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We Are the Lord's

"We are the Lord's." — Romans 14:8

Summary:

Christ has every rightful claim on his people. We are his by creation, for he gave us body and spirit; by providence, for his care has preserved and supplied us throughout life; and above all by redemption, for he delivered us from sin, darkness, death, and wrath through his incarnation, suffering, and death. Believers have also willingly acknowledged his claim by dedicating themselves to him. True surrender begins in the heart and extends to the understanding, will, conscience, affections, speech, time, property, and influence. This dedication is not bondage but the believer's highest privilege. Those who belong to Christ may trust him to care for them, provide for them, guide them by his counsel, and, afterwards, receive them into glory.

Outline:

1. **Christ is Lord of the living and the dead**
   - His death, resurrection, and renewed life establish his universal lordship.
2. **We are his by creation**
   - He formed our bodies and spirits, giving us everything we possess and every power we exercise.
3. **We are his by providential care**
   - Our preservation, daily mercies, relationships, food, clothing, rest, and breath all come from him.
4. **We are his by redeeming mercy**
   - Christ delivered us from dreadful evils, raised us to blessedness, and paid the immeasurable cost himself.
5. **We are his by willing dedication**
   - Believers surrender heart and life to Christ and find belonging to him their highest privilege and security.

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Text

"The Lord" here means the Lord Jesus, as the following words show: "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living." We find that he has every claim and right to us.

His creative power gives him a right over us: if "all things were made by him," he made us; we did not make ourselves. Thus, he owns us more fully than any person can own a fellow creature, or even a father his children. Children belong to their father in a limited, subordinate sense; we belong wholly and absolutely to the Lord.

He brought us from nothing, formed our bodies, covered us with flesh, enclosed us with bones and sinews, and placed spirits within us. If we returned all we received, what would remain ours?

His providential care gives him claim over us: he gave us life and favour, and preserves our spirits. Why did we not die in the womb? Who sustained us at our mother's breast? Whose mercies renewed each morning? Who gave his beloved sleep? Who inspired our loved ones' tenderness toward us? Whose are we but his, in whom we live, move, and exist? How vile to enjoy his sunlight, breathe his air, eat at his table, and wear his clothes without acknowledging our obligations to him!

His redeeming mercy claims us: we are not our own but bought at a price he paid. To feel the force of this claim, we must weigh three things.

- First, the terrible evils from which he delivered us: sin, darkness, this evil world, death, and coming wrath.
- Secondly, consider the state to which he has brought us: its blessedness, glory, safety, duration, and immensity. Even its beginnings here—its promises and foretastes—are indescribable and inconceivable. Even now, the joy is unspeakable and full of glory, and the peace surpasses all understanding.
- Third, consider the immense cost of his ransom. It comes freely to us, but what it cost him! Because we underestimate sin's evil and God's holiness, we fail to grasp redemption's greatness and difficulty.

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Destroying man was easy; restoring him in a way that would magnify the law he had broken and reveal God as both just and the justifier was a work only the Lord Jesus could accomplish. And what did it require even of him? Not a mere act of will—not a mere exertion, as when he delivered the Jews from Egypt or spoke the world into being.

He assumed flesh and blood and dwelt among us. For thirty-three years, he was a man of sorrows, acquainted with grief. Let us reflect on his life and suffering: his agony in the garden, shame on the cross, and abasement in the lowest parts of the earth—all endured for enemies, undeserved and undesired by us—until we feel drawn and bound by the cords of a man and bands of love, a love that passes knowledge.

Hence, he has a claim grounded not only in what he has done, but also in what we have done—a claim founded on our dedication. If we are Christians, we have affirmed his claims and surrendered ourselves to him, renouncing every other owner and saying, "Lord, I am thine, save me. Other lords beside thee have had dominion over me; but henceforth by thee only will I make mention of thy Name."

Thus the Corinthians "gave their own selves unto the Lord." In surrender, the heart is paramount: if it is given, nothing is withheld. The Lord demands, "My son, give me thine heart." Some may remember when they first made this surrender—perhaps under affliction, when earthly hopes were threatened, or at a friend's urging or a sermon. They gave themselves wholly to the Lord: their understanding to know him, will to choose him, conscience to fear him, tongue to praise him, and time, property, and influence to serve him. They have often renewed this dedication in private reflection, prayer, and at the Lord's table.

Having pledged yourself to the Lord, you cannot turn back—and would you want to? Where else could you go? He has the words of eternal life, and belonging to him is your highest privilege. If you are the Lord's, he will care for, provide for, and guide you, then receive you to glory. "If ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise."

This sermon is taken from William Jay's devotional, Morning and Evening Exercises (January 25, Evening), first published in 1854.