

Believe and You Will be Saved?

by Sebastian R Fama

“If you **confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord** and **believe in your heart** that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**” (Romans 10:9). This verse is a summary or outline of what it means to be a Christian. What does it mean to “confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord?”

First, it means you publicly acknowledge that Jesus is God incarnate. As Jesus said: “Everyone who acknowledges Me before men, I also will acknowledge before my Father who is in heaven; but whoever denies me before men, I also will deny before my Father who is in heaven” (Matthew 10:33). We can deny Him not only with our mouths, but also with our actions.

If Jesus is God incarnate, and thus Lord, certain things would naturally follow. Moments before He ascended into heaven, Jesus said to His apostles: “Go therefore and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit, **teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you**” (Matthew 28:20).

If I confess that Jesus is Lord but ignore His commands, He is not really Lord of my life. For a lord rules over his subjects. And his subjects obey. And that is exactly what Paul is teaching us in Romans 16:26: “Now to Him who is able to strengthen you according to my gospel and the preaching of Jesus Christ, ... to bring about the **obedience of faith.**”

Believing in your heart involves something much more than intellectual assent. It is a deep conviction which naturally involves obedience. And obedience involves behavior. In Matthew 25:31-46 Jesus speaks about the sheep and the goats. The sheep represent those who will go on to eternal life with Him. The goats are those who will go into the eternal fire. The sheep feed the hungry, give drink to the thirsty, welcome strangers, clothe the naked, visit the sick and those in prison. The goats are the ones who perform none of these actions.

A believer must also obey the moral law. The apostle John wrote: **“And by this we may be sure that we know Him, if we keep His Commandments? He who says 'I know him' but disobeys His Commandments is a liar, and the truth is not in him, but whoever keeps His word, in him truly love for God is perfected. By this we may be sure that we are in Him”** (1 John 2:3-5).

Does this mean that your good works will earn you salvation? No, not at all. As we see in Romans 8:13, all that we do, we do by the grace of God. Indeed, we cannot even say that Jesus is Lord except by the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians 12:3). So, all throughout the process, we see God’s grace at work. And no man can take credit for that.