

A MATTER OF SPEAKING

by Mike Glenn

An important part of God's plan for becoming a Christian is confession. When I say confession, I do not mean the confession of our sins. There are places and times for Christians to confess sins (1 John 1:8-10), but those who are not Christians have a different confession to make in order to become a Christian. Jesus said in Matthew 10:32, "Whosoever therefore shall confess me before men, him will I also confess before my Father which is in heaven..." Both the purpose and timing of this confession for the non-Christian can be learned in the conversion of the Ethiopian eunuch in Acts 8:26-39. After learning of God's plan to save him, the eunuch said, "...See, here is water; what doth hinder me to be baptized? And Philip said, If thou believest with all thine heart, thou mayest. And he answered and said, I believe that Jesus Christ is the Son of God." Notice the following from this record in Acts:

- The confession was necessary before baptism.
- The confession was to let Phillip (or anyone present for the baptism) know that the eunuch (or any other prospect) really was a believer in Christ.
- The confession was not for sins but to express belief and acceptance of the Savior.
- Obedience to God was not completed when the confession of faith was made. The rejoicing of the eunuch happened after his obedience was completed in baptism (that process will be discussed next month).

Romans 10:10 says, "For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation." So, both our faith (inward belief) and our confession of faith (verbal expression) are important to take us to salvation. Of course, our confession of Christ does not end when we become Christians. Christ's statement in Matthew 10:32 was intended to apply throughout our Christian life. Can we possibly imagine a zealous Christian who does not constantly confess Christ to those about him or her?