

JESUS IS LORD

“For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus the Lord; and ourselves your servants for Jesus’ sake” (2 Corinthians 4:5).

IF I were to ask any Sunday morning congregation, “Do you believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ?” I would get an easy reply in the affirmative. But if I were to ask each individual in that congregation, “Is He Lord of all you are and have?” we might have a very disturbing and revealing morning! Any church gathering can sing, “Bring forth the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all,” but not all who are willing to crown Him with their lips will make Him Lord of their lives.

Dr. **A. T. Robertson** said that the Lordship of Christ is the touchstone of our faith, and **G. Campbell Morgan** has called it “the central verity of the church.” And so this is the one sermon I preach everywhere I go—THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

I. The Lordship of Christ was the Initial Confession of the Church. “That if thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Lord Jesus, and shalt believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved” (Rom. 10:9).

When a Jewish convert in the early church said, “Jesus is Lord,” he meant that Jesus was God; and when a Gentile believer said that “Christ is Lord,” he meant that Caesar was no longer his god.

II. The Lordship of Christ is the Authentic Confession of the Christian. “Wherefore I give you to understand, that no man speaking by the Spirit of God calleth Jesus accursed: and that no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost” (1 Cor. 12:3).

Calling Jesus LORD is the authentic work of the Holy Spirit for the Adam never bows to the Lordship of Christ. Nowadays we have created an artificial distinction between trusting Christ as Saviour and confessing Him as Lord. We have made two experiences out of it when it is one. So we have a host who have “accepted Christ” in order to miss Hell and reach Heaven, who seem not at all concerned about making Him Lord of their lives. Salvation is not a cafeteria line where we can take the Saviourhood of Christ and pass up His Lordship, take what we want and leave the rest. We cannot get saved on the installment plan, with fingers crossed and inner reservations, as though one could take Christ “on approval.”

He has the first word and the last. He demands absolute loyalty beyond that of any earthly dictator but He has a right to do it. “Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.” How foolish to say, “Nobody is going to tell me how much to give, what to do.” We have already been told! We are His and His Word is final.” I came to Christ as a country boy. I did not understand all about the plan of salvation. But one thing I did understand: I understood that I was under new management. I belonged to Christ and He was Lord.

George McDaniel said, “Whoever accepts Jesus as Saviour, submits to Him as Lord and accepts the New Testament as the rule of his life is a Christian.” On the Damascus Road Saul

started right: “Who art thou, LORD? ... Lord, what wilt thou have me to do?” He began by confessing Jesus as Lord. Thomas cried out, “MY LORD AND MY GOD!” “In applying for membership in a Baptist church, faith in Christ and acceptance of HIS LORDSHIP is a prime condition” (**E. Y. Mullins**).

Salvation is free. The gift of God is eternal life. It is not cheap for it cost God His Son and the Son His life, but it is free. However, when we become believers we become disciples and that costs everything we have. The New Testament teaches not only faith in Christ but following Christ.

III. The Lordship of Christ will be the Ultimate Confession of all Creation. We are told that one day every knee shall bow and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is LORD to the glory of God the Father (Phil. 2:9-11). I do not ask the sinner, “Will you confess Jesus as Lord?” for that he must do now or later. I ask, “WHEN will you confess Him as Lord?”

Is He your Lord? Is He Lord of your body, your thoughts, your tongue, your temper, your spare time, your life plans, your pocketbook, your church life, your recreation, what you listen to by radio and look at on television? His Lordship covers everything from eating and drinking to world problems. But it is not bondage, it is freedom, for “where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty.”

The heart of revival, of the deeper Christian life, of Christianity, is making Jesus Lord. Have you done it?

— **Vance Havner** (1901-1986), North Carolina Baptist evangelist and Christian author