**Introduction**

It is an old enough theological concept that it has a Latin phrase – “*Lex Orandi, Lex Credendi*” – The law of Prayer, is the law of Belief. The way that it is typically invoked is something like “show me how you worship and I will understand what you believe.” If your worship changes significantly, so have your beliefs, even if you deny it. It just might take to be honest with yourself.

That is usually working from the observed form of worship to the professed belief. But there is always a question of which way does causation run. Does a change in worship form cause a change in belief? Or does a change in belief cause a change in worship form? And I think the bible would say that causation work from belief to expression.

**Text**

And I’m basing this first on our Psalm for tonight. The psalms that we are using during our midweeks were and are part of the Jewish Passover. And Psalm 115 is a comparison of Yahweh of signs and wonders to the powerless Egyptian idols. “Our God is in the heavens, he does all that he pleases. Their idols are silver and gold, the work of human hands.” And the psalmist goes on to highlight the deficiencies of the idols. They do not speak. They do not see. They do not hear. They do not smell. They do nor feel…in other words that are inhuman. And then the psalmist goes on to make the important point in verse 8. “Those who make them become like them; so do all who trust in them.”

If you believe in the idols. If you worship the idols. You become like what you worship. Which is actually more expansive that belief forming worship. Belief comes to form the whole person.

**Moral**

Any belief requires a confession – a statement of belief. And we live in an age, maybe, hopefully coming out of one, where statements of belief, confessions, are pooh-poohed. But as in all things Jesus is our model. He is not just our model, as he is also our savior. “You who fear the LORD, trust in the LORD! He is their help and their shield.” But that belief produces the confession. And that confession guides how we live and who we are.

And we have the comparison of Peter with Jesus. Now I don’t think you can question Peter’s belief. And Peter is the man who made the bold confession – “You the Christ, the son of the living God.” Which all is true as Jesus would praise his confession. Upon this I will build my church. But it isn’t an instantaneous formation. Christ builds his church. And in Peter that bold confession comes into contact with what it would mean. “Certainly you were with him.” With the implied, and you should be standing next to him right now. “Man, I do not know what you are talking about.”

The time of our testing is not always a success. We often fail to live our confession. “And he went out and wept bitterly.”

**Christology**

Compare Peter to Christ. The one thing the Council wants to hear from Jesus is his confession. “If you are the Christ, tell us.” Now Jesus knows that unlike Peter who believed it, which is why his failure to live it had him weeping bitterly, these people don’t believe it. They want to here Jesus’ confession to use it against him. He knows they will call it blasphemy and use it to kill him.

But Jesus knows his course. “From now on the Son of Man shall be seated at the right hand of Power of God.” The new man, the perfect man, Jesus, will be raised back. That Son of Man is a reference to Daniel 7 and the vision of the Kingdoms. And the time has come for the old Kingdoms to pass for THE Kingdom to come.

And when THE Kingdom comes, every tongue shall confess. And that is really what Jesus brings from the Council. They ask him straightly – “So, You are the Son of God?” And our ears are too attuned to irony or sarcasm. Jesus, reply is full earnest. “You yourselves say it.” It is as you say. The difference being that the didn’t believe it, while Jesus was making the good confession. Unlike Peter, Jesus was living out his confession. He came to save sinners. And the method would be the cross.

**Eschatological**

The priests accepted Jesus’ confession at face value. “We have heard it ourselves from his own lips.” By their actions – they would put him to death – you know they didn’t believe it. Their belief shaped their actions.

Peter’s belief shaped his actions if not quite perfectly. Repentance – that weeping bitterly – is always the first step of authentic belief.

Jesus’ belief, or maybe we should say trust like the Psalmist, perfectly forms his confession and his action. He takes up the cross for all of us.

And we probably find ourselves with Peter more often that with Jesus. Which is all the more reason to remember Jesus’ words to Peter earlier. “I have prayed for you that your faith may not fail. And when you have turned again, strengthen your brothers (Lk. 22:32 ESV).”

It is faith that saves. It is belief that turns us again. And may that faith - ours and our brothers – strengthen us for our own crosses. That we might learn to bear them. And live our confession.