

Jesus Christ Is Lord

by J. Glyn Owen

The sermon emphasizes the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ and the implications it has for Christian living and discipleship.

Duration: 29:09

Scripture: Malachi 3:8, Matthew 6:33, John 12:24, Romans 6:13, Romans 12:1, 2 Corinthians 8:5, Philippians 2:11

Topics: "Jesus Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of acknowledging Jesus Christ as Lord. He explains that simply going through the motions of religious acts is not enough; our hearts must be fully engaged in our service to God. The preacher also highlights the need to offer our entire selves to God, including our bodies, as a living sacrifice. He references Romans 6:13 and Romans 12:1 to support his points. Ultimately, the sermon encourages believers to surrender their lives completely to God and serve Him wholeheartedly.

Transcript

Let us turn together to St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, and I would like to look at a statement that you'll find in verse 11 in chapter 2. St. Paul's letter to the Philippians, chapter 2, and the statement that you will find in verse 11. Jesus Christ is Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord.

You can never be asked to concede to Jesus Christ any gift or any honor that is not his rightful due, because he is Lord. God has made him Lord, and he has the right to everything that we are or ever will be, to everything that we have or ever shall have. Jesus Christ is Lord.

That this far-reaching fact is hardly understood by many who take upon them the name of Jesus, and perhaps barely understood by any, is pretty evident from the mode of living that characterizes most Christian people today. And so I take it that it's a matter of urgency that we should give some attention to consider this question, what really does the New Testament mean when it speaks of the Lordship of Jesus Christ, and when without equivocation at all it tells us that we are the subject of one who has absolute rule over us and the right to everything that we are. Now the first thing that I would like us to do tonight is to consider very briefly something of the claim that is implicit in this statement.

What does the New Testament mean when it says concerning Jesus Christ that he is Lord. Jesus Christ is Lord. What does that mean? I believe that if only we could appreciate something of the momentous

significance of bringing together the name Jesus and the title Christ and the title Lord, we should have a far better notion of the nature of apostolic Christianity on the one hand, and of the demands of Christian discipleship on the other.

Come with me then for a moment and let's consider what really is implied in this claim. Jesus Christ is Lord. First of all think of that last all-important term Lord.

What does it really mean? Clearly we all and often use it, but how often with adequate understanding. Among the many ingredients that go to the making of its complex and far-reaching significance, let me now mention three that are very primal. The designation Lord applies in the first place to someone who is vested with authority.

Now this is the first important ingredient in the meaning of the term. Sometimes it is the authority given to a parent over his child. Sometimes the authority of the owner of something over that which he possesses.

At other times the authority that a commander has over his troops. But it is a legitimate authority, proper authority, constituted authority. It is real authority.

The Lord is always someone who has authority. The second strand that goes to the meaning of the term Lord takes us a little step further. The one who is Lord is also sovereign.

Sovereign Lord. Perhaps it lights up the significance of the term when we remember that this was the common designation for the Roman Emperor. He was Lord.

And in at least one place in the New Testament, in Acts 25 and 26, Christos refers to the Emperor as my Lord. So we have two ingredients. One, he who is Lord has authority.

He who is Lord has sovereign authority. But there is one other. The same term Lord also denotes deity.

It was the designation current in New Testament times for all the deities in the Eastern world, but more especially as far as we are concerned, it is the New Testament equivalent for the Old Testament Jehovah. Now what then is the meaning of the term Lord? He who is Lord has authority, sovereign authority, divine authority. When we come to the word Christ, we are all aware that the Christ of the Bible is the Anointed One, the long foretold person of whom we read in the Old Testament, the promised Deliverer of God, who was going to come in the fullness of the time, and who would be singularly and uniquely anointed to be the Savior of men.

Now when we say that the Christ is Lord, I suppose that would mean with the approval of all of us. But when we come to say Jesus is Christ, and Jesus Christ is Lord, we move into a distinctively Christian sphere. We leave our Jewish friends behind.

The Jew will not confess that Jesus is Christ. In that confession he moves from the Jewish situation into the Christian. But when we go further and say that Jesus is not only the Christ, but Jesus Christ is Lord, we have moved into an exclusively Christian territory.

We've left the Jew behind. We've left the worshipper of the emperor behind. We've left the pagan behind.

We've left everyone behind. We are in the Christian Upholstery, and in Christian territory. But this is the Christian claim.

It is that Jesus, the historical man of Galilee and of Nazareth, was the Christ and is Lord. He has absolute authority given to him. His is a sovereignty that knows no bounds, and he is Lord of all.

Let us be quite clear about this then. Scripture affirms that Jesus the Christ is Lord of all, Lord of nature, Lord of creation, Lord of time, Lord of eternity, Lord of life, Lord of death, Lord of humankind, Lord of demons, Lord of principalities and powers, Lord of yesterday, Lord of tomorrow, Lord of Lord and King of Kings, Lord of all. And this is our Savior.

My good friends, it is only because Jesus Christ is Lord that he can be my Savior and yours. Because he is Lord, he has a quality as prophet. Because he is Lord, his death has a significance all of its own.

Because he is Lord, the future is in his hands. Because he is Lord, I can trust him in this life and in the next. And this is our Savior.

Now then, the claim that is insisted here is clear to us. Jesus Christ is Lord. Now the next thing I want us to look at is the challenge that is involved in this fact.

The fact is fact. Whether we accept it or not, whether we yield to it or not, the fact remains. We cannot change the fact.

My good friends, you can't make Jesus Lord. He is Lord. God has made him Lord.

The only thing you and I can do is to concede to him his crown right. But he is Lord. I may kick against the bricks.

I may disbelieve. I may rebel. But his lordship remains and one day I shall know that he is Lord and shall have to bend the knee, if not willingly then unwillingly.

Now let's look at some of the implications of this. Can I begin by saying that it is a necessary aspect of Christian experience to acknowledge the lordship of Jesus Christ. By that we mean this.

You can't be a Christian without confessing that Jesus is Lord. The apostle Paul is quite clear about this. If you confess with your lips that Jesus is Lord and of course believe in your hearts that God raised him from the dead, you shall be saved.

That's the gospel. Nothing could be clearer than that. Confess with the lips and believe in the heart.

Children, if you're a Christian, this is involved in your profession. It's not an addition. Of course you may have made a profession without fully appreciating all that was involved in this.

That's a different matter. But the fact of the matter is this. Involved in becoming a Christian is the acknowledgement that Jesus is Lord.

All right then. What does that mean? Shall we start here? It's not enough merely to concede the title to him. I shall brush over that as simply as this.

Jesus said to some people of his day and age, he said, Why do you call me Lord, Lord? And do not the things which I tell you. It's not enough for you and for me and Keswick tonight to take our hats off and to say, well now yes, we'll acknowledge him as Lord. It's not enough to concede to him the designation and the title of Lordship.

He asked for something more than that. What has he asked for? Now let me try to bring two or three of the major factors into perspective against the larger background of the New Testament. What does Jesus Christ as Lord require of me? And I want to say three things.

One, the proper acknowledgement of the Lordship of Jesus Christ requires us to make to him the sacrifice of our entire souls. The Apostle Paul put this in two ways in his epistle to the Romans. In Romans chapter 6 and verse 13 he did thus, to quote, Yield your soul to God.

In the very familiar words of chapter 12 and verse 1, he puts it in this way, I beseech you therefore brethren by the mercies of God that you present your body, a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable unto God which is your reasonable service. Your souls in Romans 6 and 13, your bodies in Romans 12 and verse 1. Now you can only present God with your whole soul when you present him with your body. This is something that has gripped me in recent days and something which I think one has come to begin to understand perhaps as never before.

It is impossible for you to give yourself to God without giving him your body as a living sacrifice. Let me illustrate, or rather let me try to explain it in this way. The body is the gateway whereby all the outside influences of the world can and can only come in and influence the man within.

We often talk about the world, we've had those preaching from the Rostrum today and yesterday about the world. Now the only way in which the world from outside can come in and influence my heart and my mind and the man within it via the body, the eye gate, the ear gate, and in other ways. So that, you see, if I have handed over my entire body to the Lord, the world from outside cannot come in and encroach upon the reserves of the inner man.

Eyes, for example, part of the body, eyes that have been presented to the Lord as a living sacrifice are not available to receive the impressions of the world from pictures and literature that is pornographic and so forth. Eyes that have been presented are not available to receive impressions that are ignoble and sinful and communicate them to the man within. The same goes for the lips, for the mouth, for the ears.

So that if I have given my whole body to the Lord, the world outside cannot really and radically influence the man within. There's another side to this. If I have really given my body to the Lord, the old nature within me can't express itself as otherwise it might.

How does the old nature in you and in me want to express itself? It wants the hands, and it wants the use of the lips and of the eyes and so forth. It must have the body. But, you see, if I have handed over my body as a living sacrifice, then when the impulses of the old carnal nature arise, the hands are not available for the old nature, they are in the grip of the Lord.

So for the eyes, so for the ears, so for every faculty, so for the whole body that has been handed over. Now, my good friend, do you see what this means? If thus I have handed over the whole and the entire body as a living sacrifice to my Lord, the world cannot come in and the old nature cannot express itself. I am holy the Lord.

I am holy the Lord. If my body is His, then I am His. The world has lost its way of entrance.

The old nature has lost its mode of expression. I am His. Oh, happy boy.

So then, the proper acknowledgment of the Lordship of Jesus Christ in the first place requires of me that I make a sacrifice of the whole. Have you done that? Oh, I know there are vested interests here, and the world outside and the flesh within, marshaled by the devil himself, will wage a war. Who of us that doesn't know something about this, when it comes to the point and we know what our duty is, something in us and something outside of us, holds us back.

But here is the demand of him who has authority and sovereignty, purchased with blood, and who is our divine Lord, who says, yield me your soul, your body. Secondly, the only adequate acknowledgment of Jesus Christ as Lord requires in the second place that we offer to him the service of the pious. As Paul puts it in Romans 6, 13, do not yield your members to sin as instruments of wickedness, but yield yourselves to God and your members as instruments of righteousness.

Jesus Christ, whom we acknowledge to be Lord, is involved in the outworking of a plan, of a complex program that spans all the ages of time. And whether we are to understand the term translated instruments, to refer to weapons of war or simple instruments, the fact and the truth enshrined here is pretty clear. Our Lord, who has a program and a plan, would have all the members of our bodies, all the faculties and all the energies and everything that is latent in my life, he would have these things as his instruments.

And this is the claim of the Lord Jesus Christ upon his people. It's the claim to have all that is in our possession, every member of the body, every faculty, every endowment of ours, as the instruments of war. Now my friends, I don't know whether this will pass muster with the theologians behind me or the theologians in front of me, to imitate Canon Craig, but I believe that there is a kind of sanctified heresy abroad today that is in practice a denial of this sovereign prerogative of our Lord.

It may well turn out that this deadly heresy which is rampant in evangelical circles and not unknown in conventions such as this, will eventually have robbed the Savior of as much of his rightful dues as the blatant unbiblical notions of some wildly liberal theologians. What is this heresy? It is this, that you can put a full stop after Romans 12 and 1, and that when men have come and have given their all, their entire selves, their bodies, on the altar as it were, that is the terminus of God's requirement. It's a lie.

There is a plain lie, but it has been so very widely disseminated, that there are multitudes of people in our land tonight, and perhaps sitting in this convention, who will tell you quite unashamedly that they are dedicated, they're consecrated, they've been to a consecration meeting, they've signed a card, or they've put up their hand, or they've promised to do this and do that. They're consecrated. My friend, listen, they've yet to lift a little finger in the service of the Lord to whom they claim to belong.

And they live a lie, because the sacrifice of the whole must be accompanied by the service of the part. God does not ask for a dead sacrifice, but a living sacrifice. Let me put it this way.

When you have seen that the crown rights of the Redeemer require of you, that you should place yourself on the altar in terms of Romans 12 and 1, and you come to the point of yielding yourself in that way, my friends, you've not really done anything yet. Not a thing. Only given your Lord a promissory note.

That's all. Don't imagine when you leave the altar and leave yourself there, as it were, and you say to the Lord, Lord, here I am, every bit of me, all of me, don't imagine that you've done anything. You've done nothing, my friend.

You've put a promissory note in his hand. Now you must go out and say, Lord, what wilt thou have me to do? Here are my hands. And the hands must begin to move, and the lips must begin to move, and the life must begin to work.

You see, it is not right to put a full stop after the experience of Romans 12 and 1. We must go on and offer the service of the parts. Otherwise we live a lie, and as those living in Malachi's day will rob God of what is his. Lastly, the one whom you, Christian, acknowledge to the Lord has made it known that he requires even more than the sacrifice of the whole and the service of the part.

He requires what I can only speak of tonight as the spending of the life within. Can I summarize this? Because my time is gone. Jesus Christ does not ask of us a kind of mechanical doing of certain things, merely for the sake of saying that we have done what was required of us, as the Pharisees so often did.

They were past masters at the art of doing the right thing, but their hearts were not in it, so that Jesus Christ called them actors, people's rights, actors. And it is very possible for us to preach the gospel, but the heart is not in it. The soul is not in it.

There is no giving of self. So can we sing, and so can we serve. But the service that the Lord Jesus Christ requires is one in which all the pent-up energies of the soul, all the heart and all the mind and all the soul, and all the spirit, is given in sacrifice and given up to God and for men in the service I yield.

Oh, it's a sad spectacle, I say to you, that there are many who could pretend to be serving their Lord Jesus Christ, and yet the pent-up energies of their soul are kept in check for the field of sport, or the stage, or business. But there is no else in here. There is no giving of the heart and of the soul in the service of the Lord.

And like the people in Maritimes Day, they go about groaning and moaning, it's a weary thing to serve the Lord. They do what is required of them, but they're not spending the life for Him. My friend, that was not the service that Jesus rendered.

Long before He gave His life in death, He was pouring out His whole unto death. And the apostles caught a glimpse of it. Paul is constantly speaking of pouring out Himself, dying daily, giving Himself to death, and even in truth and in terms of spending Him, and this is about being spent.

Are you trying to serve the Lord, my friend, by keeping yourself intact? Or are you giving yourself? The sacrifice of the whole, the service of the heart, the spending of the soul. Can I end with this? There is an old Chinese legend which speaks of a potter who spent all his life unsuccessfully to get a certain stint into his pottery, and he failed. Brokenhearted one day, he was putting some earthenware into the oven, and when he had put them in, he suddenly realized that he was not able to achieve his life's ambition, and he hurled his body into the oven.

And of course, you know what happened. He was burned to ashes. But the folks that were taking out the vases at the end of the day, they were aghast when they saw that the very thing for which their master had labored all his life was now in the broken bits of earthenware and the few whole ones that were taken out.

That he had failed to do in his life, he was unable to do when he put himself into the oven. If your service is like that, my friend, I want to tell you that when you recognize that Jesus Christ is Lord, and concede to him his lordship and his crowned rights, you'll have a new hue, a new glory to your service that will be to the praise of his name and the blessing of man. So may it be.

As things are, hymn, that Father Reverend John Tuft brings to us, the closing message, number 478.

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