

Bible Basics Conference 2011: “Christ the Lord, Christ the Head, Christ the King”

Part 11

Speaker	Bible Basics Conference; Simon Attwood; Michael Hardt; Nick Fleet; Hugh Clark; Paul Dronsfield; Graham Warnes; Geoff Hawes; Andrew Poots
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Note: This text is a computer generated transcript of the sermon. In some cases it may contain errors.

[00:00:01] The first question is, what is the significance of the footstool in Psalm 110, verse 1?

Just to re-read the verse, the Lord said unto my Lord, Sit thou at my right hand until I make thine enemies thy footstool. I think we will have understood from what we have heard so far today something of what the throne represents.

But the footstool we haven't really covered. And I'm grateful for this question because it gives me an opportunity to fill out something that I forgot to say this morning. The footstool. Why are his enemies to be made his footstool? The Lord is sitting here at the right hand of Jehovah, and he has a footstool.

Now, if we express this verse in New Testament terms, we read at the end of Revelation chapter 3, [00:01:02] that to him that overcometh will I grant to sit with me in my throne, even as I also overcame and am set down with my Father in his throne. So there again is a picture of the Lord Jesus Christ after his victory being seated with his Father on the throne. There is no mention in the New Testament in that verse of the footstool. The footstool is future. The throne is present. The Lord Jesus took his place on that throne when he ascended into heaven after he has risen from among the dead.

So again, we come back to what is the footstool. To understand it, I think we have to turn first of all to the book of Joshua. And in chapter 10, Joshua is fighting against five kings who were occupying Israel at that time [00:02:04] and who God commanded Joshua to drive out. The iniquity of the Amorites and indeed of all those nations was full and God was declaring judgment on them. Now, in verse 24 of Joshua chapter 10, it says, And it came to pass when they brought out those kings unto Joshua that Joshua called for all the men of Israel and said unto the captains of the men of war which went with him, Come near, put your feet upon the necks of these kings.

And they came near and put their feet upon the necks of them.

Victorious in war, the victors put their feet upon the necks of the kings of the nations whom they had conquered, a sign of victory, enemies put under the feet.

[00:03:04] Now, the Lord Jesus, his enemies are going to be put under his feet in a coming day.

And indeed, we are told even more.

If we turn, we need to link that scripture in Joshua with a scripture at the end of Romans, Romans 16 verse 20, And the God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. So great is the victory that the Lord Jesus Christ has won that we share in that victory with him.

The God of peace is going to bruise Satan under your feet. We do not have to take action against the enemies of the people of God ourselves. God is going to see to that. The God of peace shall bruise Satan under your feet shortly. [00:04:01] Why? Because he is going to put the enemies of Christ under his feet as he sits upon the throne. And we are so united with Christ that we share in that victory. And therefore, the apostle is able to promise that victory to the Romans who were suffering from those who were opposing their faith.

What a verse this is. Whoever would have thought that it would be true of ourselves that the God of peace is going to bruise Satan under our feet shortly, that will be on the day of Christ.

But he it is that will occupy the throne.

We are told in Revelation that we will occupy the throne with him. But we need to hold on to the fact that he has conquered and he is the one whose enemies will be beneath his feet. There's a very lovely verse of a hymn by Mr. J.N. Darby. [00:05:02] You all know it. Number 235.

Soon shalt thou take thy throne, thy foes thy footstool made, and take us with thee for thine own in glory love displayed.

I trust that goes some way to answering the question. The question is as follows.

It was said that Christ is not the Lord of the assembly, but he is the Lord in the assembly.

Could this be illustrated by scriptures?

And the difference this makes practically be explained. And the questioner has added, thank you, very politely, [00:06:01] indicating that a response is expected.

In saying that Christ is not Lord of the assembly, but Lord in the assembly, my point was that I'm not aware of a direct scripture which says that Christ is the Lord of the assembly. Whereas there are scriptures that say that he is head of the assembly.

I'm thinking of Ephesians 1, verse 22, where we read that God has given him to be head over all things to the assembly.

There he is head over all things, but head to the assembly.

And in the other scripture, which was read, Colossians 2, verse 19, [00:07:02] we learn that Christ is the head from whom all the body, by joints and bands, having nourishment ministered and knitted together, increases with the increase of God. So there we see that he is the head of the assembly. He's directly referred to as such.

But we do acknowledge his lordship. And the scripture in mind in the statement that he is Lord in the assembly is 1 Corinthians 12, verse 5, where we read that there are differences of administrations or we might read it distinctions of operations, but the same Lord.

So that we see that in assembly activities we come under the lordship of Christ.

So these two truths go together and there's no question that lordship leads out to and prepares the way for headship.

[00:08:03] Lordship implies authority, headship, impulse, guidance, direction.

Some of these distinctions are somewhat intuitive and we need to take into consideration a good deal of what has been said throughout these meetings as to form an idea of the relative proportion of one to the other.

In terms of lordship, we go somewhat wider than headship because lordship includes profession. There are those who say, Lord, Lord, have we not done certain things in thy name and the Lord will have to say to them, depart from me, I never knew you. In Ephesians 4, we read that there's one Lord and one faith and one baptism. There are many who acknowledge the authority of the Lord Jesus. There are many adherents of the Christian faith, so-called.

[00:09:04] Many who have submitted outwardly to Christian baptism, baptism in water in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit. And yet sadly, there's no reality in their lives in regard to these matters and the lordship really is one of profession.

It does not need to be only profession because lordship applies also to possession and applies to that which is real. But when we come to headship, it's a matter of vital union and it can only take in that which is real and dynamic and vital.

If we put the slightest difference between the head and the body, the thinness of a gold leaf or of a sheet of paper or any minute division, well then there's no living and vital contact. [00:10:04] But when the Lord Jesus appeared to Saul on the road to Damascus, he said, Saul, Saul, why persecutest thou me?

He didn't say, why are you persecuting the disciples or the followers of the way or these believers? He said, why persecutest thou me? And this shows the vital organic unity between the head and the body that when we speak of the headship of Christ, we're concerned with that which is real and vital. Also in regard to lordship, it refers also to that which is individual. Individually, we own the lordship of Christ but when we come to headship, we come to the collective exercises of the saints of God and it is indeed when we are together in assembly that the headship of Christ is exercised [00:11:01] and we enjoy those impulses and that guidance and direction from the head. So these are some of the differences and distinctions that we would make practically between headship and lordship.

So much as to question one.

The next question concerns 1 Corinthians 11 verses 27 to 29 and I'll just read those verses. Wherefore, whosoever shall eat this bread and drink this cup of the Lord unworthily shall be guilty of the body and blood of the Lord.

[00:12:01] But let a man examine himself and so let him eat of that bread and drink of that cup for he that eateth and drinketh unworthily eateth and drinketh damnation or as we might read it eats and drinks judgment to himself not discerning the Lord's body.

And so the questioner says we heard that the Lord's table is connected with responsibility and the Lord's supper with privilege.

And then in view of this scripture the questioner asks is not the Lord's supper also connected with responsibility?

Well, I would have to say yes having read the scripture. Generalizations sometimes can be dangerous things [00:13:04] and generalizations are good and they're helpful in settling things in our mind but we always want to have the balance of truth and so I accept exactly what has been said here.

In chapter 10 we have something very similar actually because it says do we provoke the Lord to jealousy that our conduct can be such in relation to divine things that God will deal with us because he is a jealous God. But I would just say this in chapter 10 in connection with the Lord's table the sphere of our responsibility it's more our behavior our external behavior out before the world and what we're identifying with on an everyday basis. The eating and drinking unworthily it seems to be the actual conduct of the believers when they were together that they were doing things in an unworthy manner [00:14:04] that is to say they were having a love feast at the same time as they were having the Lord's supper and they had all the nice food out behind the plantain and the chicken or whatever it was on that particular day but some were just it was bring your own food and some were having a big nausea some were having a first class meal and they weren't giving anything to their other brethren and they were not having any food. Worse still on such an occasion seems quite unthinkable if we hadn't known of brothers arriving intoxicated for the breaking of bread it seems unthinkable that they were actually coming together and they were abusing their privilege to such an extent that they were getting drunk. So this eating and drinking unworthily [00:15:01] seems to in an unworthy manner it seems to be the actual practical conduct of the believers here at Corinth when they actually came together to break bread. They came together and they were coming together in an unworthy way.

We may not be exposed to the same dangers I don't suppose we're going to try and get inebriated at the Lord's supper. We've separated from a common love feast agape or common meal together. But is it not possible that in our thoughts in our attitudes in where our minds are in what we do that we can still be there together in an unworthy way?

But the answer to it you see, it's not don't do it it's not you're unworthy a lot of people take it from this scripture in their life and they're not quite fit to break bread. And so they stay away. But it's not to do with things in the past week [00:16:01] it's to do with conduct when they actually come together. And the answer to the dilemma the answer to the problem is not to to refrain from the breaking of bread

the answer it says let a man examine himself or bring himself into self-judgment and so let him eat.

The point is that when we come together we should come together in a way that is worthy of the Lord and that there should be suited behaviour and reverence reverence great lack of reverence today I'm sorry to say in the things of God in our attitude in our deportment when a brother prays do we close our eyes? Do we realise we're speaking to God? [00:17:02] Or are we writing in our notebooks? Or doing other things? It's extraordinary the things that so called Christians do when they come together in Christian meetings. I made a remark to some young people on the other side of the pond in a young people's meeting and a young brother came up to me afterwards and he said thank you for that. He says because many of the young people were sending messages sending messages when we were seeking to address God. When a brother prays I speak particularly to the younger ones whether it's electronic devices or whether it's pen or pencil and paper [00:18:02] are we consciously in the conscious realisation that we are in the presence of God and do we show due and proper reverence? Because this is what was in view here they were doing things in an unworthy manner when they came together. And this is a solemn thing for us and for our families because it says that they were bringing judgement upon themselves because they didn't distinguish the Lord's body, they didn't distinguish the holiness of the occasion they didn't distinguish that what was in view was the sufferings and death of the Lord Jesus Christ. So this questioner has a point in connection with the Lord's Supper being connected with responsibility but I would suggest that it's our responsibility and our attitude one and all when we come together rather than our responsibility during the week that has proceeded.

[00:19:02] So it's good to be challenged sometimes about what you say and to try and keep the balance of truth. Well, if Andrew is in the hot seat, what shall I say? Wish to kindle love as did Paul. That's in brackets and then it says what has the head given to the body to rekindle our love? Now fortunately the brother who asked the question explained it to me a little bit more in the break and apparently I said something like this I wish I could do a little bit of what the Apostle did in presenting Christ to believers in such a way that their hearts are connected with him, taken up with him so that it is easier [00:20:02] to address their problems. And the question is, well, how can this be done? What has the head given to the body in order for that to occur?

Well, my answer would be he has given us Christ objectively to look at and to help us doing that he has given us gifts and he has given us the Holy Spirit.

And I'll just try and give you some examples where this has happened.

These are examples where Paul, for example, tries to address a specific problem and he does that by presenting the Lord Jesus to the believers concerned.

Now my first example would be 1 Corinthians 1 and there was the problem of division or the seeds of [00:21:02] denominationalism.

I am of Paul, I am of Apollos. Now how does Paul approach that problem?

He presents Christ.

He says, is the Christ divided? Has Paul died for you?

So he directs them to Christ and by considering Christ it becomes clear to the Corinthians that this can't be the way to go to form such schools and parties.

In chapter 5, 1 Corinthians there was another problem that was to do with immorality. Now how does Paul approach that? He presents Christ. He says, Christ, our Passover has been slain.

In chapter 10 we heard about today, there was the problem of being [00:22:02] associated with idolatry. Now Paul starts off in that passage by saying beloved, flee from idolatry.

Now what does he present to them? And Andrew mentioned this, he first of all presents the blood of Christ.

And he says, you know, this blood was shed for you. You express communion with this blood. How can you be associated with idolatry?

Chapter 15, 1 Corinthians, Paul's doctrine about our bodies, about resurrection.

Now what does Paul do? Paul presents Christ. He explains what resurrection has to do with Christ. He says, you know, if there's no resurrection of the body, then Christ is not risen. You've all believed a fairy tale, a fable. Your faith is in vain. Now in Colossians, [00:23:02] we saw the problem was being attracted by philosophy, by rule making, and that sort of thing. Now again, Paul presents Christ. He presents these glories. Now if you remember that slide, there was a slide which had two lists of seven glories of Christ.

And it's very difficult to try and say something about those in such a short time. But even if one had more time, it's difficult. But you know, when I pressed the button, there was this sun, this rising sun that started as a faint picture and then became sort of a fuller and fuller picture in full colours. Now that's the sort of effect I'm talking about. How to make it alive.

How to present Christ in a way that there's actually a resonance in the hearts.

[00:24:02] It's not just, yeah, yeah, yeah, he went down that passage again. But the hearts are affected and that brings about a change in the walk. You could think of Peter. He wanted to encourage the believers in their sufferings. What does he do? He talks about Christ. How he suffered and how he left us an example. You could think of Hebrews. How does Paul wean the Hebrews who had become Christians from the temptation of going back to the old system? Well, he presents the better things in Christ. He presents how Christ is better and as you give a nice toy to a child, he will drop the knife and forget about it.

And so Paul presents what is better and the Hebrews are in this way encouraged to let go of what was hindering them. [00:25:02] So that's what I was trying to say.

What has the head given to the body to rekindle our love, to get us back onto the right course? Well, the remedy is Christ when there's a problem and the temptation for us when we try and address a problem is to go head on at least if you're German head towards the problem and address it and try and sort it out. And, you know, Paul doesn't skirt around the problems. He doesn't ignore them but nor does he start with them. He first prepares the ground by presenting the Lord Jesus. So what has the head given? Well, he has given the gifts Ephesians 4 and he has given the Holy Spirit because at

the end of the day the Holy Spirit must work in the hearts to [00:26:02] make the Scriptures alive so that Christ dwells in our hearts and fills our vision.