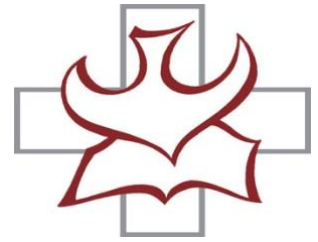


The Good Confession

Isaiah 43:10-13a, 1 Timothy 6:11-16,
1 Peter 3:15-16, John 1:6-8, 29-34

October 20, 2019

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John the Baptist is the transition between the Old Testament and the New Testament. He is the long promised forerunner of the Messiah. John the Baptist makes the *good confession* when he points to Jesus and says “*Behold! The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” His *confession* was that Jesus is the Son of God, the Savior of the world! The *good confession* is the Gospel Good News of Jesus!

Jesus Himself makes the *good confession* when He stood before Pontius Pilate. He boldly proclaimed that He is the King of Israel, the promise Messiah of the Jews who would save His people from their sins.

Jesus would leave Pontius Pilate’s courtroom and go into God’s “courtroom” on Mt. Calvary, where He stood in our place carrying our sins; He was declared guilty of our sins; He was condemned with our guilt, and sentenced to die on a cross in our place. *Jesus Himself is the good confession*; He Himself is the good news of eternal salvation for every single person on earth!

St. Paul teaches that it is now our turn to make the *good confession*; and St. Peter writes this:

In your hearts set apart Christ as Lord. Always be prepared to give an answer to everyone who asks you to give the reason for the hope that you have. But do this with gentleness and respect

1 Peter 3:15

Always be prepared to give an answer.

Another way saying that is always be ready to make the *good confession*. Be ready to tell someone about Jesus; be ready to do the right thing and live a holy life. Be *alert and aware* of how you live your Christian life and of the things that you talk about and the things that you say.

Always be prepared to give an answer!

Always be prepared to make the Good Confession!

Those words are not meant to frighten you; nor are they meant to make you apprehensive. These are joy filled words of confession, of witness, of Gospel. These words remind us that *like John the Baptist*, we have the honor of pointing to Jesus and telling others that He is *the Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world*. *Like Jesus*, we are able to confess that He is the *King of Israel, the long-promised Savior of all nations*.

When you think about the *good confession*; and always being prepared *to give an answer* to the hope that is within you, Think about it in two ways. You have your **Good Works**; and you have your **Good Words**.

Your **good works** flow from faith in the Lord Jesus Christ. Good works are driven by the Holy Spirit at work within you; **good works** are those things that line up with the 10 Commandments. Your **good works** are a light that shines in this dark world. That is why they are part of your *good confession*: your **good works** separate you from those who are engaged in evil, depraved, and sinful works.

Your **good works** stand out; whenever you obey the 10 Commandments you are a light that shines, and people notice. Your **good works** are important; every one of them. Your **good works** are a public witness; they are a public confession that you believe in Christ and that you take His Word and His Commandments seriously. Your **good works** are an important part of your *good confession*! Peter reminds us that people will notice your **good works** --- your godly lifestyle and holy living, and at

some point they will ask why you live your life differently than the world around you. That is when you can use your **good words**.

Your **GOOD WORKS** lead to an opportunity to use your **GOOD WORDS** about Jesus.

Your **good words** are nothing other than the *good news* about Jesus. The Gospel is your *Good Confession*. The word “*confession*” means *echo*: you echo the gospel to other people. That is your *good confession*; those are your **good words**; you are simply *echoing* the Gospel Good News of Jesus to others.

Remember: the Lord is **not** asking you to give a 2-hour theological explanation about Jesus. He is not asking you to parse Greek verbs or untangle Hebrew participles. He is simply asking you to *echo* the Gospel; to tell people about the Good News of Jesus’ death and resurrection; to help people understand forgiveness of sins and eternal life. You are to always be prepared to make the *Good Confession*.

This *Gospel Good News* that you “*echo*” is the same thing you have heard throughout your life:

- ⇒ **God sent Jesus to be the Savior of the world!**
- ⇒ **Jesus took your sins to the cross and you are forgiven.**
- ⇒ **Jesus’s death and resurrection led you to repentance and the forgiveness of sins.**
- ⇒ **You have peace with God and your guilty conscience has been cleansed**
- ⇒ **You were washed clean of your sins in Holy Baptism**
- ⇒ **God has declared you “not guilty” of your sins**
- ⇒ **Jesus forgives you, and now you have new life and you obey His Holy Word.**

The *Gospel Good News* that you “*echo*” is the same thing you have heard throughout your life:

The **good confession** are your **good words** explaining the Gospel to other people. Your **good words** echo the Gospel Good News of Jesus. Your **good words** invite others to hear about Jesus for themselves.

Your **good confession** – that is your **good works** and your **good words** – is your witness to the world. It is how you let your light shine for Christ; it is how you proclaim the Gospel to the world. Your **good confession** – your **good works** and your **good words** --- shine the brightest in your vocations.

- ⇒ Are you a husband or wife?
- ⇒ Are you a mother or father?
- ⇒ Are you a son or daughter?
- ⇒ Are you a brother or sister?
- ⇒ Do you have a job?
- ⇒ Do you go to school?
- ⇒ Do you have a circle of friends?
- ⇒ Do you use social media?
- ⇒ Do you live in a neighborhood?

These are the places that need your **good confession**; these are the places where your **good works** and your **good words** shine the brightest. These are the places where you can echo the Gospel Good News of Jesus to others!

Today is LWML Sunday. We are thanking God for the Lutheran Women's Missionary League and the **good confession** they have maintained for over 77 years! **By gathering together their spare change – which they call “mites” – they have given over \$100,000,000 to mission work in 43 countries!** All ladies of the congregation are welcome and warmly invited to join them in serving the Lord with gladness as they support the **good confession!**

The **good confession** echoes the Gospel Good News of Jesus. John the Baptist made the good confession! As did Jesus Himself And the Apostles And now it is your turn to make the good confession!

Make your *good confession* – do your **good works** and speak your **good words**– in all the vocations of your life! Amen!