



March 16, 2017
The Apostles' Creed 2.1

Read Philippians 2:5-11

"I believe that Jesus Christ, true God, begotten of the Father in eternity, and also a true human being, born of the virgin Mary, is my Lord." (Luther's meaning to the Apostles' Creed, *Small Catechism*)

In July of 2006 a church group from Lincoln, Nebraska, traveled to New Orleans to serve during the recovery after Hurricane Katrina. The only restaurants actually open were in the French Quarter, which had been spared much of the devastation. We got in line in front of the Acme Oyster House and were told the wait might be an hour or more. Our group contained sixteen hungry teenagers, so this was bad news.

As we waited, we talked with the security guard, an off-duty New Orleans police officer. He was about six foot three and three hundred pounds, armed and badged. When he heard that we were in the Crescent City to serve in the recovery, he said, "Let's see if we can speed things up a bit."

He walked over to a table where the customers were mostly finished and were enjoying a bit of social time. He towered over the guests at the table, looked at their empty plates, patted his holster, smiled and said, "Y'all look like you're about done here, right?" The message was received loud and clear. Five minutes later all nineteen of us were seated and looking at menus.

It was an impressive display of authority. I'm not sure that the thinly veiled threat in his words was what I wanted to our young people to see, but getting food was chiefly on their minds. The guard used his authority for good—at least from our perspective—but it wasn't really a "loving" exercise of power.

Luther confesses, "I believe that Jesus Christ...is my Lord." Lordship entails power and authority. However, the Lordship of Jesus is an exercise of love rather than violence. Jesus takes into himself all the powers of sin, death and evil. He absorbs the worst that the forces of darkness can dish out. He dies for us in every sense of that little word "for." And in that dying, he takes his throne as Lord of all Creation, Lord of this world and Lord of my life.

We can read a hymn of that kind of Lordship in Philippians 2. It is in humble obedience, even obedience to death, that Jesus wins the victory. And in that victory Jesus is exalted to Lordship. In the Apostles' Creed we confess that Lordship "to the glory of God the Father."

Let's pray. Dear God, send your Holy Spirit into my heart today to have the mind of Christ so that I can serve my neighbor as Christ serves me. In Jesus' name. Amen.

Do something: Let someone go ahead of you in line at a checkout or movie or other public event. See what happens in response.

Pastor Lowell Hennigs
Emanuel Lutheran Church
2444 N Broadway
Council Bluffs, Iowa 51503-0499
www.emanuelcb.org