

## THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (Believing on Christ as LORD and SAVIOR)

**Christ's Lordship was central to the message preached by the early church in Acts:** In the first message given in the Church Age Peter (quoting from Joel 2:32 in the OT in referencing the Lord Jesus Christ) told his audience, "**whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved**" (Acts 2:21).

When Peter and John went and preached to the Samaritans, they preached to them "*the word of the Lord*" (Acts 8:25). Consistently throughout Acts the emphasis on the message preached was that it was "*the word of the Lord*" (see 13:49; 15:35-36; 16:32; 19:10). Paul upon his conversion preached Jesus as the Christ "*is the Son of God*" (Acts 9:20). When people got saved, they were said to have believed IN/ON THE LORD (cf. Acts 9:42; 14:23; 18:8): When Peter went and preached to the Gentiles, He proclaimed that Jesus Christ "*is Lord of all*" (Acts 10:36). Consistently throughout the early days of the Church as recorded in Acts the message centered in the Person of the Lord Jesus as risen LORD (cf. Acts 11:20; 16:31).

In Acts 16 a great earthquake shook the prison to the core and the jailer was terrified and cried out, "*Sirs, what must I do to be saved?*" The response was a LORDSHIP response, "*Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and you will be saved...*" (Acts 16:31). Clearly the LORDSHIP of Christ was behind this powerful event. The jailer was just being informed about the LORDSHIP power behind it. And the text goes on to say that "*they spoke the word of the Lord to him*" (v. 32) and then the story concludes by saying that he "*believed in God*" (v. 34). To believe on the LORD Jesus Christ is to believe on Him as your GOD Who has sovereign authority and power over all.

Paul summarized the content of his gospel message as being one of "*repentance toward God and faith toward our Lord Jesus Christ*" (Acts 20:21).

**The LORDSHIP of Christ is central in the epistles:** In addressing believers Jesus is consistently said to be OUR LORD (cf. Rom. 5:1; 6:23). Even in the case of addressing believers that Paul refers to as "*carnal*" they are still said to be "*with all who in every place call on the*

*name of Jesus Christ our Lord*" (1 Cor. 1:2; 3:1). Paul indicates that a true confession in salvation involves confessing Jesus as Lord (Rom. 10:9). The truth of Christ's Lordship and His resurrection are often linked (cf. Jn. 20:28; Rom. 10:9; 1 Cor. 12:3; Phil. 2:9-11). All will eventually bow to His Lordship, but in humble faith believers bow before the truth of it NOW (Isa. 45:21-23; Phil. 2:9-11).

CONFESSION IS MORE THAN LIP SERVICE. IT SPRINGS FORTH FROM THE HEART IN SAVING FAITH (cf. Rom. 10:9-10).

Salvation involves calling on the NAME of the LORD which is a personal recognition of Who Jesus is as Lord-God (cf. Rom. 10:12-13; 1 Jn. 3:23; 5:13). A saving faith is centered in the PERSON of Christ (cf. 2 Cor. 1:19; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 1:15; 2 Tim. 3:15). A multitude of N.T. references emphasize that we need to believe "IN" or "ON" Him (cf. Jn. 3:16; Acts 9:42 etc.). It is not enough to merely believe ABOUT Jesus (cf. Ja. 2:19). Paul indicates that in salvation believers received Christ Jesus the Lord (cf. Col. 2:6; Phil. 3:8).

The Lordship of Christ was part and parcel of Paul's gospel message. Paul in defining his message said we preach "*Christ Jesus the Lord*" (2 Cor. 4:5). In 2 Thessalonians 1:8 Paul emphasized that people are accountable to obey "*the gospel of our Lord Jesus Christ*".

Christ's NAME represents who He is and in salvation, one BELIEVES ON HIS NAME and RECEIVES HIM for Who He is. It's not just a matter of receiving a gift but rather a matter of receiving a PERSON. TOO MANY PEOPLE WANT THE GIFT BUT NOT THE GIVER, but God's terms are receiving His Son for WHO He is (cf. Jn. 1:12; I Jn. 5:10-12). Concerning believers, the N.T. teaching is that we ALL have ONE LORD and ONE FAITH (cf. Eph. 4:5). Those lost in sin, in unbelief, reject the Lordship of Christ (cf. 2 Tim. 3:5; 2 Pet. 2:20; Jude 4).

**JESUS IS SAVIOR:** The angel of the Lord told Joseph that the Christ child was to be named JESUS (Mt. 1:21). The name *Jesus* in the NT corresponds to the OT name Joshua (cf. Acts 7:45; Heb. 4:8). Joshua is a compound name consisting of a mixture of the words "YHWH" and "save". It literally means "God-Savior". Jesus was so named because He would be the God-Savior Who would "*save His people from their sins*" (Mt. 1:21). Jesus was to be named "**Jesus**" meaning "**Savior**" and in combination

with this angel said He would also be called Immanuel which is translated as “**God with us**”. (Mt. 1:21-23). Indeed, Jesus is the God-Savior Who is God with us.

At the birth of Christ the angel announced to the shepherds, “*there is born to you this day in the city of David a Savior, who is Christ the Lord*” (Lk. 2:11). John the Baptist (Christ’s forerunner) introduced Jesus as “*The Lamb of God who takes away the sin of the world!*” (Jn. 1:29; 4:42; Heb. 9:22). Paul explains that God has made Christ a satisfactory payment (propitiation) for our sin (Rom. 3:25). Paul’s gospel message was the preaching of the cross (cf. 1 Cor. 1:17-18). As our Savior Christ was made to be sin for us (2 Cor. 5:21). The reason Christ came into the world was to seek and to save the lost - to save sinners (Lk. 19:10; 1 Tim. 1:15). Believers are redeemed with the PRECIOUS BLOOD of Christ (1 Pet. 1:18-19). Jesus is the propitiation (satisfactory payment) for our sins (1 Jn. 2:2). He released us from our sins by His blood (Rev. 1:5). Jesus is our salvation (Lk. 2:30; 3:6). All of heaven sings in unison, “*You were slain, and have redeemed us to God by your blood*” and cry out with a LOUD voice, “*Worthy is the Lamb who was slain...*” (Rev. 5:9-12).

A true saving faith recognizes Jesus as personal LORD and SAVIOR! This and nothing less than this is saving faith!