

Keys to Living the Abundant Life – Living in Declaration Mode

Declaration plays a very important role in the Christian life. To **declare** means to “proclaim”, “make known” or “announce.” This spiritual principle is revealed in **John 10:32**, **“If anyone acknowledges** (proclaims, announces) **Me publicly here on earth, I will also acknowledge** (proclaim, announce) **before My Father in heaven.”** The psalmist knew the importance of declaration and referred to it in his writings – **Psalm 22:22**, **“I will declare** (proclaim, make known) **Your name to all the people; in the assembly I will sing praises to You”** (quoted again in Hebrews 2:12). **Psalm 73:28**, **“...I will declare** (make known, proclaim) **all Your mighty deeds of power.”** **Psalm 145:4**, **“One generation shall praise Your works to another, and shall declare** (proclaim, make known) **Your mighty acts.”** Jesus Himself had a similar attitude, **“And I have declared** (proclaimed, made known) **to them Your name, and will continue to declare** (proclaim) **it: that the love with which You have loved Me may be in them, and I in them also”** (John 17:26).

Exodus 9:16 states, **“But I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you My power, so that My name might be proclaimed** (declared, made known) **in all the earth.”** Implying that even negative situations can occur to declare God’s name. In **1 John 1:1-4** we find ‘proclamation’ repeated three times – **“We proclaim** (declare, make known) **to you the One who existed from the beginning, whom we have heard and seen. We saw Him with our own eyes and touched Him with our own hands. He is the Word of life. This One who is life itself was revealed to us, and we have seen Him. And now we testify and proclaim** (declare, make known) **to you that He is the One who is Eternal Life. He was with the Father, and then He was revealed to us. We proclaim** (declare, make known) **to you what we ourselves have actually seen and heard so that you may be of equal terms with us. And our companionship is with the Father and with His Son, Jesus Christ. We are writing these things so that you may fully share our joy.”**

John was **making known** to us someone who he had seen with his own eyes. Someone he had chatted with and touched with his own hands. Someone who existed from the beginning of time. Someone who he declared is the Word of Life (Eternal Life), even Life itself! Someone who was with the Father – God Almighty. In this passage, John was **declaring** (announcing) the most important Person he had ever met – the **Lord** Jesus the Christ. And he was doing this publicly so that we could share in the inexpressible joy that he had experienced. The joy of having seen heard and touched the **Living Word**. By implication, I believe John was declaring (making known) the absolute sovereignty of Jesus Christ.

Jesus is the Christ but He is also Jehovah. Thomas confessed to the resurrected Christ, **“My Lord and my God”** (John 20:28). And Jesus accepted that *declaration of faith* in Him. Why? Because, **“No one can say, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ except by the Holy Spirit”** (1 Corinthians 12:3). Indeed, no one can become a Christian unless he declares **“with his mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believes in his heart that God raised Him from the dead”** (Romans 10:9). In the Greek translation of the Hebrew Old Testament, the word ‘krios’ is the regular word used to translate the Hebrew names for God - Yahweh, Jehovah, or **Lord**. The word **Lord** (‘krios’) was the equivalent of the “name of God.” At least 150 times in the New Testament it is used of God. The Old and New Testaments alike constantly use ‘krios’ for God. This is why the majority of our English Bibles do not use the name ‘Yahweh’ or ‘Jehovah’ but have “the Lord” or “Lord” instead. The disciples and the early church were very familiar with that great Name of God, and therefore, did not hesitate to **declare** that Jesus is ‘Yahweh’ or **Lord**.

The divine name ‘Yahweh’ is translated in most versions of the Bible as **“Lord”**. The Hebrew name ‘Adonai’ is also translated “Lord” in the Old Testament. However, in the New Testament only the Greek name ‘krios’ is translated “Lord.” The apostle Paul declared that there is one God who is one with Jesus (**1 Corinthians 8:6**). **“There is but one God, the Father, from whom all things come and of whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things come and through whom we live.”** The parallelism in this statement makes the perfect association between

God the Father and Christ. And that is, they both are God and Lord!

When Jesus was born in Bethlehem, the angels **proclaimed** that it was **“Christ who is the Lord”** who was born (**Luke 2:11**). Jesus Himself quoted *Psalm 110:1* when asking the religious leaders, *“What do you think about the Messiah, whose son is He?”* They said to Him, *“The son of David.”* Jesus asked them, **“How is it then that David, speaking by the Spirit calls Him Lord? ... (Matthew 22:41-46)**. David called the Messiah “Lord” because the Messiah was more than just one of his physical descendants; He is the divine Messiah – **“Jesus the Lord.”** And Jesus has been given the **“name that is above every name”** – the name Lord (**Philippians 2:8-11**), or **“Lords of Lords.”**

In the first Christian sermon delivered by Peter at Pentecost, Jesus’ lordship is made central to salvation (**Acts 2:21;36**). The creed of the early church was simply **“Jesus Christ is Lord”** (**Philippians 2:11**). The test of salvation is that Jesus Christ is Lord (**Romans 10:9**). Only the Holy Spirit can lead a person to say that Jesus Christ is Lord (**1 Corinthians 12:3**). The apostles preached and declared Jesus Christ is Lord (**2 Corinthians 8:6**). And there is only one Lord – Jesus Christ (**1 Corinthians 8:6; Ephesians 4:5**). Therefore there is only one name given among men by whom you can be saved (**Acts 4:12**) – the Lord Jesus Christ.

Jesus Christ is Lord! These 4 words are the most powerful words in the universe, and they are also the words that have brought hostility, persecution and martyrdom to Christians for 2,000 years. To Jewish minds the title had messianic overtones of deity, kingship and authority (**Luke 20:41-44**). To the politically minded Romans, Caesar claimed the title “Lord.” The Roman Empire used the words “Caesar is Lord” to embody the Roman Empire in one man, the Emperor. Caesar worship became compulsory throughout the Empire. It held the Empire together. Every man had to go to an Empire shrine and burn a pinch of incense to the image of the Emperor and say, “Caesar is Lord.” It was a test of loyalty to the Roman Empire. After the person did that, he could go away and worship any god he so chose. However, he had to first prove his loyalty by declaring ‘Caesar is Lord’. That’s precisely what the Christians refused to do. For them only Jesus Christ could be **Lord**. Nothing could force them to declare, “Caesar is Lord.” They chose to die the most terrible, agonising deaths imaginable for their faith in Jesus Christ who is **the Lord**.

The aged Bishop of Smyrna refused to yield to the demands of the Empire and paid the ultimate price on February 22, 156 A.D. Two city officials pleaded with the Bishop to comply with the demand to declare, “Caesar is Lord.” They said, “What harm is there in saying, ‘Caesar is Lord,’ and burning a little incense - and saving yourself?” As the fires were lighted at his feet and began to rise up around his body he declared, “For 86 years I have been Christ’s slave, and He has done me no wrong: how can I blaspheme my King who saved me?” Now, the reason this man refused to call Caesar Lord was because **“Lord”** (‘karios’) meant God, and there can be no other god in the life of the Christian. Jesus Christ alone is **Lord!**

It is significant that the emphatic, insistent form is used in the declaration, **“King of kings and Lord of lords”** (at a time of the demand for Caesar worship). But the big question is this, “Is Jesus Christ your Lord of Lords?” And if He is **Lord**, are you **declaring** (proclaiming, making known) His Lordship in every facet or sphere of life? For if you are not giving Jesus “centre stage” you will never experience the *abundant life* that Jesus came to give us (**John 10:10**).

The message of **Exodus 9:16** can easily apply to all of us:

“I have raised you up for this very purpose, that I might show you My mighty power, so that My name might be proclaimed (declared, made known) **in all the earth.”** What name is God referring to? To find out let’s read **Philippians 2:8-11**.... **“And after He had appeared in human form, He abased and humbled Himself still further and carried His obedience to the extreme of death, even the death of the cross! Therefore, because He stooped so low God has highly exalted Him and has freely bestowed on Him the name that is above every name. That in (at) the name of Jesus every knee should (must) bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth. And every tongue [frankly and openly] confess, declare and acknowledge that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”**

Notice that it is in or at the **name of Jesus** that all authority is established - in heaven, on earth and under the earth. And

as a result of Jesus having a **name** that is above every other name (that is named), every tongue must openly confess or **declare** that Jesus Christ is **Lord**. This is a clear allusion to Isaiah 45:23, where 'Yahweh' Himself says: ***"To Me every knee shall bend; by Me every tongue shall swear, saying, 'Only in the Lord are just deeds and power.'"*** God makes it clear beyond any doubt that Christ's lordship has a fully divine character, and that "Lord" (as applied to Christ) is equal to "Yahweh." In **Romans 14:11**, too, Paul applies these words of Isaiah to Jesus, as the Judge to whom every knee shall bend and every tongue shall confess. **"Jesus Christ is Lord"** is the essential Christian declaration of faith. But it's also the single **declaration** that establishes ALL authority in three realms - in heaven, on earth and under the earth! Let's use it effectively!