

THE LORDSHIP OF JESUS CHRIST HOW CAN JESUS CHRIST BE YOUR SAVIOR UNLESS HE IS ALSO LORD OF YOUR LIFE?

By Pastor Dan Gayman

Millions of Christians call Jesus Christ their personal Savior and claim eternal life through Christ's death, burial, and resurrection from the dead is theirs. They claim to be *born again*, saved from their sin, and qualified for citizenship in Christ's Kingdom because they have professed faith and belief in Jesus Christ. Countless people professing Christianity claim Jesus Christ as Lord. Contemporary churches of every denominational label are filled with people who claim to be saved from their sin and qualified for a future with God beyond this life. America is a nation filled with people professing Christ and Christianity, yet their lives reflect very little self-denial, commitment, sacrifice, or obedience Jesus Christ requires. What about you? If you believe you are saved, can you equally say that Jesus Christ is Lord of your life? Can Jesus Christ be your personal savior unless He is also Lord of your life? Can you spare a few precious minutes to explore a question that could cause you to reshape your entire worldview and method of living?

The Problem Stated

Most of you are familiar with the brand of Christianity that finds acceptance in almost every major mainstream church in America and the Christian West. The pulpits of our land are filled with preachers who proclaim a well-packaged message of salvation. Tune in to any church of your choice, religious television broadcasting, or crusade, and you will find eager evangelists calling people to "accept Jesus Christ as their personal Savior"; "invite Jesus into your life"; "make a decision for the Lord Jesus Christ"; "open your heart to Jesus"; etc ... A wide variety of appealing slogans beckon people to the altar for a quick confession of faith, and presto, salvation is yours!

Cut-rate salvation is preached up and down the isles of thousands of churches. Cheap salvation is dispensed from the pulpits as millions use grace as a license to live apart from the spiritual and moral commitment required in Scripture. Christianity has in many respects been reduced to an easy believism. Millions of people alleging to be *born again* live just like the rest of the world. Contemporary churches are replete with divorce, adultery, fornication, drunkards, drug addicts, sodomites, and people who have committed and/or encouraged abortion, race-mixing, and assorted other moral crimes against God. Couples cohabiting are commonplace, even in churches.

Tens of millions of professing, *born again* Christians claim membership in tens of thousands of congregations across the denominational landscape of modern America. Guess what! They have made a mockery of God and the Bible in their personal lives. The fruit of modern Christianity is being born daily in the spiritual blight and moral decadence that characterize the culture of modern America. The pagan culture of humanism now consumes America and is all but void of Christians who are committed to

a living in self-denial, sacrifice, commitment, and obedience to the moral values of Christianity. The moral crimes of lying, stealing, cheating, cursing, swearing, pride, avarice, envy, wrath, lust, gluttony, slothfulness, rebellion, covetousness, and idolatry are rife, even among church-going Americans, and are considered the lighter side of sin when compared to homosexuality, race-mixing, abortion, drug use, drunkenness, and cohabitation. There was a time when gossip, slack church attendance, and failure to tithe were the sins of the day among Christians. Today, these sins seem almost the rule.

Congregations seek a message that makes them feel good and assures them prosperity and even riches. Preachers promise them “the best life now,” which of course includes material affluence if they will just name it and claim it, blab it and grab it, visualize and declare it. Many truly believe that God is waiting in heaven, ready to pour riches upon a “me too,” “I want it now” generation. Enter the most fashionable mega churches in America, and what might you find? You will find an inclusive congregation; most of these accept homosexuals, adulterers, fornicators, drunkards, and an assortment of sinners who have broken every moral principle in Scripture. The words repentance, restitution, self-denial, self-sacrifice, commitment, discipline, and obedience are seldom heard there. But you will find rock music and other forms of entertainment have replaced the psalms, hymns, and spiritual songs of former generations. You will find little of the “*straight gate and narrow way*” that Jesus Christ promoted.

Time For A Reality Check

On the day of their death, millions of Americans may find they bought into a fraudulent salvation. When the incorporeal (non-material) soul departs the body at death, where will that soul go? “***And as it is appointed unto men once to die, but after this the judgment***” (Heb. 9:27). Physical death is neither cessation of life nor the end of conscious existence (Luke 16:19-31; II Cor. 5:1-10). Imagine how many millions of professing Christians will hear these words from Jesus Christ on the day of judgment: “***And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity***” (Matt. 7:23). The Gospel’s path to salvation recorded in Matthew, Mark, Luke, and John is remarkably different than that proposed from thousands of pulpits. The Gospel that Jesus Christ preached begins with, “***Repent: for the kingdom of heaven is at hand***” (Matt. 4:17). Repentance was the primary call of John the Baptist and of Jesus Christ Himself. When Jesus Christ called His disciples on the shores of Galilee to “***Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men***” (Matt. 4:19), He did not provide them with an easy-believism on the shores of Galilee. These disciples were called to a life of self-denial, commitment, discipline, and obedience to the Lordship of Jesus Christ, Son of the Living God!

The Sermon on the Mount

In his first major sermon that the God-Man whom we know as Jesus Christ preached, He did not portray a path strewn with roses, easy believism, or a cavalier life style. During His **Sermon on the Mount**, Jesus Christ defined the character of those who would follow Him.

- 1) ***“Blessed are the poor in spirit: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”*** (Matt. 5:3). Those who follow Jesus Christ must realize their awful state of sin, helplessness, and urgent need for redemption through the blood of Christ.
- 2) ***“Blessed are they that mourn: for they shall be comforted”*** (Matt. 5:4). Those who follow Christ must mourn and sorrow for sins that have been committed, place those sins under His blood and live in daily repentance and confession of sin.
- 3) ***“Blessed are the meek: for they shall inherit the earth”*** (Matt. 5:5). Meekness is full surrender to the Lordship of Christ. Meekness is not weakness. It is the willingness to humble oneself and acknowledge that every aspect of life must be lived under the authority of Christ and His Word.
- 4) ***“Blessed are they which do hunger and thirst after righteousness: for they shall be filled”*** (Matt. 5:6). Those who follow Jesus Christ must have an earnest desire to be like Him, to be conformed to His image and hunger for the truth of His Word.
- 5) ***“Blessed are the merciful: for they shall obtain mercy”*** (Matt. 5:7). Those who accept Jesus Christ as Savior and come under His Lordship must practice *forgiveness* until it becomes habitual (Matt. 18:21-35).
- 6) ***“Blessed are the pure in heart: for they shall see God”*** (Matt. 5:8). Moral purity and holiness must be found in followers of Jesus Christ. His precious blood saved us, so we are not our own. We belong to Christ. Purity in spirit, soul, and body is essential to be called His disciple.
- 7) ***“Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God”*** (Matt. 5:9). The disciples of Jesus Christ must resolve all conflicts (Matt. 18:15-18).
- 8) ***“Blessed are they which are persecuted for righteousness sake: for theirs is the kingdom of heaven”*** (Matt. 5:10). Those who follow Jesus Christ can expect persecution (I Peter 4:16). The world hated Christ and persecuted Him. ***“...The servant is not greater than his lord: if they have persecuted me, they will also persecute you”*** (John 15:20).

Further, in the Sermon on the Mount Jesus Christ called His disciples to be the ***“salt of the earth”*** and the ***“light of the world”*** (Matt. 5:13-14). Those who were called into a state of salvation were told to ***“Let your light shine before men, that they may see your good works, and glorify your Father which is in heaven”*** (Matt. 5:16).” Salvation without good works is empty, barren of fruit. Recall the words of Jesus to His disciples: ***“Every tree that bringeth not forth good fruit is hewn down, and cast into the fire”*** (Matt. 7:19). I wonder what **fire** Christ referred to.

Clearly, the Bible teaches us that salvation is the gift of God. ***“For by grace are ye saved through faith; and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God; Not of works, lest any man should boast”*** (Eph. 2:8-9). Salvation is a gift from God that cannot be earned, for then it would be a reward, not a gift.

Salvation is a gift that costs you everything you have. It requires denial of self, demands personal sacrifice, and requires total commitment and a willingness to make Jesus Christ the center of your intellect and heart. A salvation that is real will convict you to make

Jesus Christ the King, Priest, and Prophet of your life. He will not only become your Savior, but He must become your Lord, causing you to yield to His Lordship in every realm of life.

Genuine salvation forsakes the world and allows one to be fully committed to the way, the truth, and the life set forth in the Gospel. The faith walk that Jesus Christ calls us to live is clearly enunciated in the Sermon on the Mount (Matthew 5, 6, & 7). Jesus Christ called His followers to do and teach the commandments: “. . . **whosoever shall do and teach them, the same shall be called great in the kingdom of heaven**” (Matt. 5:19). Moreover, “. . . **whosoever is angry at his brother without a cause shall be in danger of the judgment. . .**” (Matt. 5:22).

Jesus Christ elevated the moral law of God to a new standard by saying this: “. . . **whosoever looketh on a woman to lust after her hath committed adultery with her already in his heart**” (Matt. 5:28). In all the moral law of God (including the Ten Commandments), Jesus Christ transferred the offence from the overt act to that of a motive in the heart. Jesus Christ did not abandon God’s Law (Matt. 5:17-19). Rather, he magnified it, as Isaiah prophesied (Isaiah 42:21). In every area of your personal life—lawlessness, anger, rebellion, lust, marriage, divorce, and praying for our personal enemies, Jesus Christ demanded personal accountability far beyond anything found in the Law of the Old Testament.

Instead of making the pathway to salvation seem easy, Jesus Christ presented an austere and difficult road for those on their way to the Celestial City. On trusting in earthly riches, Jesus told His followers to “**Lay not up for yourselves treasures upon earth, where moth and rust doth corrupt, and where thieves break through and steal: But lay up for yourselves treasures in heaven, where neither moth nor rust doth corrupt, and where thieves do not break through nor steal**” (Matt. 6:19-20). Jesus made it clear that those who followed Him must “**seek first the kingdom of God, and his righteousness; and all these things shall be added unto you**” (Matt. 6:33). Genuine salvation requires that Jesus Christ be the first priority in your life. Jesus is not only the Savior of our soul; He is the Lord of life!

Modern Christianity has made the gate wide and the path broad.

Conversely, Jesus Christ called His followers to “**Enter ye in at the strait gate: for wide is the gate, and broad is the way, that leadeth to destruction, and many there be which go in thereat: Because strait is the gate, and narrow is the way, which leadeth unto life, and few there be that find it**” (Matt. 7:13-14). Jesus clearly told His followers that the path to salvation was narrow and hard to navigate; only a few would find it.

Faith in Jesus Christ that does not influence the way you live is dead. A saving faith will produce good fruit. “**Even so faith, if it hath not works, is dead, being alone . . . For as the body without the spirit is dead, so faith without works is dead also**” (James 2:17, 26). A salvation that does not produce the fruits of repentance and obedience to Christ is fraudulent. A heart fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ will show the fruits of salvation. We are indeed saved by faith without works, as Scripture clearly confirms.

But it is no less true that a saving faith will yield good works. If no good fruits are evident, you can only question the validity of the salvation.

Faulty Lordship Among Millions of Christians

In the Sermon on the Mount, the Lord Jesus Christ made it clear that many would call Him Lord over their lives but in truth it would possess a fraudulent faith: ***“Not every one that saith unto me, Lord, Lord, shall enter into the kingdom of heaven; but he that doeth the will of my Father which is in heaven”*** (Matt. 7:21). Lordship requires self-denial, personal sacrifice, commitment, and above all, obedience. Consider the number of Christians who may be living in a fraudulent salvation because of their lawlessness. ***“Many will say to me in that day, Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in thy name? And in thy name have cast out devils? And in thy name done many wonderful works? And then will I profess unto them, I never knew you: depart from me, ye that work iniquity”*** (Matt. 7:22-23). These people confessed Jesus Christ, called Him Lord, and had done many wonderful works. They were, however, lawless. They did not obey the command Word of their Lord and were therefore not under the Lordship of Jesus Christ.

The word *iniquity* appearing in Matthew 7:23 invites close examination. This English word is translated from the Greek root *anomia*, *an-om-ee'ah*, and means “*illegality, violation of law, wickedness, transgression of the law, unrighteousness, from #459 anomos, an'-om-os, lawless, without law, lawless, transgressor, unlawful, wicked*” (Strong’s Exhaustive Concordance). Clearly the word *iniquity* refers to a lawless, wicked, and disobedient life. Jesus obviously was referring to professing Christians who called Him Lord but refused to live in obedience to His Word and were therefore not under His Lordship. They had actually forfeited their right to call Jesus Lord.

A Life Of Total Commitment

Sadly, millions of professing Christians live in a fraudulent salvation. They have professed Christ as their Savior but denied His Lordship. They are antinomian (lawless) and have no fruit of salvation. These are the very type of believers referenced in St. Luke 13:22-30: ***“And he went through the cities and villages, teaching, and journeying toward Jerusalem. Then said one unto him, Lord, are there few that be saved? And he said unto them, Strive to enter in at the strait gate: for many, I say unto you, will seek to enter in, and shall not be able. When once the master of the house is risen up, and hath shut to the door, and ye begin to stand without, and to knock at the door, saying, Lord, Lord, open unto us; and he shall answer and say unto you, I know you not whence ye are: Then shall ye begin to say, We have eaten and drunk in thy presence, and thou hast taught in our streets. But he shall say, I tell you, I know you not whence ye are; depart from me, all ye workers of iniquity.”***

You cannot be a disciple of the Lord Jesus Christ without absolute surrender of your will and heart to the Lordship of Christ. You must be willing to habitually practice self-denial, take up your cross, and live in obedience to the commandments of God. Christianity is a **command** and **obedience** faith. True faith in Jesus Christ generates

obedience. If you will find eternal life, you must first deny your own life and commit to full surrender to Christ. This trust is confirmed in this succinct statement from the Master Himself: ***“If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow me. For whosoever will save his life shall lose it: but whosoever will lose his life for my sake, the same shall save it. For what is a man advantaged, if he gain the whole world, and lose himself, or be cast away? For whosoever shall be ashamed of me and of my words, of him shall the Son of man be ashamed, when he shall come in his own glory, and in his Father’s, and of the holy angels”*** (Luke 9:23-26).

Christ as Savior and Lord

Millions of Christians have accepted Jesus Christ as Savior but rejected Him as Lord. They have believed by faith in the Person of Jesus Christ, the Son of God, and have trusted Him for salvation, but they are reluctant and sometimes unwilling to submit themselves to His Lordship. There can be no genuine salvation without Lordship. *Jesus* is the English transliteration of the Greek word which comes from the Hebrew word *Jehoshua*, meaning *Saviour*. To know Jesus as Saviour but deny His Lordship is to admit a faulty salvation. Recall these words from the angel in Luke 2:11: ***“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord.”*** The English word *Lord*, small case letters, is *kurios*, *koo’-ree-os*, meaning supremacy, supreme in authority, God, Lord, Master, Sir. The word *Lord* portrays someone who has the power of ownership and the right to command. If we accept Christ as Savior, we must yield to His Command Word as well! Our lifestyle must reflect our willingness to yield to His Command Word and live in obedience to His Commandments.

The word *Kurios* first applied to Jesus Christ with His approval is found in Matthew 8:2. The title *lord* can be used in regard to human relationships, as is confirmed in Matt. 6:24; 15:27; Mark 13:35; and Eph. 6:9. The divine and human use of *Kurios* is found together in Col. 4:1. The Greek word *Kurios* is the equivalent of the Hebrew word *Adonai* (Gen. 15:2) and is used by Jesus Himself in Matt. 22:43-45. In the New Testament there are several ways in which *kurios* can be used:

- 1) *Kurios* can be used as the New Testament word for the Hebrew *Jehovah* (LORD) as in Matt. 1:20,22; 2:15; 3:3; 4:7, 10; Mark 12:29, 30; Luke 1:68; 2:9.
- 2) Jesus Christ used the word *kurios* in reference to Jehovah in Matt. 4:7, 10; 11:25; Mark 12:11.
- 3) *Kurios* is used as the divine title of Jesus, the Christ, some 663 times, As such it expresses His deity. That the purpose of *kurios* was to identify Jesus Christ with the Old Testament *Jehovah* is confirmed in Matt. 3:3; 12:8; 21:9; Psa. 118:26; Matt. 22:43-45; Luke 1:43; John 8:58; 14:8-10; 20:28; Acts 9:5; 13:33.
- 4)

All who follow Jesus Christ must know Him as both *Saviour* and *Lord*: ***“For unto you is born this day in the city of David a Saviour, which is Christ the Lord”*** (Luke 2:11). On the first great Pentecost after Christ’s Resurrection, the Holy Spirit made it clear through the Apostle Peter that the House of Israel must know Jesus as both Lord and Christ: ***“Therefore let all the house of Israel know assuredly, that God hath made that same Jesus, whom ye have crucified, both Lord and Christ”*** (Acts 2:36). The Lordship of

Jesus Christ governs all areas of life: our time, wealth/money, relationships, marriage, recreation, vocation, music, art, literature, and much more.

The Master-Slave Relationship

Master and *Lord* reference human relationships and the Person of Jesus Christ in the New Testament. In John 13:13, Jesus Christ declared, **“Ye call me Master and Lord: and ye say well; for so I am.”** Moreover, Jesus Christ declared, **“But be not ye called Rabbi: for one is your Master, even Christ; and all ye are brethren . . . Neither be ye called masters: for one is your Master, even Christ”** (Matt. 23:8, 10). Jesus Christ is both Lord (*Kurios*) and Master (*Doulos*). In reference to Jesus Christ, they both are used in the New Testament and both always refer to Christ’s deity.

Jesus Christ our Master purchased us with His own blood (Acts 20:28). He redeemed us from sin and death with His precious blood, not with corruptible things like silver and gold (I Peter 1:18-19). Every member of Adam’s posterity is born into death (Romans 3:10-12; 5:12) and is under the sentence of the wrath and judgment of God. As Lord and Master, Jesus Christ bought us from this bondage of sin and death. **“For ye are bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s”** (I Cor. 6:20). Having been purchased by the very blood of Christ, we are admonished of the Holy Spirit through the pen of St. Paul to say, **“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants of men”** (I Cor. 7:23).

As our Master Jesus Christ holds absolute dominion over those whom He redeemed, we are His slaves. His redeemed have no liberty to do otherwise than what the Master requires. Where there is a Master or Lord, there must also be a slave(s). The word *doulos* appears more than 130 times in the New Testament and is most often translated *servant*. St. Paul declares, **“Art thou called being a servant? (doulos-slave) care not for it: but if thou mayest be made free (from the sentence of death), use it rather. For he that is called the Lord (Kurios), being a servant (doulos-slave), is the Lord’s freeman: likewise also he that is called, being free, is Christ’s servant (doulos-slave).”**

In his well-written book *The Gospel According to Jesus*, John MacArthur says it this way: **“Doulos is not an ambiguous term. It suggests a very specific concept which—while repugnant to our culture and our natural minds—should not be toned down or backed away from. It is the main Greek word that was used to describe the lowest, abject bond slave—a person who was literally owned by a master who could legally force him to work without wages. In other words, a doulos was a person without standing or rights. According to Kittel’s *Definitive Dictionary of New Testament Expressions*, words in the doulos group serve either to describe the status of a slave or an attitude corresponding to that of a slave . . .”**

The Bottom Line

Jesus Christ is the Savior of those given Him in the unconditional election of God the Father. They were purchased from the bondage of sin and death by the precious blood of

Jesus Christ and includes every soul numbered in the election of God the Father. This salvation was and is made effectual by the sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit. Justification from sin and death is by the blood of Jesus Christ without good works. Sanctification to good works is the office of the Holy Spirit bringing forth the fruits of salvation to those who have been saved.

Those who have been purchased from the bond slavery of sin and death are now the servants (slaves) of Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ is Master and we are His Slaves. A slave is obligated to live under the authority of his master. Christ is our Master and this requires all who have been purchased by His precious blood to be under His Lordship. A slave has no option but to yield obedience to his master.

We come under the Lordship of our Master Jesus Christ when we obey His Command Word: **“If ye love me, keep my commandments. . .He that hath my commandments, and keepeth them, he it is that loveth me: and he that loveth me shall be loved of my Father. . .If ye keep my commandments, ye shall abide in my love. . .Ye are my friends, if ye do whatsoever I command you** (John 14:15, 21; 15:10, 14).

Every member of Adam’s posterity is born into a condition of sin and death. We are bondslaves to sin under the sentence of death. A bond slave has no rights. Our only right is to die and stand under the wrath and judgment of God. We have no right to life, liberty, or happiness. Our only right is death. Our Lord (*Kurios*) and Master (*Doulos*) redeemed us from this condition of sin and death. He purchased us with His own blood, so now we are His chattel slaves. If you have trusted Him for your salvation, He is your Savior from death, hell, and the grave. If He is your Savior, He must also be your Lord and Master. You are His property. He owns you. You are fully responsible to your Master as His servant/slave to obey His commands.

So what about your salvation? Have you trusted Jesus Christ for your salvation but failed to yield to His Lordship? You cannot be saved without a full surrender to His Lordship. Is it possible that you need to make a prayerful trip to the prayer rail, confess your *iniquity* (lawless life style), and purpose to become a follower of Jesus Christ by living in obedience to His Word? The decision before you is the most important one you will ever make.

To be a follower of Jesus Christ, you have to pay the dear price. The gift of salvation is free, but it costs a life of commitment, self-denial, sacrifice, and the willingness to live as the slave/servant of the Master and Lord of all Creation. If you will live as a free man, you must become the slave/servant of the Lord Jesus Christ. A life fully surrendered to the Lordship of Jesus Christ represents a soul that has truly been saved. The person who refuses to be the slave/servant of Jesus Christ remains the slave of sin, death, and eternal judgment. **“Ye are bought with a price; be not ye the servants (slaves) of men”** (I Cor. 7:23).