patience and love.
2. Those who have publicly professed faith in Jesus should always remember that they **VOLUNTARILY** place themselves in public spotlight for the whole world to see them and identify them with the Church.
3. Let no one who has publicly professed faith in Jesus Christ be deterred from witnessing for the Lord Jesus because of the great responsibility that goes with a public profession of faith.
4. Let every one who has publicly professed faith in the Lord Jesus Christ not be ashamed or fearful to identify themselves with the Church and the work of the Church.
5. Let every action of **YOUR** life be a witness that **YOUR** profession of faith in the Lord Jesus Christ is not an empty profession.