



He Is Lord

The Lordship of Christ is once and the same time His super-natural right and hard won. The Christ-hymn in Philippians 2:5-11 tells this story powerfully and poetically. It is the story that does not begin in a manger in Bethlehem, or with accounts of a humble carpenter's son who begins to teach. The story begins in heaven with Christ equal to God.

John 1 begins in the same location, "In the beginning was the Word and the Word was with God and the Word was God." It is not necessary to understand all the theological arguments for the pre-existence of the second person of the Trinity to understand what these biblical writers are saying: Christ's journey is more like a parabola from glory to humility to higher glory than a straight line from earth to heaven. His story is one of descent and ascent.

So when Christ was amazing his friends and neighbors as a humble carpenter's son who turned out to be an extraordinary teacher, he was already Lord of the Universe. We just didn't know it yet. The evil spirits did of course. Mark 1 and other accounts show an amazed and bewildered congregation and insightful and fearful evil spirits, "I know who you are," one snorted, "You are the Holy One of God."

The Christ hymn traces the descent from heaven to earth as one of deepening sacrifice and obedience, "He was obedient unto death, even death on a cross." But there, his ascent begins, "And God raised him from the dead and gave him the name that is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee shall bow . . . and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord." Our simple little chorus is one way of confessing the Lordship of Christ. It ought to be a reminder of the Lordship of Christ in the rest of our lives expressed in obedience to His Word.

The soul that truly believes in Christ

Must be transformed and changed

From this present evil condition

To another state, one that is purely good,

And from the present lowly nature

To another, divinized nature.

The disciple will be made completely new

By the power of the Holy Spirit,

And so will be made ready even here

For the heavenly kingdom.

-- Markarios the Great