**Savior or Lord?**

Of the plethora of troubling problems facing “modern” Christianity, there is one that seems to resonant a bass line that at least a few others seem to follow in rhythmic cadence: **Everyone wants a *Savior-* few want a *Lord.***

A ***Savior* i**s both *what* people want, and therefore, *how* they choose to see and “believe in” Him. This is somewhat understandable, since we:

* Need *saving,* Romans 3:9,23;
* Certainly want to be *saved* or *justified,* Romans 3:24a;
* Surely like the notion of being *“a gift by His grace,””* Romans 3:24b;
* Also find it especially appealing if the above means that we don’t have to do anything to attain this *justification* except have *“faith in Jesus*,*”* Romans 3:26.

**Everyone** wants *this* kind of Savior! Who wouldn’t? I sure do! But what does it mean to have *“faith in Jesus,”* exactly? Is it just to *believe* that He was/is the Son of God who *died* for our sins, was *buried,* and then *resurrected?*  Certainly, such is involved as Romans 10:9b teaches, *“and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved.”* But what does the “a” (first) part of that verse say?

Actually, let’s back up and get the whole sentence, *“But what does it say? The word is near you, in your mouth and in your heart- that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that if you confess with your mouth Jesus* ***as Lord****, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved; for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation,”* Romans 10:8-10. Did you get that? Salvation through Jesus Christ is attained by *“believing”* who and what Jesus was, but also requires that we *“confess”* **Jesus *“as Lord.”*** Now what does that mean, exactly?

*“Lord”* is translated from the Greek word *kurios,* and is generally translated as *“lord”* or *“master”* in the New Testament. But as with many words (in Greek and English), it carries either an *unofficial/general* designation or an *official/specific* one. Generally, it was used as a term or respect or homage, and is even translated as *“Sir,”* cf. John 12:21. However, when it is used in the official or specific sense relative to divinity, it becomes *“Lord”* or *“Master,”* cf. John 20:28. So, which of these applications do you think is intended in our passage of Romans 10:9 as a prerequisite for salvation? Simply paying general homage or respect (*i.e.* lip service), or specifically confessing Jesus’ *lordship* and *mastery* of your life? You see, simply acknowledgingor even showing respect to Jesus as the Son of God isn’t all there is to *faith* or *salvation.* If that is all *“believe”* means, the demons qualify, James 2:19.

Instead, *confessing Jesus “as Lord”* is declaring your *submission* to His *control* of your mind, heart, soul, and strength- you and everything that makes you, you! Surely, this confession is based on *Who* and *What* **He is,** but also includes *who* and *what* **you are willing to become- His, totally and completely.** Such is as much a part of “salvation” as *“believe in you heart.”* Simply put, we may **want** a *Savior* without a *Lord,* but we can’t **have** Jesus as our *Savior* without Him being our *Lord,* cf. Romans 6:15-23.

Jesus was, even from His humble beginnings, *“a* ***Savior****, who is Christ the* ***Lord****,”* Luke 2:11. The New Testament confirms the linkage between **both** roles throughout, cf. Philippians 3:20; 2Peter 1:11; 2:20; 3:20. Thus, despite our desires, the reality is that we really can’t have *one* without the *other.* Do you *believe* that Jesus is the Christ, the Son of God? If so, great! Now will you submit to Him as *Lord* of your life? If so, I’d love nothing more than to help. Jesus wants to be your *Savior,* if you’ll let Him be your *Lord* also. (Philip C. Strong; Southport Church of Christ; 7202 Madison Ave, Indianapolis, IN 46227; online at southportcofc.org; email to mrpcstrong@hotmail.com)