

CONFESSING CHRIST

References:

Notes For Servants:

- 1.
- 2.

Objectives:

General:

Specific:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

Instructions:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.
- 4.
- 5.

Bible Verse:

“Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost.”

(1 Cor 12:3)

Lesson:

See Attached Sheets.

CONFESSING CHRIST

YOU ARE MY WITNESSES

Jesus chose His disciples to become witnesses for His death and resurrection and to proclaim the Gospel to the 'world. He said to them: "But ye shall receive power, after that the Holy Ghost is come upon you: and ye shall be witnesses unto me both in Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost part of the earth." (Acts 1 :8)

After the Pentecost, the day when the Holy Spirit came upon them, St. Peter addressed the Jews and spoke to them of the life, death and resurrection of the Lord Jesus Christ. Three thousand persons believed in Christ on that day. Stephen, the first deacon in the church, was full of faith and of the Holy Spirit, and confessed that Jesus Christ is the Lord. His face was shining as the face of an angel.

THE BOLD CONFESSION AND THE MARTYRDOM

St. Paul said that when a Christian proclaims Jesus Christ Lord and God, he does not say his own words, but the Holy Spirit enlightens his heart and gives him power and courage. He never denies his faith as long as the Holy Spirit acts in him: "Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." (1 Cor. 12 :3)

- The Christians did not proclaim Christ in secret, but they confessed him in public as the Lord said:
"Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven." (Mt. 10:32)
- The Saints and Martyrs have received the power to witness to our Lord from his cross. They follow their Lord through the path of death and resurrection.
- The community life of the early Christians, the "Koinonia" of the church, provided them with the power to witness to Christ: "And they continued stedfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking of bread, and in prayers.
(Acts 2 : 42)

HOW I CONFESS CHRIST?

Every Christian must confess Christ and witness to Him in our present world. This means that each one of us has to -complete the work of Christ on earth, and to struggle against the work of the devil in our world, and thus we become witness to the victory of Christ.

This witness must not be limited to verbal expression, but should be performed in the saintly life of service, sacrifice and self-giving.

- ★ I witness to Christ by my own behaviour when I offer myself as a good example in speech and conduct, in love, in faith, in purity. (1 Tim 4:12).
- ★ I witness to Christ when I am honest in my internal life, in purity of the mind and the senses.
- ★ I confess Christ when I offer service to others and lead them to repentance and living with Christ.
- ★ I confess Christ when I offer with thanksgiving of all what I have to the needy, sharing my bread with the hungry, covering the naked, caring for the stranger and the poor, and visiting the sick and the imprisoned.

- ★ I witness to Christ when I sacrifice for his name and accept with gladness any persecution may happened to me. (Col. 1:24).
- ★ I complete my witness to Christ when I am ready to offer myself even to death. (Acts 20:24)

HOW TO ATTAIN THE POWER OF PROCLAIMING CHRIST

St. Cyprian said that the Christians in the first century drank the cup of the Blood of Christ every day in order to give them the power to offer their own blood for His name.

When we raise our eyes and hearts towards the highest, we receive the power to say with St. Paul : “For I reckon that the sufferings of this present time are not worthy to be compared with the glory which shall be revealed in us. (Romans 8 :18).

In the Liturgy of St. Basil, the people raise their voices and sing: "Amen, amen, amen. We proclaim your death, and we confess your resurrection and Ascension... we glorify you, we thank you, and supplicate you our Lord and God."

OBSTACLES OF CONFESSING THE LORD

1. Fear of people: Sometimes we care for other people's opinions more than God. Confidence in God throws all fears away.

2. Lack of honesty in our inner life: A person who lives only for personal and selfish motives is deceitful and cannot witness to Christ.

3. Alienation from the Church community: A person who lives away from the Church, neglecting prayer, fasting and partaking of the Holy Communion becomes more and more alienated from spiritual life.

QUESTIONS

1. Why is the Church called the Witnessing Church?
2. Why were the Apostles and the saints bold in confessing their faith?
3. How did the martyrs confess their faith in Christ?
4. How could you confess Christ to the present world?
5. How could we achieve the power to witness for Christ. and what are the obstacles?
6. What should we do when a non-Christian asks us about our faith in Christ?

Conclusion:

- 1.
- 2.
- 3.

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(1 Cor 12:3)