

“Jesus is Lord, Even Over My Death” | Good Friday
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I. The Lord Jesus and the Lord Death

Jesus is Lord.

That is the simplest way to put it. He is Lord over *all things*. He’s the lord of life, the lord of love. He’s the lord of heaven and earth. He’s the lord of everything that is seen, and everything that is unseen. Jesus is lord of the past, the present, and the future.

Jesus is Lord.

This was perhaps one of the earliest Christian confessions. Those who knew Jesus and his mission to redeem and restore this world back to his heavenly father confessed the good news in these three words. Jesus is Lord.

These earliest of Christians insisted that Jesus wasn’t just a teacher or leader or miracle worker. The earliest Christians, and all Christians ever since, knew and confessed that...

Jesus is Lord.

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The fact of the matter, though, is that God’s good creation has be subjected to another master. Way back in the beginning with the sin of our first parents, this dark lord began its reign. To this ruler and lord we all bow in helpless submission. I’m speaking of the dark lord that is death.

It overcomes all people, at all times and in all places. It rules this world and everyone in in whether they be rich or poor, powerful or weak, famous or common. No one escapes its rule and reign.

This is not the way life was meant to be. God created us not for death but for life. But because sin has crept in through the fall of Adam and Eve, life is not as it should be. And despite our most valiant efforts and the most brilliant minds hard at work, none of us can outwit, outsmart, outlast, or outrun death.

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Tonight, however, is Good Friday. And if Good Friday is anything at all, it’s a clash of lords. It’s an epic battle...a grand confrontation between the lord of this world and the Lord Jesus. On this night, some 2,000 years ago, Jesus went head to head with death itself.

II. Our Death

There really is no way around it...there's no way to sugarcoat it. The ruler of this age is powerful. And the ruler of this age lays claim to us all. Unless the Lord Jesus returns first, death will have its way with all of us. We will die.

This is a subject we all tend to avoid. But at times, it's thrust upon us. Perhaps you attended a funeral recently and wondered what they would say about you. Or maybe you had a near-death experience and realized that just inches or seconds stood in the way of your own funeral. Maybe you went through, or are going through now, a time of deep depression and life has become almost unbearable and you can hardly see a way forward.

At times such as these, our own death comes to mind and we simply cannot help but wonder: who will show up to our funeral? Who will speak up? Who will break down?

I know, it's a sobering thought. It's so much easier and so much more comfortable to just ignore our impending death, isn't it?

But you didn't come here tonight to skirt around the important matters. You came here tonight because there are important things that need to be discussed. Some things like death *must* be faced.

III. Jesus Reigns in Death

That's what our Lord Jesus was doing on Good Friday. On this day Jesus came face to face with death. And just one look at the Gospel writers' accounts of this Good Friday demonstrate that Jesus' death was a terrible thing to behold.

Jesus' death was ***painful*** as he was struck in the face, flogged with a brutal whip made of leather straps with shards of pottery or rocks attached to the end that tore the flesh off his back. The crown of thorns, the weight of the cross, the nails driven through his hands and feet. The parched mouth, the struggle to breathe. Jesus' death was painful.

Jesus' death was also ***humiliating***. False charges were brought against him with no defense. The mockery of the soldiers. The shame of standing in front of the crowds barely clothed. Jeers and taunts and challenges, "he saved others, why doesn't he save himself?" Jesus' death was ***painful, and humiliating***.

But worst than the pain and the humiliation, was the ***separation***. The crowds that welcomed him into Jerusalem on Palm Sunday and praised him as savior and king were gone. The disciples who vowed to die with him had fled. His own people, the very people Jesus had come to save, knew him not and demanded his death. And when he finally hung on that cross, suspended between heaven and earth, Jesus was forsaken by His

Father. There on Golgotha, when Jesus gave up his Spirit, he was completely and utterly alone.

It's the separation that makes death so scary, isn't it? It's what makes us avoid thinking about our own death. It's just too plain frightening to think about facing the great unknown all alone.

IV. Jesus' Death Was My Death

When we think about Jesus' death, we don't often think so much about his reign as Lord. To be sure, he certainly didn't *look* like the master of heaven and earth on Good Friday. But in this epic clash of lords of Good Friday there is more than meets the eye. That is,

In *his* death, Jesus was reigning as Lord over *our* death.

That's what Paul wrote in Galatians 2:20, "I have been crucified with Christ". Paul was there and so were we. Not physically, of course. Jesus was crucified alone. But through faith, we were there too.

His pain was our pain.

His humiliation was our humiliation.

His separation was our separation.

His death was our death.

And in joining us to his suffering, he reigned for us as Lord. That's how he brought death under submission. That's how he conquered our greatest enemy. Through his death, he won for us life.

And the result is this: "Jesus is Lord, even over my death"

That's the Gospel in Seven Words tonight.

Do you realize what this means? It means that we have already died. It means you have already died. Jesus' death is our death. Jesus' cross is our cross. The tomb we hear slamming shut is our tomb.

"Through his death," Paul wrote to the Colossians, "he has delivered us from the domain of darkness and transferred us into the kingdom of his beloved son" (Col. 1:13). We have already been delivered. Therefore we need not cower, we need not fear.

Although death still makes us uncomfortable, although death still stings, we need not pay homage to that lord. Death will continue to claw and scrape until Jesus returns but we will never experience the complete and total separation that Jesus experienced. Our sins have been removed. In Christ's death we have already died and, through faith in him, we are already rising to new life.

Tonight, although it is a dark and sad day as we recall the pain, humiliation, and separation which Jesus experienced, we can also confess the *good* news on this *Good* Friday. We can confess the Good News simply and confidently, with hope in our hearts.

Death no longer reigns. For "Jesus is Lord, even over my death".

Amen.