



“Christ the Lord”
Philippians 2:5-11

Idea: Jesus is both Savior and Judge.

Intro: Thank you Jesus! The song we just introduced to you is a beautiful reminder of who Jesus is and what He has done. On this Easter Sunday morning, we join with millions of other worshipers who are gathering together to worship Jesus and celebrate what He accomplished? Who is Jesus though? It may surprise you to know that many people do not know who Jesus is or what He did. This is true even in the southern region of America. It is a question that has been asked for two millennia.

U.S. News ran a story entitled, “Who is Jesus?” on December 20, 1993. In it they attempted to answer that age-old question:

He walked out of the Judean desert nearly 2,000 years ago, an unknown itinerant preacher, proclaiming to all who would listen that the Kingdom of God was at hand. It was said that He was a healer and a gifted teacher who challenged conventional wisdom and spoke with authority and wit. In the villages and hillsides of Galilee, curious crowds would gather to witness His deeds and hear His teachings. Some followed Him, believing He was God’s anointed one, while others dismissed Him as a pretender and a troublemaker. Less than three years after He began, He was arrested in Jerusalem and executed on a Roman cross. His death, and the testimony of His followers that He arose from the dead, would change the course of history.

The religion founded on His teachings counts nearly a third of the world’s population as members, yet His words and deeds and the meaning of His life, death, and resurrection are subjects of intense debate and sometimes surprising interpretations. Many still ask the question of the ages, “Who is Jesus?”

U.S. News was asking the question nearly twenty years ago, and we are still asking it today. There is, however, broad consensus among even the most skeptical of scholars that Jesus was a miracle-worker. The Gospels record thirty-five miracles of Jesus and allude to twelve others. They depict Him healing the sick, casting out demons, walking on water, feeding thousands, calming storms, and raising the dead. History confirms the Gospels’ claims. The Jewish historian Josephus, writing near the end of the first century, wrote that Jesus was known as a “doer of startling deeds.” Implied in the modern debate over whether or not Jesus performed such amazing feats is the ultimate question of His identity. Was He the divine Son of God, as the church believes and teaches, or was He just a uniquely gifted teacher or prophet? And if He was the Son of God, then what does that mean for you and I today? The apostle Paul answers this question for us.

[Read Philippians 2:9-11.](#)

Inquiry: As a church we have been working through this letter to the Philippian believers. In it we are learning the secret to joy and rejoicing. The concept is mentioned sixteen times in the four chapters of the letter. Like us today, the Philippians struggled to find joy at times. On the other hand, Paul was able to rejoice in all things precisely because he knew the answer to the question we asked earlier. He wrote to encourage them to look to and follow the example of Jesus. In Philippians 1, the message is “put Christ first.” In Philippians 2, it is “put others next,” following the example of Jesus. Who is Jesus? According to verse eleven, He is Christ the Lord. Let’s discuss this truth further.

1. Jesus as Savior.

“Jesus Christ is Lord...”

Paul is not listing Christ as the last name of Jesus. No, he is saying that Jesus is the Christ...the Messiah...the Anointed One prophesied in the Old Testament. He came to serve others rather than Himself.

Read Philippians 2:5-8.

Paul makes it clear that Jesus was and is far from being just another man. He enjoyed real equality with God precisely because He was God. He also became a real servant by taking on human flesh and becoming a man. The purpose of Jesus’ birth, life, and death was to bring salvation to sinners. The only way for this to happen was for there to be an acceptable sacrifice offered to appease God’s divine wrath against sin and sinner.

Therefore, Jesus did not think of His equality as something to use for His own advantage. Instead, He “*emptied Himself*” or released the appearance of deity. Paul is not saying that Jesus while on earth ceased to be God. Quite the opposite, Jesus added humanity to His deity and took the humble form of servanthood, which took Him to the cross. There, He died as the perfect sacrifice to atone for or cover sin.

10 The thief comes only to steal and kill and destroy. I came that they may have life and have it abundantly. 11 I am the good shepherd. The good shepherd lays down his life for the sheep. – John 10:10-11

Today, we rejoice in Jesus as Savior because He is the Christ. He is our Messiah, the One who has paid in full the penalty for our sins. He did that on the cross through His shed blood (Heb 9:22). He did that through His resurrection from the dead, breaking the curse of death (1 Cor 15:21-22). Today, we look to Jesus our Savior because He is “*the way, and the truth, and the life*” (John 14:6). No one comes to God except through Him. Jesus is our Savior.

2. Jesus as Judge.

“Jesus Christ is Lord...”

Read Philippians 2:9-11.

Paul states of Jesus that because of His self-emptying, because of His obedience, because of His death on the cross, the Father exalted Him to the highest place and gave Him the name that is above every name. It is a name by which “*every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth.*”

Why a new name? As we read this, we need to understand that what is taking place is more than a simple renaming of the Son. In the ancient world, names were more than convenient labels. What is

meant here is that God assigns Jesus a name that reflects what He has achieved and that acknowledges who He is. Paul most likely has in mind that when the name of Jesus is invoked it is coupled with the title of “*Lord*.” This title echoes the heartbeat of many Old Testament passages (Is 42:8). The Greek term that Paul uses is κύριος. Its Hebrew equivalent in the Old Testament is YHWH, which carries the idea that God is the Eternal One who discloses Himself through His covenantal name.

Jesus has achieved this same lordship, this same status with God the Father, over the whole broken universe. In reality, there was no sense in which He did not possess this status before; the difference now is that Jesus has achieved it for the first time as the God-man, as the crucified and risen Redeemer.

This highly exalted name means that every knee will bow before and confess that Jesus is Christ and Lord. We dare not understand this statement as support for a universal salvation. Paul is not saying that every person will be saved and acknowledge Jesus as their Savior and Lord. No, he is making it clear that every person will acknowledge Jesus as the Savior and Lord, regardless of whether they had received Him as such. The text promises that Jesus will have the last word, that He is utterly vindicated, that in the end no opposition against Him will stand. There will be no universal salvation, but there will be universal confession as to who He is. This means that either we repent and confess Jesus by faith as Savior and Lord now, or we will confess Jesus in shame and terror on the last day. But confess Him we will as we give an account for how we responded to the gospel. Jesus will be our judge.

Conclusion: Who is Jesus? He is Christ the Lord! Paul is not making this claim about a Jesus who is domesticated, easily marginalized, psychologically privatized, remarkably sanitized, and merely personal. Jesus is Lord. He is one with God the Father and God the Spirit. He died on the cross to redeem sinners to Himself. In Jesus, unqualified divine majesty united with immeasurable divine mercy.

On this Easter Sunday, we can sing “Thank you Jesus for the blood” because it alone paid the penalty for our sin and made a way for us to be forgiven. We rejoice in the resurrection because it conquered the curse of death.

Who is Jesus? He is Savior and Lord. Do you know Him as such? Is Jesus your savior? Is Jesus your Lord?

Good news: God loves you. He created you and desires to know you.

Bad news: You are a sinner in rebellion against your Creator.

Best news: God has done everything necessary to justly deal with your sin and bring forgiveness and restoration to your life. Today, He calls you to turn from your sin and self and turn to Him as Savior and Lord.