



Text: Romans 10:9-10

Series: "We Believe in One..." Part 2

Title: We Believe in One Lord

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What we believe is important – the founders of this church thought it was important, the writers of the Bible thought it was important, but most importantly, **Jesus thinks it's important!**

Jesus said...

**"If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free." John 8:31-32**

Truth, teaching, beliefs – if we want to be disciples and followers of Jesus Christ we need to hold to Jesus' teaching.

The Apostle Paul handed a torch to Timothy 2000 years ago and he handed it on to others who in turn handed to others and so on and so on and it is our goal as a church to keep that torch aloft and to pass it faithfully to the next generation. We're not going to drop it! Here's the torch that Paul handed on to us...

**"What you heard from me, keep as the pattern of sound teaching, with faith and love in Christ Jesus. Guard the good deposit that was entrusted to you--guard it with the help of the Holy Spirit who lives in us." 2 Timothy 1:13-14**

We've been entrusted with truth -- "the pattern of sound teaching... the good deposit – and we're going to keep it and guard it out of love for Christ with the help of the Holy Spirit. Our forefathers in this church laid out a "pattern of sound teaching" for us in the Statement of Faith of this church. Our Statement of Faith begins with these words...

**"Basing our faith wholly on the Lord Jesus Christ for our salvation, believing in the teaching of the Word of God, and in those great distinctive principles set forth herein, namely, we believe in..."**

And then you find twelve statements of belief that our founders held to be central to the establishing of this church. All twelve are important but the founders recognized that one deserved to be placed first over all and this is it...

**"We believe in..."**

**"The pre-eminence of Christ as our divine Lord and Saviour and in his personal return."**



Something about Jesus made him stand out in the minds of the founders of this church. Something about Jesus suggested to them that he needed to come first in the Statement of Faith. Something about Jesus made him “preeminent.”

The dictionary defines “preeminent” as “standing out among all others because of superiority in a particular field or activity.” To be “preeminent” is to be “most excellent, top, finest, greatest, unsurpassed, paramount, superlative” – that’s what they thought of Jesus. If you look in the Bible you won’t find the word “preeminent” attached to Jesus but you will find something that means much the same thing and much more and this is it...

### **“Jesus is Lord.”**

**“Jesus is Lord”** is the bedrock Christian statement of faith. It’s so simple it might even sound like a Christian bumpersticker, until you unpack its meaning and find that it’s an incredibly profound statement of belief. In fact, it’s a statement of faith for which people have been willing to die for 2000 years.

Three years ago, a young church leader named Kamil Kiroglu was leaving his church in Adana, one of Turkey’s largest cities, when five young men attacked him and threatened to kill him. He was beaten so severely that twice he lost consciousness.

“They were trying to force me to deny Jesus,” Kiroglu said. “But each time they asked me to deny Jesus and become a Muslim, I was saying, ‘Jesus is Lord.’ The more I said, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ the more they beat me.”

One of the attackers pulled out a long butcher knife and threatened to kill Kiroglu if he did not deny his Christian faith and return to Islam. Kiroglu refused.

After the incident, he said, “I am praising God—not because he saved me from death, but because he helped me not to deny him in the shadow of death.” © 2006 PreachingToday.com Lee Eclov, Vernon Hills, Illinois; source: Compass Direct (January 2006)

What was so important about the statement “Jesus is Lord” that Kiroglu chose it to be his dying words. And what was so offensive about it that enraged that group of Muslim men? What do these words mean?

Before we unpack this statement, let’s read together several of the passages in the New Testament where you find this bedrock statement of faith.

First, in Paul’s First Letter to the Corinthians he wrote...



**“Therefore I tell you that no one who is speaking by the Spirit of God says, ‘Jesus be cursed,’ and no one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit.” 1 Corinthians 12:3**

In his Letter to the Philippians he wrote this beautiful, classic statement of belief in Christ...

**“Your attitude should be the same as that of Christ Jesus: Who, being in very nature God, did not consider equality with God something to be grasped, but made himself nothing, taking the very nature of a servant, being made in human likeness. And being found in appearance as a man, he humbled himself and became obedient to death -- even death on a cross! Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**  
**Philippians 2:5-11**

And in his Letter to the Romans, Paul wrote a summary of the message that he preached from city to city throughout the Roman Empire. Paul told people how they could become right with God and forgiven of their sins and saved from God’s judgment against sin. His message was simple:

**“That if you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved. As the Scripture says, ‘Anyone who trusts in him will never be put to shame.’ For there is no difference between Jew and Gentile -- the same Lord is Lord of all and richly blesses all who call on him, for, ‘Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.’”**  
**Romans 10:9-13**

“Jesus is Lord” – it was the heart of Paul’s message. It was the heart of the Gospel. In that simple confession are bound up profound truths. By confessing and believing that “Jesus is Lord” we are “justified” and “saved.”

To be “**justified**” means to be declared right with God. Our biggest problem with God is that we are all criminals, guilty of rebellion & treason against Him and alienated from him because of our rebellion. The punishment for our crime is death and we are all condemned. But God sent Jesus Christ to take our punishment for us by dying on the Cross. We desperately needed his help...

**“for all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus.”**  
**Romans 3:23-24**



By faith in Christ we can come into his presence without being afraid that God will judge us for our sin. Nothing stands between us and we can talk and fellowship with Him without fear. Our record of sin has been wiped away and we're at peace with him.

**“Therefore, since we have been justified through faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ” Romans 5:1**

Through faith in Jesus, we've been “justified” and brought into a relationship with God.

To be **“saved”** means that when God comes to judge the world for its sin we won't be condemned along with it. The Bible speaks of a coming judgment of God against sin and evil. It's a fearful, awful punishment. But if we confess and believe that “Jesus is Lord,” the Bible tells us that we don't need to fear God's punishment against sin – for us, it's gone! All our punishment was poured out on Jesus who died in our place. In fact, the future for those who are “saved” is wonderful! Those who are saved are brought into God's home and get to spend eternity with Him.

**“Since we have now been justified by his blood, how much more shall we be saved from God's wrath through him!” Romans 5:9**

Being at peace with God and being free from fear that God is going to punish us for our sin are all bound up with confessing and believing those three little words, “Jesus is Lord.”

What does it mean to **“confess”** and **“believe”** that “Jesus is Lord”?

Kamil Kiroglu knew what it meant to confess and believe. “Confessing” Jesus “with your mouth” is not just a matter of understanding certain truths about Jesus. It's not just a matter of going through some classes, learning some truth about Him and then verbally declaring your agreement with it. “Believing” in Jesus “in your heart” isn't about getting emotional and teary-eyed at the front of the church. The “heart” in the Bible isn't just emotion – “heart” describes everything inside us: our minds, our emotions, our wills, our spirits.

“Confessing with your mouth” and “believing in your heart” that Jesus is Lord is acknowledging him as your Lord and Saviour with everything you are and everything you have. It means laying your life down at his feet and surrendering to Him. It means declaring your uncompromised, unreserved, complete allegiance to Jesus Christ.

Our hymnbook (*The Celebration Hymnal* #600) contains this chorus from a popular song...



**“I pledge allegiance to the Lamb,  
With all my strength, with all I am.  
I will seek to honor His commands.  
I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.**

The words of the verse, which aren't included in our hymnbook, add this declaration...

**To the Lamb of God who bore my pain,  
Who took my place, who wore my shame.  
I will seek to honor His commands.  
I pledge allegiance to the Lamb.”**

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That's what it means to “confess with your mouth” and “believe in your heart” that Jesus is Lord.

OK, then, to whom are we declaring our allegiance? What was so important about the statement “Jesus is Lord” that Kiroglu chose it to be his dying words? And what was so offensive about it that it enraged that group of Muslim men? What does it mean?

**First** of all,

**“Jesus is Lord” is a declaration of Jesus' identity ... Jesus is God!**

The word “Lord” is an enormous Bible word. In our culture we have a history of nobility with titles like lord and duke and count but “Lord” isn't a mere landed title in the Bible.

Early in his relationship with his people in the Old Testament, God revealed his name to them. God's people, the Israelites, were in slavery in Egypt. God came to a man named Moses who was living in a desert and commissioned him to lead his people out of slavery. He appeared to Moses in a burning bush and told him to go to Egypt and tell the Israelites that God had come to rescue them through Moses. When Moses asked God what he should say if the people asked for the name of the God who sent him, God said to him...

**“God said to Moses, "I AM WHO I AM. This is what you are to say to the Israelites: 'I AM has sent me to you.' " God also said to Moses, "Say to the Israelites, 'The LORD, the God of your fathers--the God of Abraham, the God of Isaac and the God of Jacob--has sent me to you.' This is my name forever, the name by which I am to be remembered from generation to generation.” Exodus 3:14-15**



“The LORD” is God’s name. If you notice, the word “LORD” is written in capital letters. This is a translation of the Hebrew word, Yahweh (YHWH). In the Bible, wherever you see “LORD” written in capital letters, you are reading the name of God.

When Paul called Jesus “Lord” what he had in mind was this: *Jesus is God come to save us*. By confessing with our mouths that “Jesus is Lord” we are calling on God to save us from our sin. Notice this very carefully: to prove that calling on Jesus as Lord will save us, Paul quotes from the Old Testament prophet Joel. Notice Romans chapter 10, verse 13: “Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved.” The New Testament was written in the Greek language, not Hebrew, so “Lord” wasn’t written out in capital letters. But this is what we find when we read this passage from the Book of Joel in the Old Testament...

**“And everyone who calls on the name of the LORD will be saved;” Joel 2:32**

Jesus is the LORD! Again and again throughout the New Testament you find Old Testament passages about the LORD (Yahweh) applied to the Lord Jesus Christ. Here are a just two examples you can check out yourselves:

**1 Corinthians 1:31 and Jeremiah 9:24  
2 Corinthians 3:15-18 and Exodus 34:34**

But let’s look at one example together. We read those beautiful words that Paul wrote about Jesus in his Letter to the Philippians and I want to recap just a short piece of it.

**“Therefore God exalted him to the highest place and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.” Philippians 2:9-11**

Now compare those words with what the prophet Isaiah wrote. The LORD is speaking through Isaiah and he said...

**“By myself I have sworn, my mouth has uttered in all integrity a word that will not be revoked: Before me every knee will bow; by me every tongue will swear. They will say of me, ‘In the LORD alone are righteousness and strength.’” All who have raged against him will come to him and be put to shame. But in the LORD all the descendants of Israel will be found righteous and will exult.” Isaiah 45:23-25**

People in our world are searching for a God-connection but they often recoil at the necessity of connecting with Jesus. Often people couch their search in terms



of looking for a spirituality that is bigger than Jesus. But Jesus is “the LORD,” the Creator of the Universe and everything in it (Colossians 1:16) Paul tells us that **in Jesus...**

**“all the fullness of God was pleased to dwell.” Colossians 1:19 (ESV)**

There is no God-connection bigger than or outside of Jesus, because “Jesus is Lord.”

**Second,**

**“Jesus is Lord” is a declaration of His authority ... He rules over all!**

“Jesus is Lord” over “every name,” over “every knee” and over “every tongue.” One day we will either bow in worship before the Lord who has saved us or we will bow in submission before the Lord who will judge us. Kamil was ready to meet his Lord. But when he declared that Jesus was Lord the men who beat him were enraged because they refused to acknowledge Jesus as their Lord. One day, they will acknowledge that “Jesus is Lord” either willingly or unwillingly.

Paul declared “Jesus is Lord” in cities around the Roman Empire where many gods were worshipped. If we think that an awareness of other religions is a modern awareness that should alter our claim that Jesus alone is Lord we’re mistaken. Paul was fully aware that other religions claimed the allegiance of people but he wrote...

**“We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one. For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"), yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live.” 1 Corinthians 8:4-6**

I love Paul’s confidence in the Lord! He was willing to stand the teaching of the Gospel up against all comers because he was confident that “Jesus is Lord.” Paul never needed to beat people to get them to follow Jesus – he simply won them with the truth. He didn’t humiliate people or intimidate people or threaten people to get them to swear allegiance to Christ – he simply presented the message of the Cross of Christ and allowed the power of that story to win their hearts. Paul was proud of that message! **“I am not ashamed of the gospel,”** he wrote, **“because it is the power of God for the salvation of everyone who believes” Romans 1:16**

About 20 years ago Bishop Leslie Newbigin, a great Anglican missionary in India, wrote about the lack of confidence we seem to have in our message that “Jesus is Lord.”



“The contemporary embarrassment about the missionary movement of the previous century,” he wrote, “is not, as we like to think, evidence that we have become more humble. It is, I fear, much more clearly evidence of a shift in belief. It is evidence that we are less ready to affirm the uniqueness, the centrality, the decisiveness of Jesus Christ as universal Lord and Saviour, the Way by following whom the world is to find its true goal, the Truth by which every other claim to truth is to be tested, the Life in whom alone life in its fullness is to be found.” (as quoted in John Stott, *The Incomparable Christ*, p. 118.)

When we declare that “Jesus is Lord” we’re not saying “someday” he’ll be Lord. We’re declaring that he is Lord today and forever. That means that he is Lord over the situation you find yourself in right now. Kamil could declare that Jesus was Lord even as he faced death at the hands of an angry mob. Jesus isn’t just Lord when things are going our way – he’s Lord even in the midst of hard times.

In the spring of 2001 Gracia & Martin Burnham were celebrating their 18<sup>th</sup> wedding anniversary at a resort in the Philippines when they were taken captive by a Muslim guerilla group called Abu Sayyaf. After some time the Philippine military was able to rescue Gracia and other captives but in the firefight with the terrorists Martin was killed.

Gracia could have been bitter about her experience but she isn’t. She put it all under the Lordship of Christ over her life. In a magazine interview she spoke about her attitude to the terrorists.

“I do know what's going to happen to the Abu Sayyaf,” she said. “Every knee is going to bow and every tongue is going to confess that Jesus is Lord. They can do it now, while there’s time to do it, or they can do it at the Judgment, when they find out that Muhammad wasn’t the one they were supposed to put their trust in.

That's what's going to happen to all of us. That's what's going to happen to me, and that's what's going to happen to you. And that's what's going to happen to the readers of your magazine. We're going to confess that Jesus is Lord.” (©Gracia Burnham: *'I Speak My Mind'* May 1, 2003 Christianity Today webzine)

Is Jesus Lord of your life today? Does he rule your life? Have you surrendered to His authority over your circumstances? If he allows something difficult into your life it’s because he is Lord. Can you accept that and still declare him Lord?

**Third,**

**“Jesus is Lord” is a declaration of Jesus’ resurrection ... Jesus is alive!**

Belief that Jesus is Lord is connected with belief in the truth that “God raised him from the dead.” He can’t be Lord over all if he’s dead. We worship a living Lord



with whom we can have a living relationship and that makes Jesus unique among the religions of the world.

Ajith Fernando, the leader of Youth for Christ in Sri Lanka, tells this story...

“After a Muslim in Africa was converted to Christ, his friends asked him why he became a Christian. He answered, `Well, it’s like this. Suppose you were going down the road, and suddenly the road forked in two directions, and you didn’t know which way to go; and there at the fork were two men, one dead and one alive. Which one would you ask which way to go?” (Ajith Fernando, Jesus & the World Religions, p. 77)

Because Jesus is alive we can talk with him and he will guide us at the fork in the road. Because he’s alive he “never leaves us” when we go through hard times. Because he’s alive he can give us courage to face our challenges.

The fact that Jesus is alive and present with us is a mystery to many non-Christians. Sri Lanka, where Fernando works, is predominantly Buddhist. He wrote:

“My Buddhist friends in the university were quite amused at my description of God as my best friend. When I came to class in the morning they would ask me whether I had talked to my best friend that day. I felt no hesitation to answer, `Yes.’” (Ajith Fernando, Jesus & the World Religions, p. 76)

We can have a relationship with the Lord Jesus because he’s alive. The Apostle Paul said that his relationship with Jesus was the most important thing in his life.

**“I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord” Philippians 3:8**

I want you to notice how personal Paul’s allegiance is to Jesus. He called him “my Lord” and he spoke of “knowing” him. Because Jesus is alive we can know him, and talk with him; because our Lord is living he can give us guidance and counsel every day of our lives.

What does it mean to say: “Jesus is Lord”?

It means that he is God come to save us;  
that he is the Lord who rules over us;  
that he is our Friend who lives with us.

Can you say it? Can you declare that Jesus is Lord? If you’re able to, let’s confess it together. Say it with me: **“Jesus is Lord.”**



If you're not able to declare that today, I invite you to explore a relationship with the living Lord. **Christianity Explored** is a study group I'm leading on Tuesday evenings. We're going to look at the questions of who Jesus is and what it means to follow Him and I invite you to join us. Discovering that "Jesus is Lord" is the most important discovery you can make in your life.

Let's pray.

Now, let's worship him. I want to invite the worship team to come and lead us in the song, "Crown Him With Many Crowns." While they're getting into place, I also want to invite our Prayer Team forward....

**Invitation for Prayer Ministry**

**Final Song:** Crown Him with Many Crown

**Benediction**