

## THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

Any article dealing with the Deity of Christ would be incomplete without calling attention to the significance of the full title "the Lord Jesus Christ." Our Lord is referred to as "the Son of God" (I John 5:13), "the son of David, the son of Abraham" (Matthew 1:1), and "the Son of man" (John 3:13). Each designation has its place and significance. But of all the designations of our Lord, the full title, "the Lord Jesus Christ," alone presents the Redeemer to mankind in such a way that enables men to have a right estimate of His Person, and what He accomplished on behalf of sinners. Without such knowledge, sinners cannot be saved.

One of the great omissions today is in preaching "the Lord Jesus Christ." More songs are being written, and more sermons are being preached, where the name "Jesus" stands alone. To use the name "Jesus" where it stands alone is completely an unscriptural concept. Yet, it has become common place today to just speak of "Jesus," without "Christ" and "Lord." Each one of those words is essential to His true identity. And, to simply speak of "Jesus," where the name stands alone, is to fail to say what must be said if sinners are going to be saved. We may know in our own hearts what is intended by the mere mention of "Jesus," but do others who know Him not?

God's redemptive plan involves the true identity of the Saviour, and what He accomplished in order to the salvation of sinners. Only the full title "the Lord Jesus Christ" reveals such a message. What the Saviour did for sinners is only of value because of who He is.

"Jesus" is a name that is generally thought of as identifying a historical character who lived during New Testament times. Many people in the Bible, however, were named "Jesus." In the Old Testament we read of a "Joshua," in Joshua 1:1, who was contemporary with Moses (Deuteronomy 31:7). And, in Zechariah 3:1 we read of another "Joshua," who lived hundreds of years after the death of the previous "Joshua," in Joshua 24:29. The name "Joshua" is a Hebrew word that corresponds exactly to the Greek word "Jesus." The historical character "Joshua," that is the one who was contemporary with Moses, is called "Jesus" in Acts 7:45 and Hebrews 4:8.

Since there is, in scripture, more than one "Jesus," then how do we identify the "Jesus" whom men must know in order to be eternally saved? What phrases, or qualifying words, need to be used of "Jesus" in order to distinguish Him from any other "Jesus"? The title "Christ" speaks of

all that is anticipated in the Old Testament prophecies of "the Messiah." There were certain criteria which must be met by the promised "Messiah," and only one "Jesus," who ever lived on this earth, met all those criteria. Thus, inspired men of God like Paul expounded the Old Testament prophecies about "the Messiah" as preliminary to affirming that "Jesus" is the Person intended. Hence, "And Paul, as his manner was, went in unto them, and three sabbath days reasoned with them out of the scriptures, Opening and alleging, that Christ must needs have suffered, and risen again from the dead; and that this Jesus, whom I preach unto you is Christ"(Acts 17:2,3). Peter expounded the Old Testament prophecies of "Christ"(Acts 3:18), and showed that "Jesus" was the One who fulfilled them(Acts 2:36). Again, Peter expounded the Old Testament prophecies related to "Christ"(Acts 3:18), and showed that "Jesus" was the One in view(Acts 3:20). Philip also "preached Christ"(Acts 8:5), but showed that "Jesus" was intended(Acts 8:12).

There is only one "Jesus" who is "the Christ"(I John 5:1). If men always speak of "Jesus", where the name stands alone, it is impossible, through that limited expression, for others to have a right estimate of His Person. I know several people today, in Spanish speaking communities, who are named "Jesus." More than one was named "Jesus" in the Bible. But, there has never been but one "Jesus" who fulfilled all the Old Testament prophecies about "the Messiah," and that "Jesus is the Christ." In proclaiming Him, we must give the trumpet a definite sound, otherwise confusion results.

In addition to the fact that "Jesus is the Christ," let us say that only the title "Lord" declares the absolute deity of this One of whom we speak. Is that important? If your Saviour is not God, you have no Saviour at all. If "Jesus Christ" is not "Lord," God manifest in flesh, He couldn't save Himself, much less you, or any one else. It takes God to bring you to God, and "the Lord Jesus Christ" can bring you no nearer to God than He Himself is. The distance between God and the most exalted creature is infinite. Yet, many religious infidels insist on relegating their supposed saviour to the level of mere creature. The Saviour in God's word is "the Lord Jesus Christ."

The original twelve apostles, excluding Judas Iscariot who never called Him Lord, never addressed Him as "Jesus," where the name stood alone. They were His inner circle of friends, the ones who accompanied Him during His earthly sojourn. Yet, they never, I repeat never, addressed Him as "Jesus," where the name stood alone! You might ask: "By what did they address Him?" We answer: "They always addressed Him as "Lord." Notice the following examples:

1. Matthew 14:28, "And Peter answered him and said Lord..."
2. Matthew 14:30, "...he (Peter) cried, saying, Lord, s
3. Matthew 16:22, "Then Peter took him, and began to rebuke
4. Matthew 17:4, "Then answered Peter, and said unto Jesus, Lord..."
5. Matthew 18:21, Then came Peter to him, and said, Lord..."
6. Luke 9:54, "And when his disciples James and John saw this, they said, Lord..."
7. John 11:12, "Then said his disciples, Lord..."
8. John 14:5, "Thomas saith unto him, Lord..."
9. John 14:22, "Judas saith unto him, not Iscariot, Lord..."
10. John 21:15, "...He (Peter) saith unto him, Yea, Lord..." etc.

These examples suffice to show that His inner circle of friends never addressed Him as "Jesus," where the name stood alone. They addressed Him as "Lord." In contrast, the enemies of the Lord did refer to Him as "Jesus," where the name stood alone. Notice as follows:

"Now Peter sat without in the palace: and a damsel came unto him, saying, Thou also wast with Jesus of Galilee... And when he was gone out into the porch, another maid saw him, and said unto them that were there, This fellow was also with Jesus of Nazareth" (Matthew 26:69,71).

Notice again as follows:

"Then certain of the vagabond Jews, exorcists, took upon them to call over them which had evil spirits the name of the Lord Jesus, saying, We adjure you by Jesus whom Paul preacheth... And the evil spirit answered and said, Jesus I know, and Paul I know; but who are ye?" (Acts 19:13,15).

His enemies did what His nearest friends never did, use the name "Jesus," where it stood alone. In Paul's writings, we read of:

1. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (Romans 1:7);

2. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (I Corinthians 1:3);
3. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (II Corinthians 1:2);
4. "Our Lord Jesus Christ" (Galatians 1:3);
5. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (Ephesians 1:2);
6. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (Philippians 1:2);
7. "The Lord Jesus Christ" (Colossians 1:2);

In a number of these introductory remarks, "the Lord Jesus Christ" is placed on a footing of equality with God the Father. For instance, in I Thessalonians 1:1 reference is made to "the church of the Thessalonians which is in God the Father and in the Lord Jesus Christ." The second "in" here, before "the Lord Jesus Christ," is in italics. Therefore, there is a single preposition "in", governing both phrases, which speaks of the unity of the Son with the Father. Moreover, in places such as I Corinthians 1:3, we read, "Grace be unto you, and peace, from God our Father, and from the Lord Jesus Christ." The second "from" before "the Lord Jesus Christ" is in italics. But, "grace and peace" come equally from the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ, which is a testimony to the Deity of Christ. These are not insignificant statements, yet are often passed over by the casual reader. The full title "the Lord Jesus Christ" is as elevated as the term "God," which is linked with it. In adding the words "Christ" and "Lord" to the name "Jesus," the exalted character and dignity of this name, and the One of whom it speaks, may be seen.

In Acts 16:30, the Philippian jailor asked Paul and Silas, "Sirs, what must I do to be saved?" The answer given was, "And they said, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved, and thy house," verse 31. Paul added in the Roman epistle, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ: By whom also we have access by faith into this grace wherein we stand, and rejoice in hope of the glory of God" (Romans 5:1,2).

In these passages, as they appear in the King James Version, we have the full title "the Lord Jesus Christ." When the sinner is obligated to "believe on the Lord Jesus Christ" as the only means of being saved from the penalty of sin, does he realize that the full title expresses all that the Saviour is, and what He alone accomplished on his behalf?

Yes, the "Jesus" of whom we speak was an actual historical character who lived on the earth during New Testament times. But, the words "Christ" and "Lord" show the uniqueness of "this Jesus," and present Him in such a way as to magnify who He really is, and what He did for sinners.

"This Jesus" said, "...he was Jesus the Christ" (Matthew 16:20). Thus, this one claimed to be the promised "Messiah." I say "Messiah" because "Messiah" is the Hebrew word which corresponds to the Greek "Christ" (John 1:41). For other verses related to the claim of "this Jesus" to be "the Christ," see Matthew 23:10, Mark 9:41, and John 17:3. The title "Christ" speaks of all that is anticipated in the Old Testament prophecies concerning "the Messiah." It is "Christ" who is the subject of those Messianic prophecies, not "Jesus." As cases to point, see Luke 24:25-26, 44-46, Acts 2:31, Acts 3:18, Acts 26:22-23, I Corinthians 15:3-4, etc. "Jesus" was the personalized name given to the Son of God in the incarnation (Matthew 1:21). And, the very One who bore that name, under the conditions stated in Matthew 1:18-25, is the One who entered human history in order to fulfill all the criteria predicted of "the Messiah."

In view of certain calculable prophecies, such as is found in Daniel 9:24-27, there was an optimism, as the New Testament opens, that "the Christ" would appear soon. See Matthew 2:4, John 3:28, Luke 3:15, John 7:31, etc. When the Son of God entered life by means of a virgin, proving that He had no human father, and was given the name "Jesus," He is the One who claimed to be "the Christ." In regard to His claim, there was a twofold reaction, just as there is today. Some believed. Others believed not. His disciples acknowledged it (John 9:22; Luke 23:35). Yet, inspired testimony declares, "Whosoever believeth that Jesus is the Christ is born of God..."

In addition, we have the word "Lord" from the Greek "kurios." In the New Testament, this word followed two different lines as follows:

One, it was customary, or general, and was used as a title of courtesy addresses to strangers. See John 4:19, John 5:7, John 12:21, Acts 16:30 and Revelation 7:14 where it is translated "sir" or "sirs." This kind of use would have nothing to do with conveying Deity.

And, two, it was used to translate the Hebrew Jehovah as in John 1:23, in quoting from Isaiah 40:3 where the word "Lord" is from "Jehovah." This kind of use has everything to do with conveying Deity. "The kurios" of John 1:23 is the "Jehovah" of Isaiah 40:3, and we know that Jesus Christ is intended. John the Baptist was to "prepare...the way of the Lord," and the One whose way he prepared was "the Lord Jesus Christ."

This second usage conveys the Deity of Christ, and only a fool

would deny it. In view of a miracle performed by Christ on the maniac of Gadara, we read of Christ's words to the him as follows:

"...Go home to thy friends, and tell them how great things the Lord (kurios) hath done for thee, and hath had compassion on thee" (Mark 5:19)

That the words "the Lord" were intended to convey Deity is ostensible in view of Luke's words of the same event as follows:

"Return to thine own house, and shew how great things God hath done unto thee..." (Luke 8:39).

Therefore, "the Lord" of Mark 5:19 is the "God" of Luke 8:39. The specific instruction which Christ gave to the healed man was in part, "tell them how great things the Lord hath done," or "shew how great things God hath done." But, what did he do? Both Mark and Luke record that the healed man stated "how great things Jesus had done" (Mark 5:20; Luke 8:39). Therefore, "the Lord...God...Jesus" all refer to the same One, and are unmistakable references to the Deity of Christ. Not only is "Jesus the Christ," but also "Jesus is Lord."

On resurrection ground, Thomas, in seeing a mortal wound in a living man, confessed Christ to be, "My Lord and My God" (John 20:28). Some, who deny the Deity of Christ, tell us that some of the references to Christ as God are without the definite article "the," as in John 1:1. Thus, they say that this means that Christ was simply divine, god like, but not "the God." Well, in John 20:28 scholars have abundantly testified that the definite article "the" occurs in John 20:28 before both "Lord" and "God." Hence, literally, Christ is, "the Lord of me, and the God of me."

On resurrection ground, the full revelation of Christ's Deity was made manifest. And, from that point onward, believers in Christ never used the word "kurios" again to address any except God and the Lord Jesus Christ, with the exception of Revelation 7:14 where the word is translated, "Sir." Thus, the lower meaning of the word gave place to the higher meaning.

On resurrection ground, 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).

"In Caesarea," Peter again testified:

"The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ": (he is Lord of all:)" (Acts 10:36).

In Athens, in a sermon from Mar's hill, Paul testified as follows:

"God that made the world and all things therein(see John 1:3), seeing that he is Lord of heaven and earth, dwelleth not in temples made with hands" (Acts 17:24).

As "Lord," Jesus Christ is "God," and the creator of all things. Hebrews 1:8,10 similarly testifies:

"But unto the Son he saith, Thy throne, O God, is forever and ever...And, Thou, Lord, in the beginning hast laid the foundation of the earth; and the heavens are the works of thine hands."

Jesus is Lord. And, the scriptures speak of what "the Lord Jesus...said" (Acts 20:35), of what "the Lord Jesus" did (I Corinthians 11:23), of what "the Lord Jesus" suffered (I Thessalonians 2:15), etc.

Today, He is rejected by many. But, in the day of His revealed power and manifested glory, every tongue in the universe shall confess "that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father" (Philippians 2:11).