

SUBMITTING TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

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On a day that had been anticipated since the day Adam and Eve sinned in the Garden of Eden, an angel appeared unto some shepherds in a field near Bethlehem. "And the angel said unto them, Fear not: for, behold, I bring you good tidings of great joy, which shall be to all people. For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is *Christ the Lord*" (Lk. 2:10-11). The Angel used three terms for the child that was born. He was called *Savior*. The word *Savior* is used 24 times in the New Testament. God had stepped downward that man might step upward. The Savior had come for sinners. He would live in this sinful world to provide an example for man to follow and a sacrifice in which to trust. Next, you have the word *Christ*. That means the Messiah, the anointed one. Then the angel proclaimed Jesus as *Lord* or Ruler. The word *Lord* is used 667 times in the New Testament and 435 of those times in reference to Jesus. It appears that the Scriptures wanted us to know that Jesus is not only our Savior and Messiah but also our Lord.

According to W. E. Vine, *Lord* is from the Greek word *kurios* "signifying having power or authority." It is variously translated as lord, master, and owner. When we speak of Jesus as our Lord, we mean that Jesus is the master or ruler over our life. Is Jesus your Lord?

On the day of Pentecost, the apostle Peter preached, "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). Verse 36 is Peter's triumphant and bold conclusion to his sermon. When Peter reached this conclusion, he had proclaimed the life, death, burial, resurrection, ascension, enthronement and current activity of Christ and he had proved the authenticity of Jesus by the evidence from miracles, prophecy, logical reasoning, and apostolic testimony. We can know assuredly that God has made Jesus both Lord and Christ. And just as the apostles sought to instill belief in their hearers on Pentecost day, we too must believe as the angel said that our Savior is indeed Christ the Lord.

The Lordship of Jesus demands submission. "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" (Lk. 6:46). We cannot accept Christ as Savior and reject Christ as Lord. You cannot pick and choose like you are in a cafeteria. Suppose I perform a wedding ceremony and say to the young man, "Would you take Mary to be your lawfully wedded wife?" and he responds, "Well, I'll take Mary as housekeeper." Then I say to her, "Would you take John to be your lawfully wedded husband?" and she says, "Well, I'll take him as provider." Friend, we can't pick and choose what we want from Jesus. We simply must take Jesus as Lord over all!

In becoming a Christian, we must confess the Lord Jesus. "That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. For with the heart man believeth unto righteousness; and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation" (Rom. 10:9-10). Not only must that confession be made sincerely, it must be lived faithfully. Empty confessions make empty lives. Only those who obey Jesus as Lord are saved by the Savior (Heb. 5:8-9).

The apostle Peter wrote, "*But sanctify the Lord God in your hearts*: and be ready always to give an answer to every man that asketh you a reason of the hope that is in you with meekness and fear" (1 Pet. 3:15). Most of the time people skip over the first part of this verse in their concentration on the second part regarding giving an answer for our hope. When we do that, we are missing something very significant that Peter is telling us regarding the Lordship of Christ. To sanctify means to set apart. Brother Hugo McCord translated First Peter 3:15 as: "Set Christ the Lord apart in your hearts." I like

that rendering. Peter told them that they were not to allow persecution to dethrone Christ in their hearts; rather, they were to set Him apart and to elevate Him in their affections, their devotion, and their loyalty. Instead of being intimidated by persecution, they should acknowledge Christ as Lord and hold Him in reverence and awe in their hearts.

Friend do you recognize the Lordship of Christ? Are you revering the Lord Jesus in your heart daily? Are you respecting the Lord Jesus in all you say and do (Col. 3:17)? The angel said to the Shepherds: "For unto You is born this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord." Luke 2:16, 20 records, "And they came with haste, and found Mary, and Joseph, and the babe lying in a manger." "And the shepherds returned, glorifying and praising God for all the things that they had heard and seen, as it was told unto them." These men had left their sheep to seek out the Lord.

Brother Robert Taylor Jr. told the story about a man he baptized into Christ. All of his children were baptized in the same meetings. Through the years, he lost interest. Brother Taylor held some five or six meetings where his membership was. In one of his last meetings there, he paid the man a visit. The man loved his livestock, and brother Taylor found the man working with some of them. Within a very few days, he was going to take a couple of his prized mules to another state to show them in a fair. He was too busy getting them ready for the big livestock show to attend the Gospel Meeting. His prize mules meant more to Him than the Messiah. However, look at these shepherds. Sheep out on Judea hills took a back seat to the Christ who had just been born in a manger. These Jewish shepherds knew something about priorities. The Lord came first with them!

Do you believe Jesus Christ is Lord? If you do, then may I ask, Does He come *first* with You? It's one thing to say, "Yes, I believe Jesus Christ is Lord." But Is He Lord of your *tongue*? Is He Lord of your *time*? Is He Lord of your *treasure*? Is He Lord of your *talents*? It's one thing to *sing* "Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all." It's another thing to *mean* it. Every so often someone says, "Well, I decided to make Him Lord." Too late for that. He already is (Acts 2:36). God has already declared Him Lord. The question is not "will *you* make Him Lord?" The question is, "will you submit to His Lordship"?