

*Foundations 7*

*Salvation*

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*Introduction: Why I am a Christian or Follow Christ*

Happy resurrection Sunday. 1/3 of the world's population this Sunday Claims Christianity as it's faith. Easter is when Christ's Resurrection. is celebrated.

Why are you here? If a Christian why are you a Christian? Why is this day more special than all the rest of the days of the year for b Christians? What does it mean to be saved? What is salvation? Last week President Obama stated we were not a Christian nation and Newsweek cover states the rise and fall of a Christian Nation. The number of Christians fluctuates greatly but several polls over the years put the deeply committed at about 10% In fact Georg Gallup said in a 1991 poll While many more Americans than this 10 percent profess to be Christians, adds Gallup, most actually know little or nothing of Christian beliefs, and act no differently than non-Christians. So this Easter should we not answer the question What is a Christian? What is a Savior and Lord? Why are you a

Christian? I believe the first sermon preached after Christ's resurrection from Acts two answers these questions.

### ***The Salvation First Preached***

The preacher is the apostle Peter, a portion of the audience had witnessed the death and resurrection of a Prophet Jesus. This sermon is found in Acts 2:22-36 Would you please stand if you can while God's word is read.

***Men of Israel, 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. <sup>23</sup>This man was handed over to you by God's set purpose and foreknowledge; and you, with the help of wicked men,<sup>[d]</sup> put him to death by nailing him to the cross. <sup>24</sup>But God raised him from the dead, freeing him from the agony of death, because it was impossible for death to keep its hold on him. <sup>25</sup>David said about him: 'I saw the Lord always before me. Because he is at my right hand, I will not be shaken. Therefore my heart is glad and my tongue rejoices; my body also will live in hope, <sup>7</sup>because you will not abandon me to the grave, nor will you let your Holy One see decay. <sup>8</sup>You have made known to me the paths of life; you will fill me with joy in your presence. <sup>[e]</sup>***

*<sup>29</sup>"Brothers, I can tell you confidently that the patriarch David died and was buried, and his tomb is here to this day. <sup>30</sup>But he was a prophet and knew that God had promised him on oath that he would place one of his descendants on his throne. <sup>31</sup>Seeing what was ahead, he spoke of the resurrection of the Christ,<sup>[f]</sup> that he was not abandoned to the grave, nor did his body see decay. <sup>32</sup>God has raised this Jesus to life, and we are all witnesses of the fact. <sup>33</sup>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. <sup>34</sup>For David did not ascend to heaven, and yet he said, 'The Lord said to my Lord: "Sit at my right hand <sup>5</sup>until I make your enemies a footstool for your feet." <sup>[g]</sup> "Therefore let all Israel be assured of this: God has made this Jesus, whom you crucified, both Lord and Christ." Act2:22-36*

Notice a Few Things This passage is just fifty days after the death and resurrection of Christ. If Peter was wrong and there was no resurrection surely the crowd would have dug out the body of Jesus. Second, Jesus' Death, Burial and Resurrection Proved he was sent by God and was God to be man's Lord and Christ or Savior or the giver of Man's salvation.

Lets start by just getting the meaning of Salvation straight. We have so twisted and misconstrued words like Christ, savior and salvation we

need to define the terms. Saved or salvation in the bible simply means rescue or heal. Which means it does not automatically mean just saved from hell or our sins. Or the giving of eternal life after death, as many preachers this one included have implied in too many sermons.

Instead the word Salvation varies from passage to passage depending on the context. In general in most passages it simply means to get out of trouble. The trouble can be sickness, war, oppression, poverty or betrayal. So to say *God saves* simply means *God intervenes to rescue*.

So miraculously the creator of the universe steps in and intervenes in the drama of human history and protects his people from their enemies and themselves. *God's salvation comes in three primary ways. . .*

### ***God Saves by Judging***

Sometimes *God saves* by judging. Let's see some hands does it surprise you that the bible teaches *God saves* by judging? This is why I think we have lost our way. Because in the Biblical sense Judgment is a positive despite all the negativity we put on the term.

In Acts 2 *God* brings Judgment on the People of Jerusalem by Peter preaching the truth that Jesus was accredited by *God* through his life of miracles and his resurrection from the dead to be the Lord and Christ. This judging truth allows them to be free from their denial of Jesus as Lord and Christ. This is why in the bible Judgment is viewed positively.

But we all know real life is complicated. What if we are the ones who have done evil and are now experiencing the just consequences of our sin?

### ***God Saves by Forgiving***

Too often the danger or evil we face is self-created, self-inflicted and self sabotaging. And we keep doing it because we are self-deluded and self denying because we are deceived. God shows his love for us by judging us-naming our evil for what it is, by penetrating our self-denial and self-delusion with His truth he begins to save us. But God does not stop there he goes further the consequences of our bad choices still loom over us and we just like the people of Jerusalem realize we have done something stupidly wrong and evil and we have second thoughts about what we have done. As we repent and become truly sorry and having a true change of heart for what we have done we God goes further by forgiving us for what we have done. Thus bringing the meaning salvation a more fuller meaning. Salvation happens when we experience both Judgment and forgiveness together.

### ***God Saves by Judging and Forgiving!***

Salvation takes place when Justice the truth about our wrong: This Jesus whom you crucified. . . Meets God's mercy of **foregoing** our just consequences: we deserve we see this .When Peter Replied, "Repent and be Immersed, every one of you for the forgiveness of sin. With

out both we do not end up with true salvation. We often refer to God's saving Judgment by stating God has convicted us of sin and our need for repentance. Again without both there is no true salvation. .

Forgiveness without conviction of sin there is no forgiveness but irresponsible tolerance! This does not lead to reconciliation and peace instead it leads to chaos.

Just the opposite is true-Judgment without mercy is not salvation but condemnation. It also does not lead to salvations reconciliation and peace but to alienation. The good news of Salvation that Jesus rose from the dead , is that God sent His son Jesus not to condemn but to save the world by bringing justice with mercy for mans evil. True judgment with true forgiveness. First by exposing our wrong or judging so we can face our wrong and turn from it finding in this true forgiveness and restoration which brings God's salvation on earth. Is this the salvation we celebrate today?

***His Resurrection makes him Lord***

My last youth group we had a few wanna be rappers-not wanting to be left out and to **make** a point: I bought a T-shirt that said: Jesus My Homeboy on the front. I do not wear that shirt anymore, because I have become convicted that most of our Tshirts, bumpers stickers and Christian trinkets make Jesus more of a Mascot than the Lord He Is!

Yet, as Christians we call him Lord a lot, often without the foggiest idea of what we mean. Lord means master the very opposite of mascot.

There are three senses of the word master that apply to Jesus.

1. Authority or Kingship. The problem is for modern people Lord is an archaic word. The closest we can come to understanding is a monarchy in a non-democratic society, who is called king. Then your saddled with all the corruption and ruthless power that comes with the picture. In Jesus day the political pledge of allegiance was Caesar is Lord. Somewhat like Heil Hitler was required in the thirties and Forties in Nahtzi Germany. To Call Jesus Lord, was to say there is a power in Jesus more important than the king of the greatest state in history. To say Jesus is lord was and should be now a profoundly political statement. Affirming the power of a Jewish Rabbi with Scarred feet and hands over Caesar himself, with all of his swords, spears chariots and crosses could only be done in the context of a resurrection from the dead.

## 2. Master

The second meaning of Lord is an absolute master in relationship to a servant or slave, this language of more oppression and domination is totally foreign to Americans living in a democratic society.

But, Jesus once again takes the word Lord and redefines the master slave relationships, where one tells the other what to do, and when to do it! Our modern distaste for power of that sort can lead us even further astray! Jesus redefines the master slave relationship rife for abuse and corruption into a redemptive state.

When he had finished washing their feet, he put on his clothes and Returned to his place. "Do you understand what I have done for you?" he asked them. <sup>13</sup>"You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am. <sup>14</sup>Now that I, your Lord and Teacher, have washed your feet, you also should wash one another's feet. <sup>15</sup>I have set you an example that you should do as I have done for you. <sup>16</sup>I tell you the truth, no servant is greater than his master, nor is a messenger greater than the one who sent him. <sup>17</sup>Now that you know these things, you will be blessed if you do them. John 13:12-17

In this passage he demonstrated what he stated earlier that I no longer call you servants but friends. This passage is the best example of how Jesus revolutionizes mastership. By stripping down to his undergarments-something only a slave would do and washing the dirty stinky feet of his disciples-he absurdly defines master in the kingdom of God by serving Then Commands his disciples to practice this

inverted form of leadership. We cannot call Jesus Lord, unless we are willing to let him define the word in this radical way.

But in the midst of this upside down model-Jesus asserts he is still the master that gives commands he expects us to obey. Jesus handling of Peter and Judas during the last night makes clear he will never be man's wish granting Jeanie. His ascension after his resurrection he asserts he has all authority on heaven and earth. So we must answer to him, that he does not answer to us.

### ***3. Teacher***

The third meaning of Lord grows from the first two-Lord also means master teacher or Rabbi. A teacher who tells us what to do and how to do it Being told what to do so rubs us the wrong way-we may go further astray by bolting into rebellion.

We dethrone Jesus as Lord when we promote Jesus as our savior and promote the Apostle Paul, Rick Warren, or Billy Graham as master teacher and Lord. We dethrone Jesus as Lord when we trust him to save us from hell but zero interest in him saving us from greed, violence, lust or prejudice. We do this often unknowingly when we assume Jesus and his teachings soul purpose is to get us into heaven after death-so we zero in on His death, to solve our guilt

problem as a get out of jail free card. We also do this when we look at tough teachings of Jesus to turn the other Cheek and to cut off body parts to get away from sin and we say things like that it is just a spiritual teaching that's not what he meant it only applies to eternity, not our everyday life. cWe also dethrone Jesus when we use a teacher or denomination to interpret his teachings. When our church traditions are more important than the plain truth of Jesus, He is no longer our Lord!

To keep our resurrected Lord on His rightful throne we have to start thinking outside the box. In fact I think it would be best if we left the church building and enter the world of arts, trades and notice how a master artist or violinist passes on their master knowledge. Ask Jerry Wichaël you can be taught the notes on a Piano-but it takes a master to pass on to a student not only his technical skill but is artistic passions.

You will find the only way to learn this mastery is for a student to willingly submit to the master and his disciplines and traditions.

Tradition is not how we bow before a karate lesson or after a piano recital. It is a whole way of life for the master and his artists.

Traditions is the disciplines or way of life require to produce a

masterpieces.

Let's imagine a CU professor with a double PHD in Ornithology and engineering. We ask this lettered expert for a simple task: build us a robin's nest. Now He would start out well with stick and twigs but I bet that by the time he was finished it would be a muddy blob that would not withstand its first rain storm. Now look at mother robin's nest-no comparison-we would ask her how did you do that? I don't know how-I just know! So the only way you could ever build a robin's nest is to become a robin. Live with mother Robin experience how she rules the roost-why certain twigs are important. To build a robin's nest would require you to submit to her pecking as you learned her mastery. Her teaching would not be so much spoken as intuitive guidance. Jesus is Lord when we so live with him we know his kingship is good, we pick up our cross lovingly to follow his mastery and we allow His spirit to lead and guide us into the kingdom of God! Will Jesus be your Lord this Easter?

***Conclusion: I became a Christian about 23 years ago-because the evil in my life at that point was overwhelming! I wanted to feel better-be better- and live a better life than I had-so it was clear to me I needed a personal savior!***

*But over the years, the disappointments, the betrayals, then unanswered prayer for loved ones who died instead of find healing- I have grown to know it is not about me-It is not about a personal Savior!*

*I John 4:14-16 Says:* And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent his Son to be the Savior of the world. <sup>15</sup>If anyone acknowledges that Jesus is the Son of God, God lives in him and he in God. <sup>16</sup>And so we know and rely on the love God has for us.

I am a Christian This Resurrection Sunday because I am convinced that God has intervened in Human history and is saving this planet through the risen one Jesus! In my forty four years of life I am certain left to my own power and the power of other human beings we would destroy this planet! By planet I mean earth and all life on it. Man left to themselves unjudged, unforgiven and untaught we will certainly destroy this planet and all it's life forms. The cross says man's evil is so depraved only God can Save His creation. The Tomb declares that Jesus is the God who intervened in human history by taking on human flesh to show us the way the truth and the life. And even now his children rebell!

How can I say that?-the one little word I have not yet talked

about baptism!

Baptism in the greek means dip we still have learned men sprinkling because baptism is not important but Jesus is ! We in the church quibble over whether baptism is necessary for God to save you! We moan and cry because it is done in public in front of people!

He was beaten, betrayed and brutalized and all we can do is argue about what it means to follow his simple commands? We prove our desire for him to be our Lord and Savior by following his simple commands: Peter replied, "Repent and be baptized, every one of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins. And you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit. <sup>39</sup>The promise is for you and your children and for all who are far off—for all whom the Lord our God will call."

Don't debate God's simple Commands-simply obey for there is no other way. bCome up front as we stand to sing