**Measuring Spiritual Growth**

**Faith that Speaks – Part 2**

**Hebrews 3:1**

**Introduction**

One of the things every Christian believer needs to have as a part of their Christian life-style and faith walk is a proper faith-filled vocabulary and a positive confession of their faith.

There is the confession of salvation we talked about last week found in Romans 10 verses 9 & 10 which says, “that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.” Anyone who believes and acknowledges that Jesus Christ is God’s Son, sent in the flesh to save us from our sins can receive the miracle of a transformed and eternal life! But even as believers and followers of Christ we still face temptation and sometimes believers’ sins! But I John 1:9 says, “If we confess our sin (who is the we? the Christian!) If we Christians confess our sin, He (God) is faithful and just to forgive us our sin, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.” So the second area of confession is when the believer confesses his sin before the Father. A third area of confession is found in James Chapter 5 verse 16. James says, “Confess your faults (speaking to believers) one to another and prayer for one another that you may be healed.” So the third area of confession is the confession of fault for the healing of relationship! (I’m sorry; I was wrong.)

But the fourth area of confession is the one we are dealing with in this series on developing a dynamic faith; the confession of faith! Hebrews Chapter 3 verse 1,

“Therefore, holy brethren, partakers of the heavenly calling, consider the Apostle and High Priest of our confession, Christ Jesus, 2who was faithful to Him who appointed Him, as Moses also *was faithful* in all His house. 3For this One has been counted worthy of more glory than Moses, inasmuch as He who built the house has more honor than the house. 4For every house is built by someone, but He who built all things *is* God.”

The word confession means “to say the same thing as.” As Christians, we are not called to say the same things the world is saying! We are called to say the same thing God says in His word. The scriptures say that Jesus is the High Priest of our confession. As our High Priest, Jesus takes what we confess here on earth and presents our confession to the Father. When our confession meets the criteria of the Word of God, the Father commissions the Holy Spirit to make effective in our lives what we confess here on the earth.

The Apostle James tells us that, “Every good gift and every perfect gift is from above, and comes down from the Father…” The Father only gives good gifts. Sickness, pain disease, failure, defeat and all negative and destructive experiences of life are not brought upon by God, they are a result of sin and Satan and disobedience. There are always consequences to our actions; and understanding that is a foundational principle to positive living and a positive confession. Negative experiences and negative confessions and negative thinking is not part of the plan and will of God. In fact, often a negative confession brings chastisement and correction.

God wants our witness to be positive and bible-based and filled with faith so that when our High Priest (Jesus) presents our confession to the Father, He will commission the Holy Spirit to release the promises and blessings and miracle of God to us. It is the confession of our faith that releases the miracle of God’s blessing upon us making the promise of God a living reality and testimony which brings glory and honor to Jesus. When you confess who you are and what you have in Christ Jesus, you are re-enforcing what your heart believes and displacing what you do not want your mind to believe! It’s like having a bucket of muddy water. If you put a glass of clean fresh water into a bucket of muddy water what happens? Not much at first. But if you keep doing it what happens? (The clean water eventually displaces the muddy water!) When you repeat and confess and affirm who you are and what you have in Jesus, it displaces all the negative and worldly ideas and thought in your heart and mind with clean, wholesome and positive faith from God’s Word. (It’s a process and you must keep doing it!)

Here are some principles that will help you develop a positive faith confession.

1. **Confess What God Has Done For You!**

First of all, begin to confess what God, through Christ, has done for you through His great redemptive plan. Redemption is more than just being saved. It is more than just having your sins forgiven. Redemption means that because of the blood of Calvary, you have been transplanted from Satan’s garden to the garden of God. Satan’s garden is full of the weeds of sickness, negativity, arrogance, pride, destructive behavior and thoughts, jealousy, and on and on. But God’s garden is full of strength and sunlight and affirmation and confidence and encouragement and faith.

Galatians 3:13, “Christ has redeemed us from the curse of the law, having become a curse for us (for it is written, “Cursed *is* everyone who hangs on a tree”), 14that the blessing of Abraham might come upon the Gentiles in Christ Jesus, that we might receive the promise of the Spirit through faith.” When you confess your faith in Christ, your mind is being cleansed and you are displacing every negative and evil thought by the washing of the Word of God. The blessing of Abraham includes financial blessing, spiritual blessing, material blessing, physical blessing…every good and perfect gift! They are all included in God’s great redemptive plan.

1. **Confess what you mean to the Father in Christ.**

I was praying one day, and usually in my prayers, I tell the Lord how much He means to me! But on this one occasion, I was praying and I meant to say, “Lord you mean so much to me.” But it came out, “Lord I mean so much to you!” I caught myself and it embarrassed me, and immediately said, “Oh Lord, I’m sorry, I didn’t mean to say that! But the Holy Spirit prompted me in my spirit and said, “But I did mean to say that!” Because sometimes we need to recognize and know how much we mean to our Heavenly Father. Too many believers don’t have a full appreciation of how much they really mean to God. The bible says in the book of Ephesians that we are the inheritance of the Father. He has an investment in us.

Rejection and loneliness and insecurity and all of those negative thoughts and negative influences upon our lives would disappear if we could just begin to realize how much we mean to the Father!

We need to accept and confess that and ask God to make us effective lights for Him in this dark world.

1. **Confess the Continuing Work of Christ!**

Number three confess the continuing work of Christ in you. Remember, God is not finished with you yet! Continue to read God’s Word and grow in faith. Confess what God though the Word and through the Spirit is doing in your life! Tell your story and give witness to the awesome changes that are taking place in your mind and heart because of the relationship you are developing with Christ.

You are more than a forgiven sinner! The bible says you have been made the righteousness of God, in Christ! Jesus, who knew no sin, became sin for us, that we might become the righteousness of God!

Recognize and give witness to the work Christ is doing in your life!

1. **Confess the Lordship of Christ!**

Confess the Lordship and ministry of Christ over every area of your life! There is no situation or circumstance in your life that Jesus cannot deal with!

He is our Savior! He is the author and finisher of our faith. He is our Healer! He is the Great Physician, capable of healing every sickness and disease. He is the Mediator of God’s Covenant! Jesus continually intercedes on our behalf. Whatever we need to be a witness and overcomer for Him even in this sinful world, He stands ready to help and equip us! He is the Baptizer! John the Baptists said, “There is coming who is mightier than I. He will baptize you in the Holy Ghost and fire! He is our Provider! Philippians 4:19 says, “my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory by Christ Jesus.”

Don’t confess failure and weakness and negativity. Confess who Jesus is and what he has done for us and what he continues to do as the High Priest of our confession.

1. **Confess God’s Glory Over Every Situation**

The only glory some believers can manage to give God is when everything is going well for them! But the scriptures tell us that we are to give thanks to God in every situation; even the situations where we are counted worthy to suffer for the cause of Christ. Even when things aren’t going well, we need to give thanks to God for the victory that will come!

We need to confess what we know God can do for us and in us and through us as we face the situations of life with a resolve to bring glory to God no matter what!

Demonstrating this kind of faith requires a real maturity and confidence in Christ.

It’s like Job’s confession of faith, “Even if God slays me, yet will I trust in Him.” I have no beef with God! I may not like my circumstances, but my circumstances don’t dictate my faith. God is first in my life no matter what!

As you read through the scriptures, make a note of what the bible says you are and what you have in Christ – in Him, by Him, and through Him – because that is the will of God in Christ Jesus concerning you!

Let me give you a few safeguards to practicing a positive confession.

1. **Confess the Will of God.**

Confess only what you know to be the will of God. It concerns me sometimes when I hear believers say things like “God told me” or “God spoke to me” as if they are playing the ultimate trump card and you don’t have any right to challenge them because GOD told them! Probably what concerns me even more is when someone says, “I’ve got a word from God for you!” as if God can’t reveal it to you personally so he’s got to tell someone else so they can tell you. Now, I’m not talking just about words here. (I’ve said before that God told me or spoke to me. But when I say that I mean revelation, not message.) I’m talking about intent.

Well pastor, don’t you believe the prophetic word? Well, yes I do. But what I also believe is that every prophetic word must be submitted to the body of Christ or to the individual it is intended for and it is their privilege and responsibility to evaluate and judge for themselves whether or not it is really a word from the Lord.

As a believer, you need to be very careful about accepting anything and everything someone tells you “in the name of the Lord” as actually being from the Lord! Every believer needs to learn how to critically analyze and evaluate subjective truth according to the eternal truth of God’s Word. Confessing something that is contrary to the will of God is not confession at all, it’s deception. So, confess only what you know to be the will of God.

1. **Confess With Holy Spirit Guidance**

If the Bible says it, then so can you! But having said that, let me also say we need to lean upon the guidance and direction of the Holy Spirit. For instance, the bible says there is a time to reap and a time to sow, there’s a time to laugh and a time to cry. So how do you know which to do? That’s where guidance from the Holy Spirit comes in. As you cultivate a listening ear to the Holy Spirit you know how and when to act in accordance with the will of God. Confess the Word of God that is in your mind until it becomes a Rhema confession within your spirit.

1. **Base Your Confession Upon the Word**

If the Bible says, then confess it! But make sure your confession is based upon what the Word of God teaches and not just upon statements that are made in the Word of God. The Bible says many things that it does not teach; and people have created all kinds of doctrines and practices based upon a statement made somewhere in the Bible. So make sure your confession is based on what the Word of God teaches not just on a statement made in the Bible. A teaching of scripture can always be verified by several different verses of scripture found in more than one place in the bible. Learn the teachings of the bible and base your confession upon what the bible teaches.

1. **Operate in Grace**

Ephesians 2:8 says, “For by grace are you saved through faith…” Real faith operates through grace. Some try to operate faith through knowledge, or through pride, or through intimidation, but true faith operates only through grace. Faith does not rely upon ability, or personality. It relies upon the integrity and reliability of God. Grace is totally dependent upon God; upon His guidance, upon His provision, upon His goodness and upon His resources. The Apostle Paul was keenly aware that everything he was and everything he did was because of the grace of God. Apart from the grace of God, every effort is futile. Grace is truly receiving God’s riches at Christ’s expense. Grace is what makes your life worth living! Jesus said, apart from me, you can do nothing! Every confession of faith must be bathed in grace!

1. **Don’t Deny Reality!**

I know Jesus said we can speak to the mountain and see it removed, but church there has to be a mountain visibly in order for God to move it! I know David had complete confidence that God would give Israel victory over the Philistine army. But he didn’t deny the reality of the giant, Goliath on the battlefield. He admitted there was a real foe, but he confessed God’s victory over the giant and the Philistines. You don’t receive victory by denying the reality of your situation, or pain, or sickness, or whatever! But by the same token, you don’t resign yourself to accepting your circumstances as God’s final word on the matter. In spite of what you see, in spite of what you feel, in spite of what you know, you stand upon the promise of God and confess God’s glory and Lordship over your situation. As you stand your ground in faith and confess God’s authority and power over your life and circumstances you can see those negatives around you displaced by the miracle of God’s promise.

**Conclusion**

Look at Hebrews 4:14, “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast *our* confession. 15For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all *points* tempted as *we are, yet* without sin. 16Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need.”

Because our High Priest is Jesus let us do what? Let us hold fast our confession!

Don’t give up! Yes, you must face reality, but accept the natural reality as God’s final word on the matter! Don’t quit confessing God’s victory and miracle!

Hold fast to your confession!

In Chapter 10 verse 23 Paul writes, “Let us hold fast the confession of *our* hope without wavering, for He who promised *is* faithful. 24And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, 25not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as *is* the manner of some, but exhorting *one another,* and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.” Confess who you are and what you have in Christ on Sunday, Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday and Saturday! Every minute of every hour, every hour of every day, every day of every week, every week of every month, let your confession of faith stand upon the integrity and reliability of God’s grace! In other words, hold fast the confession of your faith without wavering!

The Bible says that life and death are in the power of the tongue. Your words either produce life or death! Don’t be snared by the words of your mouth! Jesus said in Mathew 12 that “By your words you are justified and by your words you are condemned.” James says that if anyone can control the tongue they can become a perfect person. Neurologists have discovered that the speech center of the brain controls the entire nervous system of the body. Medical science is finally realizing what James wrote over 2000 years ago when he tells us that the tongue is the key to a dynamic, powerful and effective life! When we speak the words that God speaks and our confession is based upon his Word, our words become faith filled and have creative ability because they have been touched by God. This world in which we’re living came into existence because of the creative power of the spoken word! God said it and it was so!

Jesus said in Mark 11:23 that, “If you believe in your heart, and speak with the faith of God, you can have what you believe for.” Faith is exercised by the spoken word!

Confession is saying positively what you believe.

Confession is speaking God’s word on His behalf.

Confession is saying the words that God speaks.

Confession is giving testimony to what you know is truth.

Confession is bearing witness to the truth you have embraced.

Speak the word and release the faith of God within you because faith is developed by what you say.