

# ***Harmonizing PROFESSION and WALK***

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***They profess to know God, but in works they deny Him, being abominable, disobedient, and disqualified for every good work" (Titus 1:16) There are many unbelievers who are disillusioned***

By those of us who call ourselves Christians because they see a contradiction in what we profess and how we live. We profess one thing but live another. When we do not harmonize our profession with our walk, we put the church into great shame and we make evangelism very difficult. We also cause many of our loved ones to question the validity of our faith. Those who have been disillusioned say, "I do not want to have anything to do with the church or with Christianity at all!" Why do they say this? It is because our profession and walk do not harmonize.

Titus 1:16 says, "They profess to know God." The New International Version of the Bible says, "they claim to know God." Who are they? They are those who claim to be Christians but by their actions, conduct or lifestyle, deny the teachings of Christ. Therefore God says, these people are abominable, disobedient and disqualified for every good work. When we profess our faith in doctrine, it must be consistent with the way we live. Someone has said, "the way we live is the expression of what we believe." If we believe in the Bible, then we must live the way the Bible teaches us to live.

Let me mention three ways we can profess our faith. First, we can profess with our mouth. We confess our faith in Jesus through our speech by giving testimonies.

Secondly, we can profess by being religious. We do what is religious to the Christian faith. For example, we attend church services regularly, we pray publicly when called upon, we give our offerings in our worship service, we carry our Bibles to church and we worship God aloud publicly as a congregation. These are religious exercises that people see and identify you as a Christian.

Thirdly, we can profess by submitting to religious ordinances or rituals such as participating in Water Baptism, Holy Communion, getting married in church and baby dedication. It is possible to profess all the religious ordinances, and yet deny Christ, if our character and lifestyle do not testify that we belong to the Lord.

How do we deny Christ? I would like to give five examples in which we can deny Christ. First, we can deny Christ in our singing. We can sing "I love you with the love of the lord" and "Blest be the tie that binds" but later on, we backbite about some brothers and sisters in Christ. The Bible says, "If anyone among you thinks he is religious, and does not bridle his tongue but deceives his own heart, this one's religion is useless" (James 11:26). In the same way, we also deny Christ when we say "Amen" in our hearts and mouth, but do not practice what we said "Amen" to. The Bible says, "These people draw near to me with their mouth, and honor me with their lips, But their hearts are far from Me" (Matthew 15:8).

Second, we can deny Christ when we are so zealous in our worship and keen to obey the Lord when we respond to altar call, but for the rest of the week, we are inconsistent. The Bible says, "And to the angel of the church Sardis write, 'These things says He who has the seven Spirits of God and the seven stars: "I know your works, that you have a name that you are alive, but you are dead" (Revelation 3:1). We may just have a name or reputation but in reality, we are just actors or hypocrites.

Third, we can deny Christ when we live our lives like the people described in 2 Timothy 3:1-5, "But know this, in the last time perilous times will come: For men will be lovers of money, boasters, proud, blasphemers, disobedient to parents, unthankful, unholy, unloving, unforgiving, slanderers, without self-control, brutal, despisers of good, traitors, headstrong, haughty, lovers of pleasure rather than lovers of God, having a form of godliness but denying its power. And from such people turn away!"

Fourth, we can deny Christ as a Christian employer when we underpay those who work for us. We give the impression that we are Christians but behind their backs, we do all kinds of shoddy deals. Titus 2:10 says, "not pilfering (thieving), but showing fidelity (honesty), that they may adorn the doctrines of God our Saviour in all things." We are not to take advantage of those working under us in the name of Christianity.

Last of all, we can deny Christ after a church service saying, "What a wonderful sermon!" but we do not live out the truth that we have heard. Like the people mentioned in Hebrew 4:2, "For indeed the Gospel was preached to us as well as to them; but the word which they heard did not profit them, not being mixed with faith in those who heard it."

Many of our loved ones or colleagues and friends could be rejecting Christ because we do not harmonize our profession with our walk. Are you the barrier that is venting them from coming to receive Jesus Christ as Lord and Saviour, Are you denying Christ in your everyday life? The Bible says those who deny Him are "abominable". This word really means "detestable", "loathsome" or "repulsive." This is a very harsh and severe word. In other words, God is saying that "He cannot tolerate them; they are disobedient, they do not qualify, they must be removed!" God is not talking to the unbelievers but to those who profess to know God but do not practice what they know and believe. God wants us to be truthful and not be hypocrites. As believers in Jesus Christ we must harmonize our profession and our walk so that others may come to the saving knowledge of Christ. Let us live for the glory of God!