

## GOD'S MAGNIFICENT IDEA

Part XXVII

Matthew 16:13-19

Introduction: Since the Old Testament taught us that God required a blood sacrifice to atone for our sins, and since sacrifice is still required of us today, how does praise figure into the equation? For this answer we must go to *Hebrews 9:11-28*. Jesus once and for all fulfilled the need for a blood sacrifice to permanently atone for our sins. *Hebrews 13:10-15* allows us to see how praise today becomes our sacrifice unto God. Thank God that what Jesus did does not have to be repeated. His blood is the permanent access to the Father. We owe Jesus our praise; because of Him, our relationship with God has been restored. Paul tells us that through Jesus we have been reconciled to the Father. Romans 5:9-11. Reconcile means to conciliate or bring *back together*.

### I. God's magnificent idea

#### A. Praise and confession. Confession is inextricably tied to praise.

1. *Hebrews 13:15*. We should note that the Amplified Version of the Bible says "...the fruit of lips that thankfully acknowledge and confess His Name." The latter part of the verse in the American Standard Version says, "...that the fruit of lips which make confession to His Name." The words "giving thanks" come from the Greek word "homologeo." In most other places in the Bible, that same word is translated *confess*. It seems to me that a correct rendering of this verse should be, "That is the fruit of our lips *confessing* His Name."
2. This is a critical distinction in this important verse on praise and worship. The sacrifice therefore is equated in this verse to the fruit of our lips. A sacrifice of praise must involve a vocal expression to God. That sacrifice then becomes a confession to His Name.
3. The Greek word *homologeo* in the Expository Dictionary of "New Testament Words" by W. E. Vine is stated to mean, "To speak the same thing, to assent, agree with, to confess, declare, to confess or declare openly by speaking out freely...to confess by way of celebrating with praise."
4. We have here a revelation of the connection between confession and the sacrifice of praise. Jesus made an interesting statement regarding this in *Matthew 10:32*. The concept of confession is also referred to in *Romans 10:9-10*, *1<sup>st</sup> timothy 6:12*, and *Hebrews 3:1*.
5. While there is a negative connotation to this word, *confessing of our sins*, there is also a positive side, that is, *confessing our faith* in God's Word. *Confession* is saying the same thing with our mouth that God says in His Word. It is literally making the words of our mouth agree with the written Word of God.
6. The psalmist helps us with this in *Psalms 116:10*. In the New Testament, Paul uses this teaching in his epistle in *2<sup>nd</sup> Corinthians 4:13*. This is a description of the process of confession. If faith is going to move in our life, it must have a means of expressing itself. The words of our lips give expression and life to the faith within us. Faith that does not speak is stillborn.
7. There is a direct connection between our mouth and our heart. *Matthew 12:34*. Our mouth is like a faucet that lets out what is really inside. If we are standing on the Word of God and we believe what it says, then that faith will be expressed through our mouth. If we are making confessions contrary to the Word of God, we are apparently bound by strongholds of Satan's lies. Satan attacks us through our minds. He plants lies in our mind, and it is up to us to rebuke him and refuse his lies. The more we dig into the value of praise, the more we recognize the absolute necessity for being an enlightened *praiser*.

Conclusion: If we want God to reside in us and in our church services, we must acknowledge and practice heartfelt praise. If God lives in the praises of His people (*Psalms 22:3*), then this is the way of guaranteeing that God will show up in our church services. Without His anointing and presence, all that is left are empty sounds and useless time spent.