

“Ye call Me ... LORD: and ye say well; for so I am.”

JOHN 13:13

THAT ALL MEN SHOULD HONOUR THE SON

JOHN 5:23

«...that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost».

1 Cor. 12:3

«Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ».

Eph. 5:20

We pray this in Jesus' name. Amen! – said the preacher emphatically at the end of his prayer. This made it evident that up to that point, he had rarely considered the “**Lordship**” of Christ. Jesus Christ is **Lord** – that is the great fact given to us (who are born again) by God through the unique ministry of Paul the apostle, for the church which is the body of Christ.

There is probably no vital part of the truth of God's Word more universally denied by professing Christianity today, than this one. The apostles would have been greatly troubled, and called for repentance had they been able to hear the way, the religious world of today **dishonours** that precious name that God the Father has put above all names. Probably the leading reason for it is *tradition*, the tradition of men which began hundreds of years ago. Another reason is certainly the general *lack of understanding* of the incomprehensible condescension of the Son of the living God. Then, a general *ignorance* concerning how to rightly divide the Word of Truth (2 Tim. 2:15) resulted in believers taking the guidelines for their use of terminology from the four Gospel records, instead of from Paul's Epistles. Finally, many hymn writers have also forgotten this great fact. It is very difficult for believers to find hymns that reverently emphasize the Lordship of Christ.

As our **opening** Bible text (1 Cor. 12:3) says, no one can acknowledge Jesus Christ as **Lord** except through the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, a person could learn to say the words, but even a parrot could do that. However, neither a parrot nor an unbelieving man could reverently speak of Him as “my Lord” in the full consciousness of this statement's meaning. The unsaved just do not speak of Him as their Lord.

The **second** Bible text (Eph. 5:20) cited provides us the pattern for the prayers of a spiritually instructed child of God today. We are taught to pray **to** the Father **in** the name of *our Lord Jesus Christ*, thereby giving Him the full honour of His title and position.

“But is not His name Jesus?”

Absolutely! But it is the name of His humanity and of His humiliation while here on earth. It is “Christ after the flesh”, or in His *earthly* ministry. In 2 Corinthians 5:16 Paul explains to us, “...though we have known Christ after the flesh, yet now henceforth know we Him so no more” (literally). We know Him now as the **risen** Lord, “Head over all things to the church, which is His body (Eph. 1:22,23). Of course He received the name “Jesus” by divine decree; however, what was revealed to the shepherds already at that time? “...Which is Christ, the Lord” (Luke 2:11). We read concerning His earthly ministry, “...that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision (= *the Jews*) for the truth of God, to confirm the promises made unto the fathers” (Romans 15:8). But His ministry now as the risen Lord is something else. In the 16th verse of the same chapter Paul writes, “That I should be the minister of Jesus Christ to the Gentiles”.

A wonderful change

Concerning His birth in this world it is written, “...and thou shalt call His name JESUS: for He shall save His people from their sins” (Matt. 1:21). Thus “Jesus” was to be His name as their Saviour. But compare that verse with a later one: “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, Whom ye have crucified, both **Lord** and Christ” (Acts 2:36). What occurred in between, that changed the emphasis on “Jesus” to emphasis on His title as “Lord”? Obviously, it was His resurrection! He is **now** the risen Lord and Messiah. God Himself has given Him a name which is above every name (Phil. 2:9), and it is certainly not simply the name “Jesus”, because He already had that name before His resurrection and glorification, and others have had and have that name. Today He is not “Jesus” to His church; He is its exalted Head, “the **Lord** Jesus Christ”. He is the “**Kyrios**” (Greek), e.g. **LORD** – Lord over life and death and over every power and might. Highest exaltation and honour followed the deepest humiliation. Blessed be this glorious

Saviour, the Lord of lords and King of kings to the glory of God the Father!

This divine change encloses an interesting transition: So we find the name “Jesus” without a title used hundreds of times in the four Gospel records, 29 times in Acts, down to 10 times in the pre-prison epistles, and only 2 times in the prison epistles themselves. On the other hand, “the Lord Jesus Christ” is not found at all in the four Gospel records, used 5 times in the book of Acts, and 32 times in Paul’s church epistles. And even when the name “Jesus” is sometimes used in the epistles, there is a special reason for each occasion, as in Ephesians 4:21, “as the truth is in Jesus”. Here His **earthly** walk is referred to as an example for us. It is also important to observe that the Holy Spirit alone is the speaker in all the epistles – and not the human writer.

An example showing the change from “Jesus” to “Lord” is found in the establishing of the Lord’s Supper. In the Gospel it is written (e.g. Mark 14:22) “Jesus took bread”. Paul, however, wrote in 1 Corinthians 11:23, “The **Lord** Jesus...took bread”. Let us observe that he said he had received this formulation from the Lord Himself! If you carefully search through Paul’s epistles you will quickly notice how carefully and accurately the Holy Spirit confers to the risen Lord His full title of honour, “the **Lord** Jesus Christ”.

They all called Him “Lord”

Even in the four Gospel records the Lordship of Christ was consistently honoured. His name “Jesus” is only used *narratively*. This means that the Holy Spirit, as the Scripture’s divine Author, in recording all the events historically of the Lord Jesus in His humanity, quite properly referred to Him as “Jesus” (Note the change from Luke 23:52 to 24:3!). And being on an equality as a part of the triune Godhead, the Holy Spirit had every right to do this. Never, however – either in the four records of the Gospel or anywhere else in the New Testament – did the disciples address Him with “Jesus”. That would truly have been a derogatory

familiarity. They all called Him “**Lord**”, thereby giving Him the honour He deserves (Romans 13:7; Malachi 1:6). The disciples even avoided referring to Him as “Jesus” when they spoke with others about Him. In Luke 24:19 one finds an exception to this: “...concerning Jesus of Nazareth”. Clearly, this was to identify Him to this “stranger”. Because of the serious shock of the crucifixion, they had temporarily lost faith in His Messiahship!

Apart from the disciples, Mary, Martha, and all of the other women called Him “Lord”. So did the Gentile centurion in Matthew 8, the dying thief on the cross and even doubting Thomas in John 20:28 – “My Lord and my God”. Full of reverence, in John 21:7 the disciple was careful to say to Peter, “It is the Lord”. Not “It is Jesus”, as so many careless Christians would say today. In Acts 9:6 Saul of Tarsus was respectful enough to say, “...Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” Stephen “saw... Jesus” standing at the right hand of God (Acts 7:55), but he cried, “...Lord Jesus, receive my spirit!” (Acts 7:59).

Those who call Him “Jesus”

Now let us look at the crowd that speaks of Him as “Jesus”, without the added titles of honour and respect (e.g. “Lord” or “Christ”). It is the speech of unbelievers. To every devoted child of God, this aspect should at least be very impressive. First, there is the “world” around us. As our beginning scripture shows, only those who **personally** know and love Him as “Lord” will confess Him as such, because that occurs through the work of the Holy Spirit. (“He shall glorify Me...” John 16:14.) For men of the world, He is simply “Jesus”, the historical “Jesus”, the great teacher, philosopher and religious founder or reformer of about 2,000 years ago. He is “Jesus” the man also, to the modernist liberals who deny His deity, His virgin birth, His complete work of redemption accomplished at

Calvary, and His bodily resurrection.¹ At best they occasionally call Him “Jesus Christ”, as a man with a first and last name.

The enemies of our Lord refer to Him as “Jesus”, as occurs in Acts 4:2,13,18; 5:40; 17:7; 19:13; 25:19, for example. Although they know Him and must obey Him, the evil spirits and demons also do not address Him as “Lord” (e.g. “...Jesus, thou Son of the most high God...” Mark 5:7). The Scriptures tell us in advance that in these last days, a renewal of demonic activity will take place (1 Tim. 4:1). Demonic activity is clearly indicated by all the various religious cults and movements of today characterized by fanaticism and obsession with miracles, signs and wonders. They are all known for their disrespectful use of the name “Jesus” and for dishonouring Him and bringing Him down to their human level.

The alarmingly increasing slander and disregard of His glorious name brings up questions for every person who claims to be a Christian. **“Where do I stand in relation to HIM?”** Is He really my personal Lord and Redeemer? Am I saved? - - - May the dear reader personally ask himself this question in all earnestness. “Being

¹ How saddening too it is today when believers speak, write or sing about the **LORD** Jesus in an irreverent and chummy manner as their “**friend**” or even “**brother**”. Nowhere in Scripture can we find any authority for this. Usually verses like John 15:14,15; 20:17 and Hebrews 2:10-18 are read only superficially. On the condition “if ye *do* **whatsoever** I command you” He condescends to call **such** Christians “friends”. You will notice: **HE** calls them this way, but this does not entitle anybody to call **Him** “friend”! He remains **our Lord** who “*commands*” (John 15:14), though He is **calling** us “friends” (v.15). None of the writers of the NT – and not even John (who was lying on the Lord’s breast) would have dared to speak of Him in such a manner (contrast: Luke 7:34). They humbly confessed to be “servants (lit. “bondservants”) of Jesus Christ” (see chapter 1:1 of Rom., Phil., Titus, 2 Peter, Rev.). Jude as a son of Mary, the mother of our Saviour, and therefore “brother of the Lord”, instead called himself “the **servant** of Jesus Christ, and brother of **James**” (Jude 1; cf. Gal. 1:19; Matt. 13:55). Abraham “was **called** the Friend of God” (John 15:14 fulfilled, cf. Gen.22) but never did he call **God** his “friend”. Thus the only begotten *Son* of God “in bringing many *sons* unto glory” is not ashamed to **call** us “**brethren**”, but we dare not call Him our “brother”, “who is over all, **God** blessed for ever. Amen.”

religious”, “going to church services”, “saying prayers”, a pious appearance, pious singing, good deeds, religious activity, preaching, and even saying “Lord, Lord” (Matt. 7:22) – all of these are no proof of personal salvation (John 3:3,5-7; 2 Cor. 5:17; 1 John 2:3-6; 5:1-3; James 2:20,26).

“Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him, and given Him a name which is above every name: that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth;

And that every tongue should

CONFESS THAT JESUS CHRIST IS LORD

to the glory of God the Father.” (Phil. 2:9-11)

*“For we preach... Christ Jesus the **Lord**.” 2 Cor. 4:5*

*“Ye call Me...**LORD**: and ye say well; for so I am.” John 13:13*

*And whatsoever ye do **in word** or deed,
do all in the name of the **Lord** Jesus,
giving thanks to God and the Father by Him.*

Colossians 3:17
