

The Lord Jesus Christ

Acts 2: 36.

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We do at least learn from the Scripture cited that God has reversed the judgment of the world. That judgment was expressed in the crucifixion of His Son, our Lord Jesus Christ. This act of diabolical cruelty had demonstrated the world's hatred against God, in spite of His unparalleled infinitude of saving grace towards guilty men. Yet God had raised Him from among the dead and has set Him at His right hand exalting Him. Thus we read, "God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ."

As Lord authority, power, and administration are committed to Him. Was He not, even in the days of His humiliation when here on earth, Lord? Undoubtedly, and this He had frequently shown. We cite but two from the many incidents which could be adduced to supply confirmation. Luke 5: 1-9, when Peter and his partners were told by our Lord to "launch out into the deep, and let down you nets for a draught," (for the Lord would not use another's boat without paying for it). Simon answered Him, "Master (using a word peculiar to this gospel, meaning Commander) we have toiled all night, and have taken nothing: nevertheless at Thy word I will let down the net." Note the word "the nets," had the Lord not said "nets"? Having done so, they enclosed such a multitude of fishes that their net brake. On this they beckoned their partners in the other ship to help them, doing so the ship began to sink, so great was the haul. "When Simon Peter saw it, he fell down at Jesus' knees, saying, Depart from me; for I am a sinful man, O Lord."

The resources of the deep immediately responded to our Lord, He is the Master of the seas! Later as "He went into a city called Nain," He met a funeral cortege on the way to the cemetery. It was that of a young man, the only son of his widowed mother. Our Lord, when He saw her, had compassion on her and said, "Weep not. He came and touched the coffin and said, Young man, I say unto thee, Arise, and He that was dead sat up and began to speak. And He delivered Him to his mother."

He, who was Himself an only-begotten Son, felt for the widowed mother as none else could. Thus, whether the resources of the deep, or the depths of bereavement's sorrow, all must yield to the Lord. And so we might continue, yet it maybe these two incidents from among the many which could be cited will suffice to confirm that, even when here in lowliness, He was ever Lord. Why then should He be "made Lord"? Because when presented to the Jews as such they had despised and crucified Him. When they had done their worst, God stepped in and did His best. As we read, "This Jesus hath God raised up, whereof we all are witnesses" (Acts 2: 32).

God indeed has so wrought that in that soon-coming day when His Son shall be universally owned, "Thy people shall be willing in the day of thy power" (Psalm 110: 3). "To Him shall the obedience (gathering) of the people be" (Gen. 49: 10).

Being then by the right hand of God exalted He has there been made both Lord and Christ. The recognition of this was attested on that day of Pentecost in that three thousand souls received the apostolic testimony — contrasting with the inauguration of the law system when three thousand perished under the judgment which was then administered (Ex. 32: 28). These who were saved on this the beginning of the Spirit's day, "continued steadfastly in the apostles' doctrine and fellowship, and in breaking bread and prayers" (Act 2: 42). This was a work amongst Jews. The commission from our risen Lord was to preach "repentance and remission of sins . . . in His Name among all nations,

beginning at Jerusalem" (Luke 24: 47). When we reach the Acts He indicated the territory of their witness, "Jerusalem, and in all Judaea, and in Samaria, and unto the uttermost parts of the earth" (Acts 1: 8).

Turning to Acts 10 where the witness was to extend to the Gentile in the person of Cornelius with his household, such was the feeling against the salvation of God going to such that even Peter, to whom the Lord had entrusted the keys of the kingdom of heaven, needed a thrice repeated vision in preparation to opening the door to the Gentile. That he had learned the lesson which the vision was given to teach him was evidenced by his preaching in the house of Cornelius, "The word which God sent unto the children of Israel, preaching peace by Jesus Christ: (He is Lord of all)." Not only of the Jew but also of the Gentile, "To Him give all the prophets witness, that through His name *whosoever* believeth in Him shall receive remission of sins" (Acts 10: 43).

In going over to Romans 10, we learn that He is presented for the acceptance of individuals. Paul, by the Spirit's inspiration, writes there, "The word is nigh thee, even in thy mouth and in thy heart; that is, the word of faith, which we preach; 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."

By this shall our souls be saved. Being saved in hope, we await the redemption of our bodies by power. In between these two grand events we have the blessed opportunity to prove Him as an every day, all the way, Saviour and Lord. We shall be saved from many a pitfall and dilemma if we nail our colours to the mast. Let it be known Whose we are, and Whom we serve. We shall soon find, if we let it be known that He is our Lord and Saviour, that the worldling will give us a wide berth! This confession of the Lord with its attendant heart belief introduces to the Kingdom of God. This is certainly not yet in display. Indeed this is the time for suffering, not for reigning! This then is also the time for subjection which ever carries with it the principle of obedience. This Kingdom is not carnal but a spiritual kingdom. We read in Romans 14: 7, "For the Kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost."

Every department of life affords scope for the practice of its moral features. This consideration leads us into Colossians 3: 16 -25. Here again, the accent is upon our Lord Jesus Christ. Whether amongst our brethren; "Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, in all wisdom teaching and admonishing one another, in psalms, and hymns, and spiritual songs, singing with grace in your hearts to the Lord." "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."

In the realm of married life the wives, the subject ones, are first addressed, "Wives be subject to your husbands, as is fitting in the Lord." The husbands are next exhorted, if wives are to be subject they must be given every encouragement so to be. "Husbands, love your wives, and be not bitter against them." Love provides very fertile soil for a happy marriage and surely in the midst of the Christian company nothing can be so honouring to the Lord than for the partners to go on happily in love. Family life is not excepted from divine admonition. If there ever was a day when children were encouraged in defiance of parental authority that surely is the present day.

"Children, obey your parents in all things: for this is well pleasing unto the Lord." This too is governed by the happy recognition of His Lordship. Fathers also come in for a word here: "Provoke not your children to anger, lest they be discouraged."

How many children may leave, or contemplate leaving, home due to their ill-conceived thoughts of the iron heel! Fathers, see to it that you so live your life in loving obedience to your Lord that you afford your children every reason to go on in the happy atmosphere of a true Christian home —

exemplify yourself those things you would enjoin upon them. Passing now into the region of secular relationships we come to servants. While we in our day have no equivalent to that which obtained in the apostle's day, nonetheless this has to be marked by the principle of obedience, such as pertains to the Kingdom of God. Bondslaves (servants) have not to be governed by menpleasing, just acting so as to catch the master's eye in order to curry favour. They shall act with their eye on their Lord desiring to please Him in all things. Conscious too, that a day of just appraisal is coming. Well aware that however rightly or wrongly they may be treated here, then there will be perfect redress. One of these days bondservice shall give place to reigning. Then too, when righteousness rules, he that now does wrong shall receive for the wrong that he has done — and there is no respect of persons. The Lord shall judge impartially. Masters must give to their servants that which is just and equal for they have a Master in heaven.

In every sphere of responsibility let us remember that the features of subject obedience have already been perfectly exemplified in no less a Person than our Lord Himself. He it was Who said in the days of His flesh, "Come unto Me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you and learn of (from) Me: for I am meek and lowly in heart: and ye shall find rest unto your souls, For My yoke is easy, and My burden is light."

He was entirely committed in devoted obedience to the Father, this is what He spoke of as His rest. "My yoke" — companionship with Himself. "MY burden" — the establishing of His Father's pleasure. thus are we invited to learn from Him, and this in view of sharing with Him in His rejection now, and yet with reigning with Him in faithful anticipation. According to Phil. 2: 5-11, the answer is given for His self-humbling, though being in the form of God, thinking it not a thing to be grasped at to be equal with God. So unlike Adam! for He was and is God, and yet He stooped to the form of bondman, taking a place in the likeness of men, and being found in figure as a man, He humbled Himself. O! the depths of His humbling — becoming obedient even unto death, and that the death of the cross. "For whosoever exalteth himself shall be abased; and he that humbleth himself shall be exalted" (Luke 14: 11).

Little wonder, then, that we read, "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted Him." Such renown has been bestowed upon Him that in the day of His manifested supremacy, when the Name of Jesus is sounded forth, 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."

As we have earlier said, this shall be the day of His manifested supremacy — then shall be the time for God's displayed approval of the principle of the lowly, subject obedience. Our Lord Jesus Christ shall then receive His due answer for all the reproach, shame and contumely which he met with here. How right that it should be so. May we all have the grace to follow in His steps until then.