

The Exalted Jesus

I believe in Jesus, God's only
Son, our Lord, who was
conceived by the Holy Spirit,
born of the virgin Mary ...

On the third day
he rose from the dead
He ascended into heaven
and is seated at the right hand
of God the Father Almighty;
from there he will come to
judge the living and the dead.

(Catechism n. 638-682,
441-463 and 484-486).

Catechism I.10 The Exalted Christ

n. 638-658 Jesus raised to life-beyond-death

- After Jesus' death his disciples had experiences that convinced them that Jesus, though dead as far as this life is concerned, was alive and in communion with them in a new way. Their experiences and conviction are a matter of history. The words in which they expressed their convictions about the risen Jesus take us beyond the language that they used of him while he was living among them prior to his death.
- We are dealing with an understanding that is the fruit of faith, and so we should expect their language to be more poetic, more symbolic. How else can we speak of what lies beyond space and time as we know it?

- Real things happened to them and they understood these happenings as being related to Jesus. That much is fact.
- When, however, they attempted to communicate their understanding of the implications that these facts had for Jesus in his exalted state, they had no choice but to use metaphoric, symbolic language.
- As we read their words we must allow the wonder of their inspired art to draw us into what is necessarily beyond words. In this way we may capture something of their lively faith and even recognise some of our own experiences in theirs.

- **Matthew**'s scene on a mountain in Galilee: faith & hesitation, mission.
- **Luke**'s scenes of the journey, the Word of Scripture, the Eucharist, personal experiences & the authority of the Christian assembly. The Eucharistic assembly, the assertion that they were not experiencing a ghost, the gift of the Spirit, the mission and Jesus' withdrawal to heaven.
- **John**'s scenes where Mary recognises Jesus when he calls her by name. the Eucharistic Assembly, the gift of the Spirit and forgiveness, Thomas's doubts allayed when he touches the wounds of Christ, the fishing, the Eucharist, Peter's assertion of love and his mission.

- ‘ I handed on to you as of first importance what I in turn had received:
- that Christ died **for our sins in accord with the scriptures**,
- that he was buried,
- that he was raised **on the third day in accord with the scriptures**,
- and that he appeared to Cephas,
- then to the twelve.
- Then he appeared to more than five hundred brothers and sisters
- at one time, most of whom are still alive, though some have died.
- Then he appeared to James,
- then to all the apostles.

- Last of all, as to one untimely born, he appeared also to me.’

- ‘After his suffering Jesus presented himself **alive** to the apostles by many convincing proofs’ (Acts 1:3).
- ‘Paul asserted that Jesus was **alive**’ (Acts 25:19).
- ‘You will see me; because **I live**, you also will live’ (John 14:19).
- ‘He was put to death in the flesh, but made **alive in the Spirit**’ (1Peter 3:18).

- ‘He was **taken up** in **glory**’ (1 Timothy 3:16).
- ‘He was **taken up** to heaven’ (Acts 1:2).
- ‘Was it not necessary that the Messiah should suffer these things and then enter into his **glory**?’ (Luke 24:26).
- ‘He will transform the body of our humiliation that it may be conformed to **the body of his glory**’ (Philippians 3:21).
- ‘God has **glorified** his servant Jesus’ (Acts 3:13).

- ‘You are looking for Jesus of Nazareth. He is not here. He has been **raised**’ (Matthew 28:6).
- ‘So it is with the **resurrection** of the dead.
- What is sown is perishable, what is **raised** is imperishable.
- It is sown in dishonour, it is **raised** in glory.
- It is sown in weakness, it is **raised** in power.

- It is sown an ensouled body, it is **raised** a spiritual body.’
(1Corinthians 15:42-44).

- ‘Being raised’ is the most compelling and most satisfactory way of speaking of Jesus being with God and with his disciples after his death on Calvary, for it focuses on Jesus’ ‘body’, that is to say on the whole reality of his human condition. The whole of his humanity, all that it means to be human, has been transformed and taken up into life by God.
- ‘Our aim here is to discover how Jesus’ disciples thought of him in his resurrected state. They experienced his power working in them and through them bringing about the healing and redeeming reign of God. They experienced his Spirit filling their hearts and re-creating their world.

- They spoke of him as **king**, the Christ, fulfilling in his exalted state all their messianic hopes. As king he is **Lord** and **Judge**
- In a special way he was consecrated **Son of God**, enjoying the fullness of the Father's Spirit and power.
- From his throne in heaven he exercised the kingly functions of **High Priest**.
- In each case these exalted titles were understood in the light of **Calvary**.'

The Lord : Kyrios

- 1. a respectful form of greeting ['Sir'] : Jesus is frequently addressed this way.
- 2. an honorific title for the king, emphasising power and authority.
 - 'King of kings and Lord of lords' (Revelation 17:14 & 19:16).
 - 'Lord of all' (Acts 10:36)
 - 'God has put all things into subjection under his feet' (1Cor 15:27).
 - 'The Lord Jesus, after he had spoken to them, was taken up into heaven and sat down at the right hand of God. And they went out and proclaimed the good news everywhere, while the Lord worked with them and confirmed the message by the signs that accompanied it' (Mark 16:19-20).

- ‘I, Paul, was set apart for the gospel of God ... concerning his Son, who was descended from David according to the flesh, and was declared (or ‘constituted’) to be Son of God with power according to the Spirit of holiness by resurrection from the dead, Jesus Christ our **Lord**’ (Rom 1:1-4).
- ‘Christ died and lived again so that he might be **Lord** of both the dead and the living’ (Romans 14:9).
- ‘God highly exalted him
- and gave him the name that is above every name,
- so that at the name of Jesus every knee should bend,
- in heaven and on earth and under the earth,
- and every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is **Lord**, to the glory of God the Father’ (Philippians 2:9-11).

‘Lord’ is also used in the Greek Septuagint version to translate the Hebrew name of God ‘YHWH’. Calling the exalted Jesus ‘Lord’ sometimes picks up this more mysterious meaning. We will speak of this in the next lecture.



You Raise Me Up.

Graham / Lovland Text: © 2002, Hal Leonard Corporation.

Reprinted with permission under One License A-642681.

All rights reserved.



When I am down and, oh, my soul, so weary;
When troubles come and my heart burdened be;
Then I am still and wait here in the silence,
Until you come and sit awhile with me.



There is no life - no life without its hunger;
Each restless heart beats so imperfectly;
But when you come and I am filled with wonder,
Sometimes, I think I glimpse eternity.



You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up to more than I can be.



Then I am still and wait here in the silence,
Until you come and sit awhile with me.



You raise me up, so I can stand on mountains;
You raise me up to walk on stormy seas;
I am strong when I am on your shoulders;
You raise me up to more than I can be. (R.)