

“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 that Christ is the **LORD**. That is the great truth God gave us, who are born again – and therewith His assembly – who build the body of Christ, through the ministry of Paul the apostle.

In professing Christianity probably no part of the truth of God’s Word is denied more than this. The apostles would have been greatly troubled, and called for repentance had they been able to hear the way the modern religious world **dishonours** that precious name above every other name that God the Father gave HIM. The dishonourable use of this name and title, likely stems from *tradition* that began hundreds of years ago. Another reason is certainly the general *lack of understanding* of the incomprehensible humility of the Son of the living God. Finally, a general *ignorance* concerning how to correctly 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. Many hymn writers have also forgotten this great truth. Today 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 confess Jesus as **Lord** except through the Holy Spirit. Admittedly, a person could learn to say these words, but even a parrot could do that. However, neither a parrot nor an unbelieving person could reverently speak of Him as “his Lord” in the full consciousness of this statement’s meaning. The unsaved simply 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. 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 that is the name of His humanity and humiliation as He lived on this earth. That is “Christ after the flesh”, or meaning 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 no more". **Now** we know Him as the risen **Lord**, given as the **Head** over all His assembly, which is His body (Eph. 1:22 cf.). 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). His current "ministry" is different, however. 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). As their Saviour, He bare the name Jesus. But compare this 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 happened during this time interval to change the emphasis from "Jesus" to the title "Lord"? Obviously it was His resurrection! He is **now** the exalted 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 during His time of humiliation and obedience, and others have had and have that name. He is no longer only "Jesus" for His assembly today; He is the 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 transi-

tion which reveals the important fact that the period of time from John the Baptist into the "Acts of the Apostles" was dispensational of transitional character. The transition between the Jewish-Messianic presentation of the Old Testament (and the four gospel records) – to the mystery of the **one body** in Paul's Epistles is visible in various ways. Thus, we find the name "Jesus" hundreds of times in the four gospel records, 29 times in Acts, about 10 times in the letters Paul wrote before his imprisonment, and only two times in his prison epistles themselves.

On the other hand, we do not find the name "Lord Jesus Christ" at all in the four gospel records, while we find it five times in Acts, and a total of 32 times in Paul's epistles. And when only the name "Jesus" is sometimes used in the epistles, there is always a particular reason for using His name in this manner, such as in Ephesians 4:21, which reads: "as the truth is in Jesus". Here His **earthly** life is presented to us as a model. 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, "...That 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 honorary title: the **Lord** Jesus Christ.

They all call Him Lord

Even in the four gospel records the Lordship of Christ is consistently honoured. His name "Jesus" is only used *narratively*.

This means that the Holy Spirit as the Scripture's divine Author, in recounting all the historical details about the humanity of Jesus, refers to Him most precisely as "Jesus" (Note the change from Luke 23:52 to 24:3!). As a part of the Godhead it is His 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". Here it was truly necessary to distinguish Him from others with the same name. The crucifixion of the One in Whom they believed as their Messiah was also a terrible shock to them.

Apart from the disciples, Mary, Martha, and all of the other women called Him "Lord", as did the centurion in Matthew 8 and the dying thief on the cross. Even doubting Thomas said, "...My Lord and my God" in John 20:28. Full of reverence, a disciple said to Peter in John 21:7, "...It is the Lord". He did not simply say, "It is Jesus!" as some Christians would rashly 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 consider **the masses** who speak of Him as "Jesus" without adding His rightful title. This way of speaking must be very grievous to any true child of God. It is the speech of unbelievers, and it reminds us that the "world" surrounds us. As our first Bible text shows us, 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 people of this 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 also the man Jesus for the modern liberalists who deny His deity, His virgin birth, His complete work of redemption accomplished at Calvary, and His bodily resurrection. At the most, they occasionally refer to Him as "Jesus Christ", a man with a first and last name.

The enemies of our Lord also only call Him "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 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 (His name as Lord: Kyrios = LORD) 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)

D.L. McC.

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

*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*

*Questions and correspondence concerning God’s way of salvation
and His revealed will for His people are heartily welcome.*

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