

## As You Received Him, Part One

*Colossians 2:6-7*

**I**t may have been during a revival meeting in a church, or in the privacy of your home. It could have been on Sunday or one of the other days of the week. It could have occurred as the result of strong, Christ-centered, Bible-based preaching, or as the result of the quiet, consistent, loving witness of a Sunday School teacher or a parent.

We're talking about the day and the hour when you fell in love with the Lord Jesus, and received Him as Master of your life so He could save you.

Some would tell you that it isn't good to keep looking back into the past, and for the most part, they are right. But there is an important something from the past we need to remember—the day we first believed, and the incredible things that happened to us that day. Paul said, *“So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in him.”* He is saying, “Think about the past as you live in the present. Let the past shape and mold your behavior in the present.”

He said the same thing in his first letter to the church at Thessalonica: *“Finally, brothers, we instructed you how to live in order to please God, as in fact you are living. Now we ask you and urge you in the Lord Jesus to do this more and more”* (1 Thessalonians 4:1).

At one time you received into your heart and life a message of how you are to live. Keep on living that way, is what Paul told them in that day, and what he tells us in our day.

And it may have been an entire lifetime ago, or 25 years ago, or ten years ago, or last year, or last week. But Paul calls all of us who name the Name of Christ to look back on that hour when Life began again for us, and to remember how we received Christ, and live *that* way! Look back with me now, and let's see just *how* we received Christ. You see, the way we accepted Christ in the past should determine how we live for Christ in the present.

How did we receive Him? From this passage in Colossians, Paul tells us that we received Him as Lord, and as Nourishment. Now, let's bring those two truths into today, and make them present tense.

## **1 Jesus is our Lord, v. 6**

Never one time in the Scriptures are we invited to receive Jesus as a great Teacher or Philosopher. The Bible never says, "Make Jesus your best friend." What the Bible makes very clear and very plain is that Jesus is to be received as Lord. Paul said, "*as you received Christ Jesus as **Lord...***"

And there are many, many other places where Jesus is referred to as Lord. Jesus Himself said once to His disciples, "*You call me 'Teacher' and 'Lord,' and rightly so, for that is what I am*" (John 13:13). "*If you love me, you will obey what I command,*" (John 14:15), or in other words, if you love Me, obey me as Lord by doing what I tell you to do. Paul wrote to the Romans, "*If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living*" (Romans 14:8-9).

The Scriptures teach us that as Lord, Jesus is to be pre-eminent. That means He must have top priority in everything, every corner of our lives, every attitude, every dream, every friendship, every word that escapes our lips. "*For he must reign until he has put all his enemies under his feet*" (1 Corinthians 15:25). We learn from Paul that we are to struggle to "*take captive every thought to make it obedient to Christ*" (2 Corinthians 10:5). And look at Colossians 1:18, a very beautiful verse, indeed! "*And he is the head of the body, the church; he is the beginning and the firstborn from among the dead, so that in everything he might have the supremacy.*"

When does Jesus begin to have supremacy in your life? The moment you become perfect? That's not right, because Jesus would never be supreme in your life! Does it happen the instant we pass through death into eternity? No, because Jesus is Lord of the Living as well as the Dead! Jesus receives pre-eminence in my life and yours the moment we receive Him into our lives as **Lord!** If you are in possession of eternal life right now, it is because you made Jesus Christ Lord of your life at some

point in the past. On that blessed day, when you believed, you received Him as Lord, or you received Him not at all.

I remember the day He first came into my life as Lord. I confessed my sins, and surrendered my heart to Him. In He came, as silent as the sunrise, as invisible as the wind, and He brought light to my dark soul, and He brought a breath of always-fresh air to my dead spirit. He brought a holy fragrance, and mystery to life. He brought forgiveness of sins; He redirected my paths; He began the process of reshaping my attitudes. He did all this—and He did it as Lord.

If you've received Jesus as Lord, then *live* that way! Making Jesus Lord involves more than believing He is the Son of God, and more than going through the motions of worship on a regular or semi-regular basis. Making Christ Lord means that you submit to Him as a slave would to a master. That's something we're prone to forget as time goes by.

We joyfully received Christ Jesus as Lord of our lives, but we so often don't *live* as though Jesus were Lord of our lives. Just as we were so eager to please and obey Him *then*, let us please and obey Him *now*. We received Him as Lord; let us therefore live in complete submission to His rule. Every desire, every affection, every area of our lives must be brought captive in a daily struggle to the rule of Christ Jesus the Lord.

## **2 Jesus is our Nourishment, v. 7**

Paul tells us that we are “*rooted*” in Jesus in verse seven. What does he mean? Just as a majestic, towering tree is rooted in the soil, so a Christian is to be rooted in Christ. Have you thought about what roots do for a tree? The roots go down into the soil, and provide nourishment for the tree. The root system provides practically all of the water and essentially all of the required nutrients, with the exception of carbon dioxide, which comes from the air.

The root system of rye grass is a very good illustration of what Paul was saying here. In one study, a single rye plant, about 20 inches high and consisting of a clump of about 80 shoots, was found to have 380 miles of roots, which included 14 billion root hairs! If all these root hairs had been split open and spread flat on a

floor, their combined surface area would have covered more than 4,000 square feet -- about the floor space occupied by two or three good-sized houses.

When I received Jesus Christ into my life, I received Him as Nourishment of my life. My soul is rooted deeply in Him, and from Him comes all the nourishment to help me grow spiritually, and keep me spiritually strong. The only way that a tree can grow is to have roots, because the roots give the tree nourishment. The only way that I can grow as a Christian, in fact, the only way that I can even *survive*, is to be rooted deeply in Christ Jesus my Lord!

I don't have an option about this. I must cling to Christ as the roots of a tree cling to the soil. Everything I am and everything I ever hope to be must come from Jesus Christ the Lord. All of my reason for living, my reason for working, my reason for being, is found in Christ, or my life makes no sense at all. I may be a famous scientist who makes an astounding discovery which will cure cancer, but when I die, all my work stays here. I may become the richest oil baron in the world, but when I die, my money stays here. I may become a world-renowned humanitarian, but when I die, who picks up where I left off? You see, only Christ in our lives can give us something worth living for, because only Christ can make our lives eternally significant.

*That* is what the apostle Paul was trying to tell us when he wrote in Philippians 3:8, “*I consider everything a loss compared to the surpassing greatness of knowing Christ Jesus my Lord.*” Another version (TEV) puts it this way: “*I reckon everything as complete loss for the sake of what is so much more valuable, the knowledge of Christ Jesus my Lord.*” Paul's soul was then, and is today, rooted deeply in Christ!

Do you remember the parable of the soils that Jesus told? Seed was sown by the wayside; some fell on stony ground, some fell among thorns, and some fell on good ground. It is interesting to note that the seed that fell on stony ground was scorched when the sun came up, because it had no root! It withered away (Mark 4:6). You see it plainly now—the Christian's life must be rooted deeply in Christ. We must feed on *Him*, and allow *Him* to nourish our souls. And when we do, what a difference that can make to us! Listen to the words of the first Psalm, in speaking about the righteous person:

*“He is like a tree planted by streams of water, which yields its fruit in season and whose leaf does not wither. Whatever he does prospers” (Psalm 1:3).*

A tree planted by a river can receive nourishment even when there is a prolonged drought. If the river fails, then the tree fails, but let’s remind ourselves that Jesus is the River, and He never fails! Everything depends on Him.

And whatever the need, Jesus our Nourishment always has an abundant, overflowing supply. When I am cast down, He lifts me up. When I exalt myself, He humbles me. When I am lonely, He is my Friend. When I am sad, He is my Smile. When I hurt, He is my Comforter. When I sin, He is my Conscience and my Advocate before the Father. When I am confused, He is my Light. When I stray, he is the Good Shepherd, Who brings me back. When I am misunderstood, He is the One who understands. When I am forsaken, He is the One who stands by me.

Jesus is my Nourishment, and He is all I need. Philippians 4:19 tells us, *“But my God shall supply all your need according to His riches in glory in Christ Jesus.”* 2 Corinthians 9:8 reads, *“And God is able to make all grace abound toward you; that you, always having sufficiency in all things, may abound to every good work.”* Jesus my Nourishment is all I need.

That is the way I received Him. Paul said *“just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him.”* When I became a follower of Christ, when I was born again, I received Jesus as the Nourishment and Sustainer of my life. I received Him as the Provider of every need. I believed Him when He said in John 10, *“I give them eternal life, and they shall never perish; no one can snatch them out of my hand.”*

And just as I received Him as Nourishment, I am to so live my life in complete and utter dependence on Him. No tree pulls its roots out of the ground and runs off to live somewhere else, but that is the approach many of us take toward Christ, isn’t it? Just as we were so eager and willing to depend on Christ then, let us depend upon Him *now*.

That’s what we hear from many of the hymns we sing:

*Ev'ry need His hand supplying,  
Ev'ry good in Him I see;  
On His strength divine relying,  
He is all in all to me.*  
(Thoro Harris, in *All That Thrills My Soul*)

And another:

*I have a Christ Who satisfies,  
Since I have been redeemed,  
To do His will my highest prize,  
Since I have been redeemed.*  
(Edwin O. Excell, in *Since I Have Been Redeemed*)

Do you remember how you received Christ Jesus into your life? Next week we'll look at two other ways, but today we've reminded ourselves first that we received Jesus as Lord, or we didn't receive Him at all.

Perhaps today you've realized that you made a terrible mistake back there when you joined the church: you never made Jesus your Lord, and you have been struggling ever since, as you try to control your life, but fail constantly. Today the good news for you that it is not too late! Jesus can still be invited in as Lord! You can still surrender your life to Him, and you can do it today.

Second, we've been reminded that we received Jesus as Nourishment, as all we need, as all in all. And you've realized today that you've been depending on other things to satisfy you. You've consistently looked elsewhere for satisfaction and meaning. Your roots have gone out over the surface of your life, rather than down deeply into Christ. You, too, hear this: it is not too late! The roots of your life can still grow down deeply into Christ, and into all that He provides!

Do you need to recommit your life to Him as Lord and Nourishment of your life? The wonderful thing about Jesus is that He forgives and He forgives and He forgives, and He longs to take us to Himself, if we are willing.

Are you willing?

*So then, just as you received Christ Jesus as Lord, continue to live in Him, rooted and built up in him, strengthened in the faith as you were taught, and overflowing with thankfulness. (Colossians 2:6-7)*