

SOTERIOLOGY (170)

5. What about the idea of repentance in salvation?

The word repent comes from two Greek words which means to change your thought or mind. Peter uses this word in Acts 2:38 and it is obvious he is asking the Jewish people to change their minds concerning who Jesus Christ was. As repentance relates to salvation, it is not a separate work to be performed—it is a changing of mind about what will save a person from sin. Biblical salvation is changing one's mind to totally rely and trust on Jesus Christ to save from sin. It is an attitude that turns from self, dead works, human merit or dead religion to placing faith in the living Savior.

6. What about the idea of “Discipleship?”

Often, those who support Lordship salvation equate justification and discipleship. The idea is you must believe and follow as a disciple in order for real salvation to take place. Frankly, this contradicts clear revelation which clearly teaches that justification is by faith the moment one believes in Jesus Christ (Rom. 3:21-24; 5:1).

If one carefully studies the Bible, one will discover that the noun “disciple” shows up many times in the Gospels, a few brief times in Acts and not at all in the rest of the New Testament. This is no mere coincidence. **The term “Christian” and “disciple” are not synonymous terms.** This may be easily proved by a statement in the Gospel of John—John 6:66—“As a result of this many of His disciples withdrew and were not walking with Him anymore. A disciple was one who may or may not have believed in Christ, who followed Jesus when He was here on earth. Judas was a disciple who obviously followed Jesus, but was not a true believer. Every person classified a Christian is a born-again, indwelt by the Holy Spirit child of God.

The concept of discipleship, as it relates to the Grace Age, is that of being instructed and learning and growing after one is a Christian.

7. What about the idea of “obedience”?

Those who support Lordship salvation argue that obedience and obey are synonyms of faith and believe. So they reason salvation must involve commitment to a life of obedience. Often passages such as Rom. 1:5 or 16:26 are used to prove the point. However, the obedience that Paul is calling for is the obedience to turn to faith in Christ for salvation (Rom. 3:22-28). He is not referring to obedience in the Christian life after salvation.

8. Is Lordship salvation logical?

When one carefully searches the Bible one must admit that Lordship salvation cannot answer many key Biblical questions:

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- 1) How do we explain the Corinthian letter Paul wrote? There is no evidence that the Corinthians had ever yielded to Christ's Lordship when he wrote I Corinthians and yet he clearly classifies them and Christians who had experienced the grace of God. Some of them were coming drunk to church and caught up in immorality. How do we explain this in view of a Lordship gospel?
- 2) How do we explain the Thessalonian letter Paul wrote? Apparently, there was some type of immoral wife-swapping taking place in the church which Paul called the believers out of (I Thess. 4:1-7) and yet he says they had God's Spirit in them (4:8)?
- 3) What about Peter's statement concerning "righteous Lot," whose salvation cannot be questioned in view of Peter's illustration and yet there is not one good word said about Lot in the entire O.T. (II Pet. 2:7-8)?
- 4) What about carnal Christians? The issue of carnality is the issue of not yielding the flesh to the Spirit of God. In other words, it is a matter of "lordship" yet they are still Christians (I Cor. 3:1).
- 5) What about rewards and loss of rewards? Why will some Christians be in heaven and lose rewards (I Cor. 3:14-15)? The answer is because they would not allow the Lord to control their lives—they refused Lordship—yet they are saved!
- 6) What about Jesus' assessment of the seven churches of Revelation? It is obvious that all but one church had major problems with His Lordship and yet He promises life to those who had believed on Him?
- 7) Someone must be right because Paul warns against preaching another gospel (Gal. 1:6-9). A message of faith in Jesus Christ is not the same message as faith in Jesus Christ plus commitment. Both can't be correct. One is the Gospel and one isn't. If we let Galatians speak to us—Paul is pretty clear—Gal. 2:16; 3:2, 6-8, 11, 14.
- 8) Why does God promise salvation through faith if He really means faith plus works? Gal. 3:14, 22, 24, 26
- 9) How do we explain Paul's answer when he was directly asked, "What must I do to be saved?" (Acts 16:30). His answer was "Believe in the Lord Jesus and you shall be saved" (16:31).

Logically speaking, Lordship salvation cannot be defended from the Word of God. It is a failure to understand dispensational distinctives and misunderstand a marvelous message of grace. Often one will say simple faith is "cheap grace." How terrible. God's grace was not cheap. God's grace was not easy. His own Son died to offer salvation to those who will simply believe on Him. That is what the Bible teaches and that is what we believe and defend.