**“Believe, Confess, Be Saved”**

**John 3:16-17; Eph. 2:8-9; Rom. 10:1-17**

**(Notes based on the sermon by Pastor Steve Massey, Hayden Bible Church, 3/16/25)**

What makes someone a Christian? Does calling yourself a Christian make you one? Most Americans “self-identify” as Christians, but their belief typically stops there. Does going to church make you a Christian? Just ‘cause I stand in my garage does not make me a car! How about being born into a Christian family, or being politically and morally conservative? No, that doesn’t cut it either. So, what must anyone ***do*** to truly become a Christian?

Read John 3:16-17, Eph. 2:8-9, and Rom. 10:9-10. (Q1) In these three passages, the Bible clearly and succinctly presents what anyone must do to become a Christian. We are saved by grace alone through faith alone in Christ alone as our Savior and Lord. Paul focuses on the mouth and the heart in Romans 10. These two essential aspects of saving faith go together. Believing and confessing are in the active tense. Every Christian clinging to Him now is still believing and confessing.

In Rom. 10:1-3 Paul commends his fellow Jews for following the Law and their religious traditions. But their error was thinking that this gave them a right standing with God. They thought, “If we can just do enough religious stuff maybe God will accept us.” But **we all** fail to meet God’s perfect standard (Rom. 3:10, 23). Paul makes it clear that Christ’s perfection is credited to us if we simply believe and confess Him from our heart (Rom. 10:9-10).

What does it mean to “believe from the heart”? Believing from the heart requires **knowledge, agreement,** and **surrender**. God comes and opens our eyes with **knowledge**. We were all born alienated from God. SELF is on the throne. You do wrong things because you are a sinner by nature. You need a new nature, a new heart. Your ONLY rescue is Jesus Christ. To be saved is to be adopted into His family (Rom. 8:15; Gal. 4:4-5). We are to be stewards, not hoarders, of this knowledge (Rom. 10: 13-14). Note: You don’t need to know everything to be saved! Also note: Mere knowledge of the gospel does not save you. Even demons know the facts of the gospel!

Belief from the heart requires **agreement**. You agree that it is true because it comes from a God who is always true. Again, it is OK if you don’t understand it all. BUT… don’t be that guy who agrees that God’s Word is true, yet remains unbelieving in his heart. Belief from the heart requires **surrender**. Here’s an example: You may **know** that a life vest will keep you afloat. You may **agree** that a life jacket could save your life. But until you **surrender and put it on** it does you no good. Have you put on the life vest that God has offered? You must personally fall into Jesus’ arms. Belief from the heart is not a past thing and it’s not a passive thing. (Q2) Saving faith is a reliance on Christ that is present and active and growing. Confession includes our total allegiance to Him. He is our Lord and our Master (Matt. 10:32-33).

Just HOW do we confess Jesus as Lord? One way is through **baptism**. Baptism does not save, but it testifies of salvation. It is a public confession of belief in Christ. It is a picture of what God does for His children. When we come up out of that water we identify with Christ’s resurrection. We also confess Jesus is Lord through the taking of the bread and the cup. When we take **communion** we remember all He has done and is doing for us. We confess Jesus as Lord when we **gather on the Lord’s day** (Heb. 10:24-25). Still another way to confess Him is by **telling others about Him** (Acts 1:8, 4:20; Matt. 28:18-20). We confess Him when we actively share the gospel with family and friends. Charle Spurgeon said, “A Christian… can hardly carry out his confession with his mouth unless he goes a little out of his way at times to bear testimony.” Finally, we confess Jesus as Lord **by choosing obedience over sin**. No, we are not yet perfect. But our habit, our pattern, is one of obedience. When we confess Jesus as Lord He exerts His Lordship in our lives more and more as we grow in Him. Let us live all of our days actively believing, confessing, and surrendering to Him.

**QUESTIONS**:

1. In your own words, how do you become a Christian?
2. Pastor Steve said, “Belief from the heart is not a past thing and it’s not a passive thing.” What did he mean?
3. Baptism is important to the individual and to the church. Explain both.
4. What questions in Rom. 10:14-15 is God calling YOU to participate in? How are you responding?
5. Which phrase(s) in the hymn below mean the most to you? Why?

**“Living for Jesus a Life that is True” (Chisholm)**

Living for Jesus a life that is true,  
Striving to please Him in all that I do;  
Yielding allegiance, glad-hearted and free,  
This is the pathway of blessing for me.

**O Jesus, Lord and Savior,  
I give myself to Thee,  
For Thou, in Thy atonement  
Didst give Thyself for me;  
I own no other Master,  
My heart shall be Thy throne,  
My life I give, henceforth to live,  
O Christ, for Thee alone.**

Living for Jesus who died in my place,  
Bearing on Calv’ry my sin and disgrace;  
Such love constrains me to answer His call,  
Follow His leading and give Him my all.