

Acts 4:12—Neither is there salvation in any other, for there is no other name under heaven given among men whereby we must be saved.

While Jesus came to be the light of the world he also demands to be Lord. Even though his actions are motivated by love he demands to be recognized as king. While his mission on earth is the abolition of slavery he still longs to be Master. True, he took on the role of a servant he yet reclaimed his robe as the Divine. Since he surrendered his life on the cross once for you he now demands that you surrender your life continuously for him. Christ alone is Savior, Deliverer, Messiah, and Counselor. He alone has offered himself, the perfect for the imperfect, us. Throughout history many a man has given his life as a sacrifice for another man in an attempt to spare a life; a life for a life. Some of those attempts have been successful. A foreman charges into a blazing building to rescue a screaming child never to return alive. A police man races to the aid of a panicked hostage only to be felled by a desperate gunman. A helicopter pilot hovers dangerously close to a sheer rock cliff as rescuers frantically attempt to retrieve a frost bitten, broken climber from sure death. The climber is saved but a sudden change of wind direction dooms the pilot to a crushing death. A soldier responding to pleas of out gunned comrades places himself in harm's way in order for them to return home to their families. He however doesn't get to enjoy a similar reunion. There have always been men of honor, men of valor, who choose others over self in order to serve the greater good. And yet as courageous as they are, as gallant as their actions were, they are still flawed, sinful men who gave their lives to save other flawed, sinful men. As virtuous as they may have been they were all guilty of many infractions, mistakes, and miscues that displayed corrupted thinking and poor judgment. They were in some ways unethical, immoral and even illegal in some of their behavior and demeanor. Even on their best day they were mere men.

By contrast, Jesus the Christ experienced all the challenges and difficulties of living, he with stood all the insults and attacks of his enemies, he endured all the disappointment and misunderstanding of family and friends, yet in all things, in all ways and at all times he never once succumbed to sin. He overcame every single test, trial and temptation without turning away from the sovereign God or turning toward the siren of Satan. He is the Ideal, the Exemplar, the Epitome, the Paradigm, the Touchstone, and the Perfect Model. All men, without exception, have lived lives worthy of death from the perspective of a perfect God. So Christ chose to give his perfect life as a sacrifice for our imperfect lives so that God's justice would be satisfied. He accepted our punishment for our sins even though he was completely innocent. He willingly hung on that cruel Roman cross, not for himself, but for flawed mankind. The Innocent was traded for the guilty. The Perfect was exchanged for the imperfect. The Living was substituted for the dying. His Divinity was ransomed for our humanity. That's why he has every right to demand that all men praise him as Lord, honor him as King, obey him as Master and love him as Savior.