

IMPACT

I **M**ust **P**ersonally **A**cknowledge **C**hrist **T**oday
Trust in the LORD with all your heart, And lean not on your own understanding; *in all your ways acknowledge Him* and He shall direct your path.
Proverbs 3:5-6

Passage: I John 2:19-23 “They went out from us, but they were not of us; for if they had been of us, *they would have continued with us*; but they went out that they might be made manifest, that none of them were of us. But you have an anointing from the Holy One, and you know all things. I have not written to you because you do not know the truth, but because you know it, and that no lie is of the truth. Who is a liar but he who denies that Jesus is the Christ? He is antichrist who denies the Father and the Son. Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.”

Quote: In New Testament times, confessing Christ publicly often came at the ultimate price—death. In some parts of the world, it still does!

Several years ago, a television ad featured people of various ages and from different races declaring, “***I am an American!***” The way they said it revealed far more than that they simply lived in America. It meant that they were not ashamed to call themselves Americans, and that they were grateful for the benefits of being citizens of this country. It meant that they could offer proof of their legal citizenship. The words, “***I am a Christian***” mean that you are convinced that the written Word of God is Truth. You embrace the living Son of God as your own cherished Savior. You openly declare your allegiance to Him as Lord of your life. You are not ashamed of being a citizen of Heaven. You are grateful for the present and future benefits of your citizenship! The words, “***I am a Christian,***” mean that you possess the proof of your citizenship in the form of God’s gifts of faith, repentance and the indwelling Holy Spirit.¹

True Christians believe in their hearts and confess with their tongues that Jesus Christ is the Savior of their soul and the Lord of their life.² This confession is to “declare openly by way of speaking out freely” with deep conviction your “allegiance to Christ as your Master and Lord.”³ The same Greek word for confess is translated acknowledge in I John 2:23. “Whoever denies the Son does not have the Father either; he

Who acknowledges the Son has the Father also.” For Christians, a formal, public confession of Christ is primarily made by identifying with Him through the single act of believer’s baptism. Baptism cost believers in the early church far more than it does in our day and in our country; it marked a public break from what they were and formerly believed, and it declared allegiance to Christ. Currently in many foreign countries, baptism as a declaration of faith in Christ could mean death! For baptized believers, confession of Christ continues by remembering Him in the Lord’s Supper—an on-going *act of obedience* that strengthens our faith and our fellowship.⁴ In a very real sense, confession of Christ is also made by joining a local church where the careful, preaching of God’s Word is the priority and through which members can serve the Lord. We also confess Christ when praise Him for His goodness as well as when we petition Him for provision and protection.

“We must not be ashamed of the person, the teaching, nor the requirements of Christ. If we deny Him in these things before men, or are *unwilling to express our attachment to Him in every way possible*, then it is right that He should... deny us before God. And He will do it.”⁵

**God has no
“secret agents!”**

Too often, failure to confess Christ will be in the form of not sharing with others a reason for the hope that lies within us. For some, it is especially “tempting” not to share the Gospel with family and friends under the guise of “not making waves.” The truth is that we often selfishly value our present relationship with them far more than we regard their eternal relationship with Christ! As with us, He will be their Savior and their Judge.⁶ The question is whether the judgment will be for rewards, or for the lack of a saving relationship with Him. Too many *professing Christians* embrace a man-centered, “try Jesus,” false gospel that makes little impact upon their own lives let alone on the lives of those who interact with them. May God help us to proclaim boldly that Jesus is the way, the truth, and the life!⁶ When it comes to confessing Christ, the plain truth is that God has no “secret agents!”

¹ Eph.2:1-10; I John 3:24; 4:13, 15 ² Romans 10:9, 10 ³ Vine’s ⁴ II Corinthians 11:23-30 ⁵ A. Barnes ⁶ II Cor.5:1-11; John 3 and 14