

LD 13 (QA 34); Psalm 49:5-9; John 20:24-29; My Lord and My God I. From Doubt to Faith II. The Price of Possession III. The Benefit of Belonging

Congregation of our Lord Jesus Christ, to what or whom do you belong? Most of us belong to various groups- like we could belong to a MOPS group, or a Parent's Club- even social groups like the NRA or Lion's Club. Children, you likely belong to Cadets or GEMS and maybe even a sports club or team. We all belong to various groups and societies- and each one has different requirements. But most of the time it is pretty easy to belong to these groups. You simply show up- and suddenly you are part of the group. Or maybe you have to try out- or pay a yearly due- and then you are card carrying member. But of all the groups and societies that we can belong to- there is one group that is the hardest to get into. In fact, it is impossible to get into this group! There is no amount of money that you can pay- no initiation that you can endure- no try out that will secure your place on these rolls or in these ranks. The only way to get into this group is if someone pays your entrance fee for you- and as we will see- that fee is incredibly high! So today we continue to consider the various names and titles attributed to the 2<sup>nd</sup> person of the Trinity- He is Jesus Christ- the Son of God- and He is our Lord! We consider this theme: Jesus Christ purchases His people with His blood making Him our Lord!

### **I. From Doubt to Faith**

In our first point we consider a Biblical example where a member of the disciples comes to grips with the Lordship of Jesus. In our reading from John 20 we are reintroduced to Thomas. Now poor Thomas was absent the last time that Jesus appeared to the disciples back in v. 19- and he refuses to believe the witness of the woman and the other disciples. Thomas who said- let's all die with Lazarus- now doubts that Jesus can come back from the dead! This has earned Thomas the nickname- doubting Thomas. But Thomas is very pragmatic- I will not believe unless I see! I will not trust anyone's words- I need to see this Jesus with my own eyes. And Jesus graciously appears to Thomas- and with a slight rebuke He tells Thomas to put his fingers in the holes in His hands and side. Thomas, do not doubt- but rather believe!

And by the working of the Spirit, Thomas does believe. But the confession that Thomas makes is our focus this morning. So Thomas says in v. 28- My Lord and My God. In the Greek this would be- my Kurious and my Theos. In the Hebrew- Adoni and Elohim. Now Thomas is confessing something very significant. The words he uses are titles that are reserved for God alone- he is recognizing that Jesus is the master- the owner- the sovereign King and ruler over all. And Jesus is also God- the divine One- the creator of heaven and earth. Here again is a clear proof text for the deity of Jesus Christ. And you will remember that this title- Kurious- was one that the Roman Rulers claimed for themselves. Caesar is Lord- as the people were commanded to declare. But the disciples will not blaspheme- rather they rightly confess- Jesus alone is the Lord! He is the master- my master- the one to whom I belong- the one to whom all allegiance and honor belongs! Thomas had to see it- but He did confess the truth eventually. We take note of the fact that Thomas had to see the marks- the scars. He had to behold the place where the nails pierced his hands and the spear pierced His side. Proof of identity and proof of death! Only then would he believe! He has to see where the precious blood had been drawn from his side- so there is a connection between the wounds and necessary atonement. Thomas knew that Jesus was dead- He had died. His body broken and His blood shed. The proof of identity was in the wounds on Jesus' body! He is the one who died- but has now been raised as the living Lord! The Lord even over death- who conquered the grave and defeated sin! Who suffered and died- being nailed to a cruel cross. But upon seeing Jesus' hand and side- Thomas knows! But at the end of John 20 Jesus states- you believed because you saw. Blessed are those who believe without seeing! There is a greater blessing for those who believe without seeing- who confess the truth from a heart of faith- believing the testimony recorded without actually meeting Jesus and seeing Him in the flesh! And this blessing is now ours! By faith we confess- Jesus is our Lord and our God!

## **II. The Price of Possession**

As we continue, we look at the process by which Jesus becomes our Lord. Although it is true that God is Lord of all because He is the creator of all- Jesus is the Lord of the church in a special and unique way. Remember that the Lordship of Jesus has to do with His purchasing- He has ransomed a people to be His own- He bought us at a price as I Cor. 6 puts it. So what did Jesus pay for us? What was the unit which was given so that we might be purchased? As I Peter 1 :18 answers- you were ransomed with the precious blood of Jesus. So Jesus paid for you- and what He paid was the most expensive thing that can be paid- and that is his blood. Not just a little blood- but His life blood! We could say that Jesus bled out for His people! What makes your life blood so precious is that you only have so much to give- and once your blood has been shed completely there is no more that you can give. When compared to money- you can always make more money. But life blood- that is truly special. For in the giving of His life blood, Jesus laid down His life and died! But if we were purchased, what were we purchased from? Well, as our QA 34 says, we were delivered and purchased from sin and the tyranny of the devil. When Adam sinned- and we sinned through Adam- we sold ourselves to be slaves! We bound ourselves to sin- and thus found ourselves under the power of the Devil. Jesus buys us- purchases us- and brings us back to Himself! We can speak of this ransom in other way as well. When Jesus suffered and died, He satisfied God's justice and made propitiation- satisfying the wrath of God upon our sin. In this suffering and dying, by the shedding of His blood, Jesus made the payment necessary to satisfy God's just anger against sin. So Jesus purchases us by His blood- makes us His own- saves us from the futile way of sin and bondage to the Devils way- liberating us from the snares of death itself.

It is for this reason that we call Him our Lord- we belong to Him- He made the payment necessary for us! Now we have a new master- belonging to Him in body and in soul. Here our QA 34 echoes QA 1- belonging body and soul- in live and in death- to my faithful Savior Jesus Christ. Those whom He has saved belong to Him- He is their Lord, master and sovereign one. Only the blood of Jesus could purchase us in this way- only the blood of the Lamb will suffice to take away the sins of the world. Our

reading from Psalm 49 clarifies the unique necessity that there is for the blood of Jesus. As the Psalmist asks in 49:8- who can give a ransom to God- who can pay for the price of their life? The ransom is costly- and can never suffice. In other words- there is no created thing- no amount of money, gold or riches that can be given in exchange for a person's life! The ransom for a man- what price can you put on a person's body and soul? To whom can you make payment? What does God need with your money- for the earth is the Lord's and everything in it! What do we have that we have not first received! Search the skies and the seas- you will never find a treasure to give in exchange for your soul- the cost is too great! There is but one substance- one payment- the precious blood of Jesus Christ! So precious that nothing more is needed- and nothing else will do. You are not your own- you are blood bought! Now when you belong to someone- He has the right of ownership. For example, if you go to the dealer and buy a new car and you pay cash- that car is yours. You can do with it as you please. You can get it dirty and let it rust- or you can keep it clean and running well- but it is yours. You are the owner. Well, you belong to Jesus! You are His- what does He do with you? Does He ignore or cherish those whom He has purchased?

### **III. The Benefit of Belonging**

Coming to our last point we find the benefit of belonging to such a gracious and kind Lord! Having been purchased means that we are set free- liberated from one kingdom- as well as being ushered into a new. Jesus takes care of His possessions! We are no longer enslaved- bound to sin- rather we are set free from Satan and his power. Two of the key devices of the Devil are temptation and fear. In temptation, we are lured into an action of rebellion. But by the Holy Spirit we are born again- sanctified- and now able to resist that temptation. And concerning fear, fear comes from the knowledge of future condemnation. As 1 John 4:18 puts it, fear has to do with punishment. But since we have been set free from the punishment that we deserve, the device of fear that the Devil uses no longer has the same weight! Since the Spirit who is in us is great than the Devil, we are now free! Free from the Tyranny of the Evil- free from the fear

of coming condemnation! Joyfully liberated! That is not to say that we no longer sin, but our lives are not lived in constant slavery- addicted to sin and unable to obey God! No- by the Spirit- having been set free by our Lord Jesus- means that we can and do begin to love and obey God! This is one of the great blessings that we have! We belong no longer to the kingdom of Darkness- but the Kingdom of light! Our Lord is not the Prince of Darkness, but the Son of God- Jesus! He is such a kind and merciful lord! He cares for us- we are His! He will not let us be destroyed or lost- we are His prized possession! If the shepherd would search for 1 lost lamb among 100- how much more Jesus will search for, find and protect His bride! But as Lord, we have to keep His ownership of us always in view. A Christian is to constantly surrender their own perceived rights. We reminder ourselves- I am not my own! We have all heard children say- You are not the boss of me! Well, Jesus is your boss! He has the right to tell you have to live- and as your owner- He has free and complete right to use you, your life and your possessions for His glory! It is humbling fact! Your life is not your own- you are His! He is your Lord- and you belong to Him!

As we close, we are reminded of the benefit we have of belonging. We are in the safety and care of the Lord of glory- Jesus Christ! On Pentecost Sunday, Peter declared to the Israelites that God has made this Jesus- whom you crucified both Lord and Messiah. And even as the book of Revelation proclaims- Jesus is King of Kings and Lord of lords. There is none higher than He- and we belong to none other! Indeed- no one can say that Jesus is Lord except by the Spirit as I Cor. 12 teaches. Knowing, confessing and believing in Jesus as the Lord is necessary for our salvation. Jesus Christ purchases His people with His blood making Him our Lord! Praise God for the Lordship of Jesus!