Jesus Christ is Lord

Romans 10:5-10

Introduction

Psychologist – Jordan Peterson once met with a young woman who needed his help

This woman was in her early twenties. She appeared extremely unhappy when he met her. She said that she had spent much of the last six months lying in bed. She agreed to come talk with him – because she was so desperate. The only thing that kept her from committing suicide was the responsibility she felt for her cat.

Her story: She had dropped out of High School – and had not been well attended to by her parents [according to her] – who allowed her to drift in a meaningless manner

Despite her broken and disjointed life – she had formulated a plan for the future. She would get her HS diploma. And then go on to veterinarian school – where she could learn to care for animals.

When Jordan asked her if she had looked into what would be required to carry out this ambition. She had not. He then agreed to discuss her future in more detail with her if she would complete an online planning program designed by his colleagues.

When they met – he said: 'all was going well until the discussion twisted toward the political. After discussing her personal situation, she began to voice her discontent with the state of the world at large – with the looming catastrophe, in her opinion, of the effects of human activity on the planet. Now, there is nothing wrong, in principle, with the expression of concern for environmental issues. That is not the point. There is something wrong, however, with overestimating your knowledge of such things – or perhaps even considering them – when you are a mid-twenty-year-old with nothing positive going on in your life and you are having great difficulty even getting out of bed. Under those conditions, you need to get your priorities straight, and establish the humility necessary to attend to and solve your own problems.'

Jordan Peterson: 'As the verbal exchange continued, I found myself no longer engaged in a genuine conversation with a lost young woman who had come to speak with me. Instead, I became a hypothetically equal partner in a debate with an ideologue who knew what was wrong, globally speaking; who knew who was at fault for those problems; who knew that participating in the continuing destruction by manifesting any personal desire whatsoever was immoral; and who believed, finally, that we were all both guilty and doomed.'

There was no point in continuing the conversation

Jordan Peterson: 'It was impossible for me not to conclude that some of what had reduced her to her months-long state of moral paralysis was not so much guilt about potentially contributing to the negative effects of human striving on the

broader world, as it was the sense of moral superiority that concern about such things brought her.'

She was proud – and it was destroying her life

Her sense of having figured everything out about the environment [and condemning others] gave her a reason not to listen to those who might be able to help her

Jesus once gave an invitation to the Jews around Him

Matthew 11:28-30 – 'Come unto Me all who are weary and heavy-laden, and I will give you rest. Take My yoke upon you, and learn from Me, for I am gentle and humble in heart; and you shall find rest for your souls. For My yoke is easy and My load is light.'

In the Christian faith – we learn from Jesus
We want to know: 'What does Jesus say about this behavior / etc.?'
We come humbly – we take His yoke upon ourselves – we say: 'You're the Lord – teach me your ways!' - - - and we find rest for our souls

When it came to many of the Jews – that was something – they were not willing to do

They already had life worked out

They saw themselves as guides to the blind / upholders of orthodoxy / Defenders of the Law

By outward appearances they seemed to have it together

Matthew 23:27-28 - 'Woe to you scribes and Pharisees, hypocrites! For you are like whitewashed tombs which on the outside appear beautiful, but inside they are full of dead men's bones and all uncleanness. Even so you too outwardly appear righteous to men, but inwardly you are full of hypocrisy and lawlessness.'

Their practice of religion was corrupted with the disease of self-righteousness

The Jews had a zeal for God but not according to knowledge

We come to a classic gospel text this morning - where Paul points us to salvation thru faith in Jesus

Romans 10:9 – 'That if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.'

What do we mean when we say, 'Jesus is Lord'?

I. We have the Law! – vv. 5-8

Paul sets up a contrast between the righteousness the Jews believed they attained thru the Law - - - and the righteousness which one is granted thru faith in Jesus

Romans 2:17-20 – 'But if you bear the name "Jew," and rely upon the Law, and boast in God, and know *His* will, and approve the things that are essential, being instructed out of the Law, and are confident that you yourself are a guide to the blind, a light to those who are in darkness, a corrector of the foolish, a teacher of the immature, having in the Law the embodiment of knowledge and of the truth.'

i.e. – you've got it all figured out

But he then goes on to point to their own failure to keep the Law – He says – 'If you boast in the Law – do you keep it?'

'you who teach others not to steal - - - do you steal?'

He says that the name of God is blasphemed among the Gentiles because of them

*** If you could obey the Law perfectly – then yes – you would receive eternal life – but no one perfectly keeps the Law

Jesus made this argument before Paul – in the Sermon on the Mount

To the person who says, 'I've never killed anyone' – I have never committed murder – I have kept the commandment

Jesus replies: 'Do you ever get angry at people? – do you ever have ill will or malice towards another? [same sin – only different in degree]

Matthew 5:27-28 – 'You have heard that it was said, "You shall not commit adultery"; but I say to you, that everyone who looks on a woman to lust for her has committed adultery with her already in his heart.'

Even Jimmy Carter [the Baptist President] admitted to being guilty of that sin

Jesus gives us the divine interpretation and meaning of the Law

Lust and anger – same sins as adultery and murder – just difference in degree

In all His teaching – Jesus was showing us that every single individual is guilty of some level and degree of sinfulness - - - from Adolf Hitler – to Mother Theresa

Romans 3:23 – 'For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God.'

The only proper response to the Law is to say: 'Wretched man that I am – who will deliver me from this condemnation?'

That is where Paul turns from the bad news to the good news – vv. 6-8

It is justification by faith – that is God's program for being declared righteous in His sight

David Jeremiah: 'Paul speaks of righteousness as if it were a person. One need not ascend into heaven to bring righteousness down. Christ has already done that. One need not descend into the abyss; Christ has already been raised from the dead.'

Jesus has done it all - - - tis ours but to believe

II. Saving Faith – vv. 9-10

Here Paul summarizes saving faith – reduces it to two basic elements

We believe that Jesus Christ is Lord [confess that] and we believe that God the Father raised Him from the dead

There is no gospel without this!

Martyn Lloyd-Jones: 'If a man does not believe in the resurrection of Christ, whatever else he may believe, he has no right to call himself a Christian. The great message that the apostles preached, as you will find it in the Acts of the Apostles was this: Jesus and the Resurrection. But for that mighty truth they would not have preached at all. This was ever their theme: Jesus and the resurrection.'

We believe the testimony of the disciples on that first Easter morning - - - he rose again!

Believe in ones heart = 'truly believe' as opposed to a false or superficial profession

'Lord' = [Gr. - Κυριοσ]

What do we mean when we say that Jesus Christ is Lord?

In early Roman persecutions – a Christian was put to death for refusing to say, 'Caesar is Lord'

Caesar is not my Lord – Jesus is

I Corinthians 12:3 – 'No one speaking by the Spirit of God says, "Jesus is accursed"; and no one can say, "Jesus is Lord," except by the Holy Spirit.'

To make a true profession – the Holy Spirit is involved

I Corinthians 8:5, 6 – '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 are all things, and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him.'

Κυριοσ = also used in the LXX – [Greek translation of the OT – translation of YHWH – more than 6000 times - - - the Hebrew personal name for God is translated as Κυριοσ

Consider one verse

Psalm 84:11 – 'For the Lord God is a sun and a shield; The Lord gives grace and glory; No good thing does He withhold from those who walk uprightly.'

Lord God = means two words for God are used here

Yahweh = Lord – [Jews didn't even want to pronounce this name for fear of taking it in vain]
Elohim = God [Gr. = Θεοσ] / more generic term for God

When we say 'Jesus is Lord' – we are using the personal name for God - -

Lordship - points to deity / authority / power

Every knee shall bow / every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord

Everyone will acknowledge that Christ is Lord at some point – but for some – it will be too late

We need to acknowledge Him now – [while living] - in our faith

Charles Hodge: 'The thing to be confessed is that Jesus Christ is Lord. That is, we must openly recognize His authority; acknowledge that He is exalted above all principalities and powers, that angels are made subject to Him, that all power in heaven and earth is committed unto Him, and of course that He is our Lord.'

As Christians we recognize that Christ is Lord over the entire earth – all peoples / tongues and nations

Abraham Kuyper: 'There is not one square inch in the whole domain of our human existence over which Christ, who is Sovereign over all, does not cry: 'Mine!'"

It's the Christian who acknowledges such lordship

We confess His lordship thru our obedience

Jesus expressed this idea:

Luke 6:46 – 'And why do you call Me, "Lord, Lord", and do not do what I say?'

To call Him Lord is to acknowledge He has the right to tell us how to live!

Even as Christians - we do not perfectly obey Him in this life - but we recognize as a part of our faith – that He deserves unquestioned / unlimited obedience

Sometimes God has to lead us thru a series of trials to make us ready to obey Him

Jonah had to spend a few days inside a fish – before he said – 'Ok – God you win!'

Some other ways we confess Christ as Lord:

We confess Jesus as Lord in worship and song

The early church worshiped Jesus

Timothy Keller: '[For Jews] It was absolute blasphemy to propose that any human being should be worshipped. Yet hundreds of Jews began worshipping Jesus literally overnight.'

Not all the Jews rejected Jesus – some bowed down and called Him Lord

The disciples – after Jesus walked on water

Matthew 14:33 – 'And those who were in the boat worshiped Him saying, "You are certainly God's Son.'

The women coming from the empty tomb

Matthew 28:9 – 'And behold, Jesus met them and greeted them. And they came up and took hold of His feet and worshiped Him.'

We join them in that worship

We proclaim His lordship in baptism

Peter told the crowd on Pentecost

Acts 2:38 – 'And Peter said to them, "Repent and let each of you be baptized in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins.'

Submit yourself to Christian baptism – to reflect your inward faith

Charles Spurgeon draws an analogy from a master / servant relationship

Charles Spurgeon: 'If my Master had told me to pick up six stones and lay them in a row I would do it, without demanding of Him, 'What good will it do?' . . . The very simplicity and apparent uselessness of the ordinance should make the believer say, 'Therefore I do it because it becomes the better test to me of my obedience to my Master.'

Spurgeon: 'When you tell your servant to do something and he cannot comprehend it, if he turns round and says, 'Please sir – what for?' You are quite clear that he hardly understands the relationship between master and servant. So when God tells me to do a thing, if I say, "What for?" I cannot have taken the place which Faith ought to occupy, which is simple obedience to whatever the Lord hath said. Baptism is commanded and faith obeys because it is commanded and thus takes her proper place.'

Why be baptized? [ultimately because our Lord tells us to be baptized]

Is everyone saved who calls Jesus Lord?

Jesus answers that for us

Matthew 7:21 – 'Not everyone who says to Me, "Lord, Lord," will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who does the will of My Father who is in heaven.'

They called Him Lord! / they went to church / they sang in the choir / taught SS

Matthew 7:22-23 – 'Many will say to Me on that day, Lord, Lord – did we not prophesy in your name, and in your name cast out demons, and in your name perform many miracles? And then I will declare to them, "I never knew you – depart from Me – you who practice lawlessness.'"

They called Him Lord – but it was not authentic

It is this element of lordship that rubs up against the sinner / our pride

Timothy Keller has a chapter on this in his book, 'The Reason for God'

Some people express objections to the Christian faith essentially saying that, 'Christianity is a straitjacket.'

One woman said: 'I don't want to live for God. I want to live for my own sake!' – 'It's my life!'

Timothy Keller: 'Christianity is supposedly a limit to personal growth and potential because it constrains our freedom to choose our own beliefs and practices.'

I don't want to believe what the Bible says – or live according to the Bible

Or maybe I want a church that just tells me to do whatever is right in my own eyes

Of course – we do believe in religious freedom in this country – a person's right to choose their own religion

Enforced religion by government only makes martyrs and hypocrites

But – when it comes to the Christian religion - - - we are led by the Spirit to say, 'Jesus is My Lord' – that I find ultimate freedom and life in obeying and trusting Him

That when I go off on my own – and do my own thing – is when I make a mess of things

The path of obedience to Jesus for me is as freeing as a fish finding its way to the water

We also profess the resurrection of Jesus Christ – a historical event

I Corinthians 15:17 – '. . .if Christ has not been raised, your faith is worthless; you are still in your sins.'

I Corinthians 15:20 – 'But now Christ has been raised from the dead, the first fruits of those who are asleep.'

MLJ: 'The resurrection is the proclamation of the fact that God is fully and completely satisfied with the work that His Son did on the cross.'

Conclusion

Jesus cried: 'It is finished' from the cross

He paid the penalty for our sins / He tore the veil of the temple – so all can enter in thru faith

Max Lucado has written a book – reflecting letters he has received as a pastor

One is from young Sammy

Sammy: 'Dear Max - - - I'm sorry for pulling the fire alarm after 11:30 service. Please forgive me. My parents have punished me but I want to make it right with you. Please let me know what I can do.'

What can we do with our sins?

There is only place to take our sins – and that is to the foot of the cross - - - where Christ the Lord - - - paid for them in full

I John 1:9 – 'If we confess our sins, He is faithful and just to forgive us our sins, and to cleanse us from all unrighteousness.' [kjv]

Lord's Table