

# Jesus is Lord

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Date: 28 July 2024

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[ 0 : 0 0 ]     now christianity has always said that change real change comes at the level of the heart if heart change doesn't happen nothing else is really going to change you might have some superficial changes but nothing else is really going to change now that's all over the bible it's in the bible it's in saint augustine if you go back to the ancient church it's in martin luther it's in the puritans it's in martin luther king it's in timothy you will not change if your heart is not changed if your heart is not cut through with the good news that jesus is lord and so three things i want you to see this morning number one what does it mean that jesus is lord number two why aren't we cut to the heart by this news and then number three how can we be cut to the heart by this news what does it mean that jesus is lord why aren't we cut to the heart and how can we be cut to the heart so here's the first one what does it mean that jesus is lord perhaps the most surprising thing about peter's sermon here is actually the main character of the sermon i don't know if you noticed this but you've got to remember the backdrop to the sermon the spirit of god has just been poured out and peter is giving an explanation for this pouring out he says look guys people are not drunk people haven't even had brunch yet that's his basic argument people haven't had breakfast yet so they can't possibly be drunk it's not drinking time here's what's actually going on and then he quotes from the old testament in verse 17 he says in the last days god says i will pour out my spirit on all people your sons and daughters will prophesy your young men will see visions your old men will dream dreams even on my servants both men and women i will pour out my spirit in those days and they will prophesy i will show wonders in the heavens above and signs on the earth below blood and fire and billows of smoke the sun will be turned to darkness the moon to blood before the coming of the great and glorious day of the lord and everyone who calls on the name of the lord will be saved so he quotes from one of the prophets in the old testament joel quotes from joel chapter 2 and he tells people that what they're seeing and what they're hearing right now these disciples declaring the wonders of god in foreign languages what they're seeing and they're hearing is the outpouring of the spirit of god that is actually prophesied in the bible that they have at the time in the old testament no longer is the spirit kind of being poured out just for special occasions on priests and kings and prophets like you see in many of the stories in the old testament now now he's being poured out on everyone and so you see the comprehensive list they're young people old people men women everyone now you read that and you think so far so good no surprises in the sermon the people are wanting answers for the the work of the spirit how does this all work and peter is teaching them about the spirit of god from the bible the surprise then comes in verse 22 he says fellow israelites listen to this jesus of nazareth was a man accredited by god to you by miracles wonders and signs which god did among you through him as you yourselves know this has changed subject you see that i thought we were talking about god's spirit here i thought we were talking about the working the supernatural working of god's spirit why is he talking about jesus here's a surprise the occasion for the sermon is the supernatural work of the spirit of god but the main subject of peter's sermon and it goes from here to the end of the sermon is not the holy spirit but jesus of nazareth he spends the rest of the sermon again kind of going back to the old testament to make the point that jesus is the messiah that that king david uh prophesied about so messiah was the figure that the old testament we're looking forward to this great king in the line of king david who would come one day to rule and reign over his people that jesus was this messiah that jesus died

that god raised him to life and that because of this god has established that this jesus is the lord seated now at the right hand of god in heaven and it is this lord seated at the right hand of god in heaven of the father who is now pouring out his spirit this thing that you now are seeing and hearing in the streets so the focus is all on jesus it's all about him the spirit of god who at the start of the chapter is kind of center stage is kind of retreated into the background and the the spotlight of the stage is now focused onto jesus on the lord and it's actually this word lord that's really really important and it's kind of integral to peter's argument here so we we sometimes use the word lord as something of a courtesy title for a really important person but several commentators point out that that peter seems to be playing around a little bit here with the word lord by the way he's using the old testament quotes that he does both in the first one in joel chapter two but then particularly in the third one that he has in verse 32 so verse 32 well a little bit later for verse 32 here's here's the section just before that he says he's busy preaching and he says god has raised this jesus to life we're all witnesses of it exalted to the right hand of god he has received from the father the promised holy spirit and has poured out what you now see and hear for david did not ascend to heaven and yet he said and now he quotes from the old testament psalm 110 the lord said to my lord sit at my right hand until i make your enemies a footstool for your feet and he goes back to his sermon and he says therefore let all israel be assured of this god has made this jesus whom you crucified both lord and messiah now stick with me here because this bit's a little bit complicated but it's not immediately clear what peter is doing here in your english translations like the niv as you're reading but in that that first sentence of the quote that sentence the lord said to my lord if you go back to your old testament and you read it in the original language if you're able to do that you read it back in the original language there there are actually two different words for the word lord there so psalm 110 verse 1 reads the lord capital l capital r capital d that is yahweh in old testament translation often whether the divine covenantal name of god yahweh occurs what the translators would do is they would just put in the word adonai which means lord as a kind of courtesy thing to not to cover over his divine name and so the way in many of your bibles you'll see it is it's capitalized l o r d to show that it's not lord in the generic sense but yahweh lord so psalm 110 reads the lord capital l capital o capital r capital d said to my lord small l o r d sit at my right hand so it is the covenant god of israel speaking to some sort of messianic figure who will one day sit at his right hand now all the jews who are around peter at this point in time when they're listening to this sermon they've got some sort of conception of the messiah they're waiting for a messiah they they would have likely read that second lord the small l o r d as being some sort of messianic figure who will sit with some sort of great authority next to god judging the nations but when peter quotes psalm 110 he uses the same word for lord in both instances he uses a greek word kurios at least in luke's conception of it here who's writing the book so what he does is he actually introduces some ambiguity here now all of a sudden implicitly i think raising the level of this messianic figure almost to the level of yahweh the lord capital l capital o capital r capital d and actually if you if you put this side by side with

the with the joel 2 quote where it says everyone who calls on the name of the lord will be saved you're not going well who is this lord and so then he comes with this great crescendo verse 36 therefore let all israel be assured of this god has made this jesus whom you crucified both lord and messiah so he is massively massively raising the profile of jesus here to the level of the divine which is something of a plot twist now for these jewish listeners they're not expecting this jesus is not just a human messiah he's saying he's more than that he's the lord of life himself this is incredibly important for christian doctrine and belief it's critical that you as you think about your own faith that you conceive of jesus as not merely a human messiah but as the lord of life himself the one who is exalted to the right hand of the father ruling over human history if he's if he's only a human messiah then he's just another change guru that's what he is part of a long line of change gurus who are just telling us what we need to know or what we need to do in order to affect change in our lives he's he's like a spiritual tim nooks really and we don't need that unless you want some moderate weight loss you don't need another tim nooks what we need is what we need another we need a person who's going to transform us not a person telling us what to do a person who's going to transform us a lord of life who's going to transform us he just says jesus is that person through his death and his resurrection god the father has underlined the fact that's what peter's saying god the father has underlined the fact that jesus is messiah and lord and so we need to need to be clear on jesus if you want to get out of that kind of exhausting endless cycle of being duped by change guru after change guru then you need to start by being really really clear on who jesus is he's the lord of life himself now here's how the people respond to peter's sermon verse 37 when the people heard this they were cut to the heart and said to peter and the other apostles brothers what shall we do earlier in verse 23 peter tells him that the reason jesus needed to be raised to life is because well you killed him you put him to death guys god came and god accredited to him to you by signs and miracles all the wonders that are prophesied in the old testament and instead of following him you killed him and so that fact then coupled i think with the aha moment that jesus really is lord and messiah well it does something inside of these listeners now as they're sitting there and they're putting these two things together in their minds again we killed jesus and he's the lord of life they're cut to the heart and they go oh my goodness what have we done what do we do now we'll come back in a moment to what's going on inside of them as they are cut to the heart but for a second let's look at the question why aren't we cut to the heart by this news why aren't we cut to the heart when i say jesus is lord you've probably heard that or a version of that many many many times in your life the last census stats i think said that south africa professors well south africans identify as 85 percent christian this country that means a phrase like jesus is lord is not particularly shocking or arresting when you hear it doesn't make you kind of immediately stop and re-evaluate your entire life and what you've been doing with yourself up until this point we've almost been inoculated to the power of the claim

i can explain it this way i am i can see table mountain from the little office that i have up here so i can see table mountain kind of out of the little window in the corner there from from my office and it's beautiful i love the sight of the mountain but i notice how kind of blasé and indifferent i can be about the natural beauty of our mountains and our city i notice it when i have foreign guests here in cape town for the first time and i'm kind of showing them around what's going on so i've often taken folk up signal hill at sunset to watch the changing colors and to look at the mountain and the sea on the other side and sometimes people who've come into cape town for the very very first time maybe they've seen something on google or something but this is the first time they've seen it in person and i've often watched them stand there like literally dumbstruck like not moving going i've never seen anything like this i think we forget but i've never seen anything like this it is a truly world-class stunning sight and an experience to gaze upon our mountain for the first time but we see it all the time you and me you're probably going to go out after this service if the clouds lift a little bit you're going to see the mountain and you're probably not going to stand there shocked with your mouth down going wow many of you are going to stand around and drink coffee and look at other people who are nowhere near as attractive as that mountain we've been inoculated to the wonder of the sight the familiarity of us kind of dulled the desires of our heart now it's the same thing with jesus as lord our familiarity with the story severely diminished the power of that statement in our hearts so we're not cut to the heart funny i've heard a lot of sermons about how maybe you have as well particularly i remember back to my time in youth ministry but a lot of sermons about how our love for jesus is dealt by familiarity and generally those sermons tend to all end with the same sort of convicting challenge from the pastor return to your first love rekindle that flame inside of your heart and so you maybe kind of then go out of that sermon a little bit more pumped than you came in at the front end but come monday morning 10 a.m back at work and your heart's kind of back to where it was before and there's no lasting change and so i really think what we have to do is we have to diagnose the problem more deeply than merely saying well look familiarity breeds dullness or even contempt because if i'm honest i still actually go up signal hill at sunrise or sunset to look at the mountain even when i don't have foreign tourists with me i go by myself sometimes and that mountain is still beautiful even though i've got all that familiarity it still grabs my heart so what's what's going on here with jesus what's going on in our own hearts what's the real problem i actually think there are several problems that the bible highlights as the cause for that dullness of heart but here in the text is actually one that's highlighted brought to the front and it's if you look back just before our section go to verse 13 so this is the verse that comes just before the section we read this morning the disciples all spill out onto the road and they miraculously start speaking in foreign languages declaring the wonders of god and here's the response that comes from some of the listeners who are there it says some however made fun of them and said they have had too much wine in fact it's this accusation then that is the occasion for peter's sermon they're not drunk he says they're not drunk it's something from god this what you're seeing now is something supernatural it's something from god and then peter seems to underline that point in his sermon

in the way that he introduces jesus he says this man was accredited to you by miracles wonders and signs which god did among you or among you through him as you yourselves know now that is that's really fascinating that last line as you yourselves know those listeners were aware of jesus they knew about his miracles howard marshall the late new testament scholar and early church historian he makes a point that the vast majority of the early critics of christianity in the first few centuries of the christian faith they never really disputed the miracles of jesus they were like yeah he probably did those things no one was fighting with him on that but they didn't worship him as lord why well they attributed his miracles to something else they came up with alternative explanations just like some of the people gathered here at pentecost oh this isn't a supernatural work of the spirit it's just a bunch of drugs this happens if you go back and you read the gospel accounts the same thing happens to jesus in the gospel accounts when jesus supernaturally drives out demons the pharisees go oh it's probably by the power of satan or the devil the great demon himself that he's able to drive out these demons there's this alternative explanation for jesus and his claim in lordship even when he evidences his lordship through performing miracles i think the reason that we instinctively reach for these alternative explanations is because well it's because the reality of jesus's lordship terrifies us deep down maybe even at a subconscious level it terrifies us because if jesus is lord well then it changes everything about this world and about your life you as you sit and listen you're not the people sitting around you you if jesus is lord then you are not truly truly truly truly acknowledging that jesus is lord truly being cut to the heart and saying what must i do is the most uncomfortable the most disruptive thing that you can possibly do with your life right now you know that because jesus wants dominion over every single part of you every single part he wants lordship of your behavior he wants lordship of your inner thoughts he wants lordship of your values he wants lordship of your time he wants lordship of your energy he wants lordship over your material wealth he wants lordship of your relationships he wants it all and if he truly is the one then who sits at the right hand of the father presiding over all of human history with divine authority well then guess what he actually deserves it all from you every single last bit that is terrifying declaring that jesus is lord is the most uncomfortable most disruptive thing you can possibly do in your life and so i don't think it's just a familiarity issue that's the problem i think we actually cocoon our own hearts against the power of the statement jesus is lord i think we subconsciously feed feed our our hearts with alternative explanations in kind of an act of self-preservation we do that every single time we self-justify an act of disobedience i didn't really mean to do that i didn't do that it wasn't that bad so we will never ultimately change for the better because we are too terrified to allow ourselves to be truly cut to the heart in light of the world changing news that jesus is lord and you say well stephen

[ 20:16 ] is there hope for me then is there any hope for us can we have our hearts changed by this life changing news our hearts pierced by this life changing news this passage and others like it have sometimes come up in the past in conversations around anti-semitism semitism semitism semitism that's the right word peter's pretty strong here as you read his words he starts by clearly identifying who his audience is fellow jews and all who are all who live or are residing in jerusalem and then he goes in pretty hard on these people verse 23 you with the help of wicked men that's the romans you with the help of wicked men put jesus to death by nailing him to the cross it's very accusatory even in his kind of big point in verse 36 he reiterates this let all israel be assured of this god has made this jesus whom you crucified both lord and messiah and so you can see how people read these and kind of like will blush at these verses and go wow that does maybe sound a little bit anti-semitic i don't think that's what's going on here i don't think peter's point here is the national sin of israel as something kind of intrinsic to their ethnic identity i think he's actually making a much broader point about our corporate complicity in the crucifixion of the son of god during the time of george floyd and then actually even before that here in south africa during phasmas fall there was a lot of really really heated discussion online mainly online about systemic racism some people learned about that term for the first time during that period but this whole discussion about systemic racism and in christian circles there were lots of debates around whether or not the bible actually has a category for systemic sin that can make kind of an entire population group or group of people complicit in this sin even if they didn't kind of personally carry it out now those conversations seem to have actually died down a little bit at least in kind of the blogosphere and that but but i actually think it is an idea that needs more biblical examination because with all the qualifications put in place it does actually seem like corporate guilt is a category in scripture and this passage is one example of several that you find so peter accuses the crowd of crucifying christ but we know from the text itself that many of that people in the crowd would not have been in jerusalem at the time of the crucifixion many of these people are visitors coming expressly for the festival of pentecost 50 days later only temporarily residing in jerusalem for this festival they weren't there when jesus was nailed to the cross they weren't there part of the mob calling for his blood they weren't there at the foot of the cross hurling insults at him and mocking him some of them were but not all of them and yet peter says you're all guilty you all killed him that's not anti-semitism this is the acknowledgement that yes some wicked romans carried out the actual crucifixion yes some jews were present in jerusalem and egged on the crowd and egged on pontius pilate and yes this was even this is going to confuse you even in accordance with god's deliberate plan and foreknowledge according to verse 23 we might come back and do a sermon on that just to unconfuse you but there's another reason there's another reason that christ was hanging on the cross and that reason is you

and me you me and every other human being who has walked this earth refusing to submit to god's total lordship over our lives it is only when you truly understand that shocking truth that you will be cut to the heart jesus is dying there because he came to us he loved us and yet we rejected him look at his miracles look at the miracles in the gospels if you want to know more about the miracles i'm going to speak about it tonight at the uncovering jesus seminar but look at his miracles in the gospels these signs that peter says show us that he was accredited by god they're all miracles of healing of restoration miracles of setting the oppressed free that is they are all miracles of love when he when he came to claim his rightful lordship over his people he didn't come with a whip to beat us into submission he came with gentle compassion he came washing feet he came lifting up the invisible shunned people in society the children the widows the prostitutes the tax collectors he came with grace he came with love and we killed him we killed him are you cut to the heart are you pierced to the heart listen to the words from the 19th century

Scottish pastor and hymn writer Horatius Bonar our holy Jesus how hast thou offended that we to judge thee have in hate pretended by foes derided by thine own rejected oh most afflicted who was the guilty who brought this upon thee alas my treason Jesus hath undone thee 'twas I Lord Jesus I it was denied thee I crucified thee I see the scourges tear his back I see the piercing crown and of that crowd who smite and mock I feel that I am one it was I that shed the sacred blood I nailed him to the tree I crucified the Christ of God I joined the mockery around yon cross the throng I see mocking the sufferers groan yet still my voice it seems to be as if I mocked alone Jesus is on that cross because of you because of me you cut to the heart it's it's a horrific thought and yet it is also beautiful so horrific and so beautiful that it will rewire your heart that level of your deepest desires in a way that nothing else on this planet has the ability to do horrific because the gruesome death of the

Lord of life fall squarely in our laps we have the we have the bloodied guilty hands but beautiful because Peter says this man was handed over to you by God's deliberate plan and foreknowledge so think about it this way people Jesus in agreement with his father perfect agreement with his father decided in history past before the foundation of this world to go to that cross for you and for me he is not the helpless victim of our sin he is loving us he is loving us not just with his miracles not just with his compassion not just with his humble foot washing not just with his tender including of the outside he is loving us with his death too in willingly laying down his life love for us he knew that we would respond to all his miracles to all his love we would respond to all of that with murder he knew that so sinful are our hearts and so he went to the place where his heart would be pierced with the

Roman spear so that the terrible terrible grip that sin has on our hearts might be broken once and for all that is what our Lord did for us so if you sit here this morning you say I want to change if you want your life to change then what you need friends this morning is you need the deepest part of your heart the part that controls your deepest wants and desires and life you need that part to be completely reconstructed by the crucified Lord nothing else nothing else is going to bring you the lasting change you want nothing else is going to have the power and this is the key thing nothing else is going to have the power to so radically overcome your sin your failings your weaknesses and completely transform you as our crucified Lord so I would ask you to to plead to pray to the Lord that he might give you the clearest clearest possible vision of our crucified Lord this morning that you might be changed by what you see let's pray together our father and our king our hearts are cold when they should not be cold our hearts are hard when they should be soft and pierced through allow us this morning by the power of your holy spirit to get a very very clear clear clear vision of who your son is that he is both

[ 30 : 42 ] Lord and Messiah and then allow us to see very clearly what he does with his lordship how he goes to the cross to save us to save us from our failure to submit to his lordship let us see that vision Lord so that it changes our hearts it changes our loves it changes our wants and it changes our desire so that you end up having true true dominion over every single part of our lives Lord I know that's scary I know it's terrifying Lord but the vision of Jesus will help us overcome our fears and truly submit to his lordship I pray for any person here this morning Lord who's never come to faith in Jesus who's never understood what Christ is doing on that cross for them I pray that they would repent of their sin and trust in Jesus find the hope and the joy that comes from the gospel the freedom the liberation the true and lasting change that can be had in Christ have that mercy upon us Lord we all sit here with different things we want to change we look at our sin we look at our failings our weaknesses our lack of achievement help us to bring all of that to Jesus and to rest in him this morning we pray and we ask this all for

Christ's sake and his glory amen