

Jesus Is Lord!

Acts 2:29-36

Words are cheap. It's easy to say words that you don't mean. It's easy to speak words without sincerity, without integrity. It's easy to say things just because you know that is what others want to hear. It's easy to say the things you are supposed to say. And never is that more obvious than when talking about religion, about your faith. Never is that temptation more dangerous!

Words can be cheap, but they shouldn't be, for words are important and should have a purpose. Words have meaning, and some words, meaningfully spoken, remain very necessary. For example, as a profession of your faith, you must speak. You must use words to express your heart. And the simplest form of a genuine profession of faith is that which Paul expresses in,

Rom. 10:9 "...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved."

"If you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus..." That could be translated this way to make the point every clearer, "if you confess with your mouth that Jesus is Lord...you will be saved." Jesus is Lord! That is the fundamental expression of a true and genuine profession of faith. And you say it with your mouth because it is what Paul calls "your confession." It is what you profess, and if you wish to be a Christian, you must have such a confession. You must have this confession—Jesus is Lord.

Do you remember the membership views we witnessed last Sunday morning, especially that fourth question, "Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your sovereign Lord?" Sovereign refers to the one who is in ultimate authority, above whom there is no other authority. "Do you acknowledge Jesus Christ as your

sovereign Lord?" And for membership in this church, we require you to answer "yes," "I do." Jesus is Lord!

And that's where we begin this morning, though I am beginning at the end of our text. It is actually the conclusion of Paul's sermon, and it provokes the most appropriate and encouraging response which any sermon possibly have,

v.37 "Now when they heard this, they were cut to the heart, and said to Peter and the rest of the apostles, "Men and brethren, what shall we do?"

We'll get to that next week, but for today we begin with the conclusion of Peter's sermon itself, with reference to...

I. YOUR PROFESSION OF FAITH: JESUS IS LORD.

Some people might ask, "Why do we need to make any profession?" Actions speak louder than words, which is, of course, so often true. But God requires words. The Bible requires words. Not empty words. And clearly not words of hypocrisy. But words nonetheless, true words, words you confess with your mouth!

Jesus emphasizes the importance of such a profession of faith when he declares,

Mat. 10:32 "Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. 33 But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven."

And in Peter's pentecostal sermon, as I already noted, this declaration is his conclusion. I was taught in preaching class in seminary that the most important sentence in the sermon was the final one. So this is Peter's final word to summarize and draw to a conclusion the whole of his sermon,

v.36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that

God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

Note, first,

A. The significance of both Lord and Christ.

God has made this Jesus Lord. The word Lord mean master. It is a title that represents authority, governing authority. It is a title that imposes upon us the duty of honor and submission. Thus declaring that Jesus is Lord is to declare that Jesus is the absolute authority in your life, he represents your highest obligation of obedience. Jesus is Lord means Jesus is master. Jesus is your ruler, your king, and in every possible way, your superior!

He is, of course, God, which is why he can claim such an exalted position when no one else can. And that is why all other sources of ultimate authority function as a false god. And it is why the resistance to this profession of faith is the essence of rebellion. Ultimately, there are only two options in this matter. Either Jesus is Lord, or he isn't! I often comment that not every issue is confined to a choice between only two options, not everything is binary, not everything is black and white. But some things are, and sometimes it is helpful, and necessary to speak in such binary terms. Either Jesus is Lord, or he is not. Either you profess with your mouth and confess with words that come from your heart that Jesus is Lord, or you exist in a state of rebellion and insubordination, resisting and rejecting the rule of God in your heart and life.

You can't have it both ways. You can't claim the name of Jesus, the identity of a Christian, if you won't proclaim with the sincerity of your words that Jesus is Lord! And that is what Peter is preaching to his audience on the day of Pentecost. Therefore

that is what I will preach to you today. It is also what the apostle Paul would teach and preach, as he writes to the Philippians,

Phil. 2:9 “Therefore God also has highly exalted Him and given Him the name which is above every name, 10 that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of those in heaven, and of those on earth, and of those under the earth, 11 and that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”

That is the call of the gospel, “that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”

When Paul prays for the church in Ephesus, he prays not only for understanding of the great hope of their salvation, but he also prays for their understanding and knowledge of God himself. Specifically, this is his prayer...

Eph. 1:18 “...that you may know what is the hope of His calling, what are the riches of the glory of His inheritance in the saints, 19 and what is the exceeding greatness of His power toward us who believe, according to the working of His mighty power 20 which He worked in Christ when He raised Him from the dead and seated Him at His right hand in the heavenly places, 21 far above all principality and power and might and dominion, and every name that is named, not only in this age but also in that which is to come.”

To know God, to know Jesus, is to know this, that Jesus now reigns at the right hand of God the father, above every other power and authority that exists, “not only in this age but also in that which is to come.” Jesus is Lord. Thus Paul continues,

Eph 1:22 “And He put all things under His feet, and gave Him to be head over all things to the church, 23 which is His body, the fullness of Him who fills all in all.”

Jesus is Lord, he is the head over all things! And we must recognize and honor that exalted authority by the words of our confession, “Jesus is Lord.”

Notice, then, in verse 36, Peter also makes reference to the fact that “God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified,...Christ.” You may know the meaning of that name, it is the Greek form of the Hebrew word Messiah. The word means “anointed,” obviously referring to God’s anointing. The Messiah was set apart by God for the great purpose of salvation, and the Messiah would come to earth in the form of a man, the man Jesus. Jesus the Messiah is translated correctly, Jesus the Christ. And this is what we know about the Messiah, about the anointed one, the Christ,

Ps. 2:2 “The kings of the earth set themselves, And the rulers take counsel together, Against the LORD and against His Anointed [his Messiah, his Christ], saying, 3 “Let us break Their bonds in pieces And cast away Their cords from us.” 4 He who sits in the heavens shall laugh; The Lord shall hold them in derision. 5 Then He shall speak to them in His wrath, And distress them in His deep displeasure: 6 “Yet I have set My King On My holy hill of Zion.”

So the Messiah-Christ is the King, the king of all kings!

Do you remember the godly old man names Simeon, who lived out his years in the confidence of God’s promise that he would see the messiah himself?

Luke 2:25 “And behold, there was a man in Jerusalem whose name was Simeon, and this man was just and devout, waiting for the Consolation of Israel, and the Holy Spirit was upon him. 26 And it had been revealed to him by the Holy Spirit that he would not see death before he had seen the Lord’s Christ.”

Jesus is the Christ! Thus Simeon would rightly declare, Luke 2:29 “Lord, now You are letting Your servant depart in peace, According to Your word; 30 For my eyes have seen Your salvation 31 Which You have prepared before the face of all peoples, 32 A light to bring revelation to the Gentiles, And the glory of Your people Israel.”

So Jesus is Lord! Jesus is Messiah, the Christ. And God has accomplished that himself, by his own determination and purpose.

v.36 “Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ.”

God did it. It is,

B. The fulfillment of God’s will and purpose.

We read a very similar thought last week,

v.32 “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.”

The idea is not simply to note Jesus’ identity, but to emphasize that God himself has ordered and ordained this all. So, to be a Christian, to rightfully claim the promise of the gospel and to gain the hope and assurance of eternal life, these must be your words, Jesus is Lord. Jesus Messiah, the Christ. And then, moving backward in Peter’s sermon as I preach to you this morning, you need to recognize and understand what it means for Jesus to reign as king in this way. So Peter both proclaims and explains...

II. THE REIGN OF JESUS AS LORD.

Remember the context of Pentecost, that Peter is explaining the great miracle of foreign languages being spoken by so many in Jerusalem, languages that allowed people from every nation to

hear the gospel and, by hearing, believe unto salvation. So Peter explains the outpouring of the Holy Spirit this way,
v.33

Being exalted, being raised up, not simply from the dead, but raised up in the ascension. Jesus ascended to the place and position of ultimate authority, the place defined so clear as “the right hand of God.” That’s what Peter determined to preach on the day of Pentecost, that Jesus has ascended to such a place. To put it more clearly,

A. Jesus now reigns with all authority.

All of these words are royal words, words that have reference to a king, to the reign of a king. And Peter makes direct reference to the Old Testament king par excellence, King David. He has already mentioned David in verse 29, and then in verses 34 and 35, Peter quotes Psalm 110 with the direct application of those words not to King David but to King Jesus.

v.34 “For David did not ascend into the heavens, but he says himself: The LORD said to my Lord, “Sit at My right hand, 35 Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.””

In other words, let me say it clearly, Jesus is enthroned as King. That what the words mean, “Sit at My right hand.” And that reign and rule as King is not something future, like it was for the first 73 years of the life of King Charles of England, who was compelled to wait all those years for his mother, the Queen, to pass away. Many people think of Jesus that way, wrongly, that he is waiting as well, waiting until the end of this age, waiting for an age they label as the kingdom age. But Peter’s pentecostal sermon emphasizes that that kingdom age is now. Jesus is king now. Jesus reigns with all authority now. And he will continue to reign until, verse 35, “Till I make Your enemies Your footstool.”

Paul teaches the same thing in,
1 Cor. 15:25 “For He must reign till He has put all enemies under His feet. 26 The last enemy that will be destroyed is death.”

All of that refers to this present age, an age in which King Jesus reigns with all authority. And, with that authority,

B. Jesus pours out the Holy Spirit upon his church.

And that’s the point Peter is making at Pentecost. That’s his explanation of the gift of foreign languages being so obvious on that great day when 3000 souls were saved.

v.33 “Therefore being exalted to the right hand of God, and having received from the Father the promise of the Holy Spirit, He poured out this which you now see and hear.”

And then, again moving backward in our text, we come to the theme of Peter’s sermon. The subject. The substance. The content. On the day of Pentecost, in what we could rightly label the first sermon of the Christian church, what was that subject? The answer to that question should tell us what our priorities should continue to be as well. And the answer is plain, it is the resurrection. What Peter chose to proclaim to his audience on this all important day of transition from the Old Testament church to the New Testament church, was the truth and the reality of the resurrection of Jesus Christ from the dead.

III. THE RESURRECTION OF JESUS.

That was introduced last week in my sermon, when Peter spoke about the sin and guilt of those who put Jesus to death. We then read,

v.24 “...whom God raised up, having loosed the pains of death, because it was not possible that He should be held by it.”

Peter quotes Psalm 16, as we studied last week, and then

makes the direct application of the words not to David, but to Jesus.

v.25 “For David says concerning Him: I foresaw the LORD always before my face, For He is at my right hand, that I may not be shaken. 26 Therefore my heart rejoiced, and my tongue was glad; Moreover my flesh also will rest in hope. 27 For You will not leave my soul in Hades, Nor will You allow Your Holy One to see corruption. 28 You have made known to me the ways of life; You will make me full of joy in Your presence.”

Just look at Peter’s explanation of that Old Testament Psalm about David.

v.29 “Men and brethren, let me speak freely to you of the patriarch David, that he is both dead and buried, and his tomb is with us to this day.”

That’s the obvious point. David is dead! His body went to the grave, to Sheol or Hades, and he saw corruption. His human body returned to the dust. So who was David referring to in that Psalm, Psalm 16? What is...

A. The prophecy of David.

It is a prophecy of Jesus! The soul, the human soul, whose body would not remain in the grave, under the power death, was the soul of Jesus. David is dead, emphasizes Peter, but,

v.32 “This Jesus God has raised up, of which we are all witnesses.”

The explanation is given very clearly.

v.30 “Therefore, being a prophet, and knowing that God had sworn with an oath to him that of the fruit of his body, according to the flesh, He would raise up the Christ to sit on his throne, 31 he, foreseeing this, spoke concerning the resurrection of the Christ, that His soul was not left in Hades, nor did His flesh see

corruption.”

That’s what the Old Testament is all about. That’s what the prophecy of David is all about, that Jesus, David’s descendant, remember, that Jesus would be raised from the dead and seated as King at the right hand of God in heaven. His flesh, Jesus’ flesh, did not see corruption. His human body, his human life was preserved to live. That’s the point of verse 31, the point of Psalm 16.

B. The preservation of Jesus’ human life.

I noted last week why this humanity of Jesus is so important for us. Not only was it necessary for a human to be the atoning sacrifice for human sin, satisfying the demands of God’s justice required as the penalty for human sin, not only is that true, but for our encouragement we read this in,

Heb. 4:14 “Seeing then that we have a great High Priest who has passed through the heavens, Jesus the Son of God, let us hold fast our confession. 15 For we do not have a High Priest who cannot sympathize with our weaknesses, but was in all points tempted as we are, yet without sin. 16 Let us therefore come boldly to the throne of grace, that we may obtain mercy and find grace to help in time of need. 5:1 For every high priest taken from among men is appointed for men in things pertaining to God, that he may offer both gifts and sacrifices for sins. 2 He can have compassion on those who are ignorant and going astray, since he himself is also subject to weakness.”

We have a high priest, a man, a man who was subjected to all the infirmities of our humanity, including temptation. Our high priest is a perfect man, and he remains a man in his resurrection. He was raised from the dead as a man, he ascended to the right hand of God as a man, and he rules and reigns as king with his humanity inseparably and eternally united with his deity. He is

both man and God.

And so, getting back to Peter's great pentecostal sermon, this is the concluding application for us today just as it was the people who listened to him in Jerusalem.

v.36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly that God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ."

So what shall we do? We will study the answer to that question in detail next week, but for my sermon this morning, let me answer that question by reference to the introduction of my sermon today, referring to what Paul writes in Romans 10. You who hear the declaration of the gospel, how should you respond? What is the goal and purpose of pentecostal, biblical preaching? What should you do? Two things. Two inseparable and essential things. First, you must believe! You must believe that Jesus is alive, that God has raised him from the dead. You must believe in the resurrection.

And second, with that belief, with the faith to believe what God has reveal, you must profess your own faith as expressed so clearly in this text. Not cheap words, not words of tradition or mere memory. But words of commitment, words of devotion, words of submission and honor. These are the words: Jesus is Lord.

v.36 "Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly [and let every one of you know assuredly] that God has made this Jesus, ...[who was] crucified, both Lord and Christ."

Or, as Paul writes,

Rom. 10:9 "...that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. 10 For with the heart one believes unto

righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation. 11 For the Scripture says, "Whoever believes on Him will not be put to shame." 12 For there is no distinction between Jew and Greek, for the same Lord over all is rich to all who call upon Him. 13 For "whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved."