

HOW CHRIST IS DENIED.

Christ is denied (a) by our words spoken out of harmony with his spirit and teaching; (b) by rejecting him as our Saviour and teacher and Lord, sent from Heaven for our salvation, instruction and government; (c) by taking sides with the world and against him in amusements, social customs and business principles and management; (d) by remaining silent when we ought to speak, either in testimony as to the saving and keeping power of God, or rebuking immoral conduct in our presence.

A HELPFUL OUTLINE.

1. *Whom are we to confess.* "Me," says Christ. Not a denomination, nor a creed, but a person—the eternal Son of God. He must be confessed as Prophet (teacher), Priest (Saviour), and King (supreme ruler over our lives).

2. *Where are we to confess Christ?* "Before men." Before men—young and old, good and bad, rich and poor, learned and ignorant. Before men—in the home, at school, in the office, in the workshop, on the playground—everywhere.

3. *How are we to confess Christ?* (a) *Verbally.* We should never refuse to own that we need him, trust him, love him and serve him. (b) *Practically.* By our deeds. Actions speak louder than words. Our deeds must never belie our profession. We must,

"By actions, words and temper show
That we our Heavenly Master know
And serve with heart sincere."

(c) *Passively.* By bearing, with Christian fortitude, patience and resignation the troubles of life—poverty, affliction, adversity, bereavement.

4. *What hinders us from confessing Christ?* Fear of being reviled and ridiculed; fear of men's hatred in opposing their opinion; fear of persecution and loss of temporal things. The parents of the blind man had this fear. (John 9: 22.)

5. *What are the advantages of confessing Christ?* An approving conscience (Rom. 10: 9, 10). Open deliverance (illus.—the three Hebrew young men. Dan. chap. III.). Open acknowledgment and approval (Luke 3: 5-6).

6. *What will be the consequences of not confessing Christ?* A guilty conscience. An injured life. An unhappy death. A dark eternity.

WHAT IS IT TO CONFESS CHRIST?

To confess Christ is, first of all, to confess our sins, since he is first of all the Saviour. Then it is to accept his leadership—to have no more any will of our own.

Then it is to receive his truth without question, since he is the source of all truth. Then it is confession before men—for a stay to you and a spur to others.

Our confession of Christ admits Christ's glory; his confession of us promises our glory forever.

HINDRANCES TO CONFESSING CHRIST.

These hindrances are sometimes foolish friends or mistaken parents; but Christ will call us friends, and our Heavenly Father is better than earthly parent.

Another hindrance is often the fear of what "they" will say, drowning the fear of what he will say.

"I am not good enough," we say, forgetting that he is good enough for both.

We are hindered by the fear that we must change much of our life. If a physician told a sick man to keep on living just as he had been living, would not the sick man justly lose confidence in him?

HOME THIRSTS.

Not to confess Christ is to deny him. Whoever is not for him is against him.

Lip confession is useless without life confession—to say Lord, Lord, and do not the things which he says.

Life confession is useless without lip confession. It is like following an army but refusing to enlist or wear the uniform.

Postponing decision is denial as long as it is postponed, and is likely to be denial forever.

Christ will deny the deniers, and thus they will be denied of blessedness forever.

Christ's confession of us begins as soon as we confess him; it means peace here, as well as glory hereafter.

Whatever men may say, they honor a man that shows his colors more than a man that takes his color, chameleon-like, from everything.—Wells.

POINTS FOR THE PRESIDENT.

Did your last meeting begin on time? If not, see that this one does, and all subsequent ones—a good deal depends on punctuality. As a rule, don't allow the meeting to drag on after the hour of closing. Plan your order of service beforehand, and conduct it with spirit; have no dull moments in the hour. Arrange for three papers or addresses for this meeting. 1. What is meant by confessing Christ? 2. How may we confess Christ? 3. How do men deny Christ? Have a short testimony service, at which members who know and believe in Christ may confess him, and those who are not Christians may no longer deny their Lord by refusing to accept and serve him.

DECEMBER. 23—"THE GLORY OF CHRIST."

John 1: 14.

CHRISTMAS MEETING.

HOME READINGS.

Mon., Dec. 17. The glorious gospel 2 Cor. 4: 1-6
Tues., Dec. 18. Its glorious message..... 1 John 1: 1-10
Wed., Dec. 19. God in Jesus Christ..... 2 Cor. 3: 18-21
Thurs., Dec. 20. The transfiguration..... Luke 9: 28-35
Fri., Dec. 21. Glorified in the disciples..... John 17: 5-10
Sat., Dec. 22. Christmas glory..... Luke 2: 11-14

THE greatest theme on earth for human contemplation is the glory of Jesus. With our limited intellectual vision and bedimmed spiritual outlook, we can but faintly and imperfectly understand the subject, in which all heaven rejoices and at which all the world may justly wonder.

The glory of Christ is intrinsic—he was God in the beginning; he became God on earth "manifest in the flesh"; he is still God, blessed forevermore. The glory of Christ is the glory of God—a glory so great that human eyes could not behold it and live; symbolizing, it would seem, the fact that no human intellect can fully contemplate that glory and continue to exist within human limitations. But the degree of that glory of Christ which mortal minds may grasp is described as "the glory as of the only begotten of the Father."

The glory of Christ is also *extrinsic*—he was active in the creation of things; he is the source of life and light to men; "he was the true light which lighteth every man that cometh into the world"; he came into the world (for "The Word was made flesh and dwelt among us"), and "as many as received him to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." The Son of God became the Son of Man in order that the sons of men might become the sons of God. This is the glory of Christ as revealed in redemption—the hope of our fallen world, the glory of mankind.

JESUS CROWNED.

In Hebrews we read: "But we see Jesus "crowned with glory and honor" (Heb. 2: 9). Thus we may consider "Jesus crowned with glory and honor" as the subject of our present topic. And the crowning of Jesus is an event in history. We do not need to wait until the glories of eternity are revealed in order to see Jesus crowned with glory and honor. The steady and sublime

march of historic events reveal the presence and demonstrates the glory of the Son of God, the Redeemer of the world. In point of time the coronation of Jesus began with his introduction into this world as his Saviour, when the heavenly anthem sounded in sweet harmony over our sin-troubled earth: "Glory to God in the highest and on earth peace, good-will toward men." It was thereafter continued, for his unique and charming life crowned him as a *perfect man*. His resurrection on Easter morn crowned him the *conqueror of death*. On Ascension Day he was accepted as *King of kings*, who could say: "All power is given unto me in heaven and on earth." And, seated on the right hand of the Father, he is *eternally crowned*, reigning in majestic triumph as the ages move on, until the time shall come when from the river into the end of the earth He shall be Sovereign supreme.

1. *Jesus is crowned in the fact of his unique and charming life.*—Jesus is the only one who ever lived a life of stainless purity, the only one who with never-ceasing self-sacrifice devoted himself to the good of humanity. Both his *being* and his *doing* were perfect, irreproachable, magnificent. Men who reject the divinity of Christ, yet acknowledge his sublime humanity, his perfect manhood. He is the model man for all ages, the great exemplar of the human race, the sublime ideal of human character for all time. Young people, imitate him. Make him your ideal. Aim at nothing lower. "Do not take poor human creatures for your ideal of excellence, no tune your hearts to their key notes. Black veins are in the purest marble, and flaws in the most lustrous diamonds; but to imitate Jesus is freedom, and to be like him is perfection."

2. *Jesus is crowned in the preaching of the Gospel.*—The gospel is the instrument for the regeneration and rectification of the world. It is the *only* instrument for this exalted purpose. Learning will not do. Commerce is helpless for this object. Military process cannot force the world to be good. The astronomer looks at the heavens. Those stars are to be counted; those constellations are to be mapped out; the orbits of the planets are to be observed. It is a vast and complicated work. How is it to be done? By the telescope. Just so, the church looks out upon its work. It is commissioned to bring this world into captivity to the obedience of Christ. It is a great work. How is it to be done? By the gospel. God has given us this, and only this, to save the world. And it is doing its work. The world is transformed as the gospel is preached and accepted. It is the forerunner and sustainer of civilization, the harbinger of peace.

3. *Jesus is crowned in the church's faithfulness in spreading the Gospel.*—The missionary work of the apostles was at first discouraging and hazardous—immense odds there were to fight against. But notwithstanding opposition, in every age of the Christian era, Jesus had received a crown. After the first centuries of fierce persecution, peace and liberty were at last gained, and not only that, but on the throne of Rome, sat the first Christian emperor, and on his coat-of-arms was emblazoned the cross of Christ. Not long after, the Emperor Julian was determined on the destruction of the Christians, but, on the battlefield, with the sword thrust in his side, he exclaimed, O Galilean, thou hast conquered." Napoleon in exile reviewed the mighty kingdom which had exercised dominion in the world's history, and said that each in turn had disappeared, "but," said he "one kingdom was founded upon love, and to-day there are millions of adherents who are ready to die for Jesus, the Christ." Great has been the progress of the gospel since then in the home field and in foreign lands by the faithfulness of the church in propagating the truth. The glory of Christ has been achieved in the world-wide power of his life and teachings.