

# A Perversion of the Gospel

## Lordship Salvation

By Dr. Curtis Hutson

*"Paul, an apostle, (not of men, neither by man, but by Jesus Christ, and God the Father, who raised him from the dead;) And all the brethren which are with me, unto the churches of Galatia: Grace be to you and peace from God the Father, and from our Lord Jesus Christ, Who gave himself for our sins, that he might deliver us from this present evil world, according to the will of God and our Father: To whom be glory for ever and ever. Amen. I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into the grace of Christ unto another gospel: Which is not another; but there be some that trouble you, and would pervert the gospel of Christ. But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you than that which we have preached unto you, let him be accursed. As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach any other gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed." Galatians 1:1-9*

Lordship salvation is an unscriptural teaching regarding the doctrine of salvation and is confusing to Christians. Those who teach it claim that one must make Jesus Lord of his life in order to be saved. They use such expressions as, "You cannot receive Jesus as Saviour without receiving Him as Lord," or, "If Jesus Christ is not the Lord of your life, then you are not saved."

The Bible teaches salvation by grace through faith. Ephesians 2:8, 9 says, "For by grace ye are saved through faith: and that not of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." But those who teach Lordship salvation say that is not enough to trust Jesus Christ; you must also make Him Lord of your life in order

to be saved. This kind of teaching frustrates the grace of God and is called in the Bible "another gospel."

## **I. Another Gospel Which Is Not Another**

In verse 6, Paul said, "I marvel that ye are so soon removed from him that called you into grace of Christ unto another gospel." Paul contrasts the Gospel of the grace of God with "another gospel" which he does not define. In verse 7 he said, "Which is not another...." That sounds like a contradiction, but the word "another" does not come from the same Greek word. In verse 6 it means "another--different from the one we preach." In verse 7 the Greek word means "another of the same kind." So we might paraphrase the verse, "I marvel that you are so soon removed from him who called you unto the grace of Christ unto a different gospel which is not like the one we preach."

He goes on to say, "There be some that trouble you" (vs. 7). The preaching of another gospel troubles people. He also calls it a perversion of the Gospel of the grace of God.

Then he says something very strong in verse 8: "But though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto than that which we have preached to you, let him be accursed [or "let him be damned"]. Then he emphasizes it again in verse 9: "As we said before, so say I now again, If any man preach another gospel unto you than that ye have received, let him be accursed [or "let him be damned"]."

Paul said, "I am startled; I marvel; I can't believe that you are so soon removed from the Gospel of the grace of Christ unto another gospel." "Another gospel" is not defined, so I will define it based upon the implication of the text.

The Gospel of the grace of Christ is one thing. Another gospel would be anything that contradicts the teaching of salvation by grace through faith. If a man preaches that one is saved by the substitutionary death of Jesus, by trusting Christ, then adds some from of good works, he

contradicts the Gospel of the grace of God. I could not put it any better than Romans 11:6, "And if by grace, then it is no more of works: otherwise grace is no more grace. But if it be of works, then it is no more grace: otherwise work is no more work."

Salvation cannot be by grace *and* works. It has to be either grace *or* works.

Most people have a poor concept of grace. I used to work for a loan company. I would give what is called a "grace period." If you didn't pay your debt in time, you had five days "grace" before you got a notice and were tagged with a late charge.

That is not grace; that is a probation. Grace is the unmerited, undeserved favor of God toward Hell-deserving sinners.

There is so much confusion over the doctrine of salvation. If you ask the next ten people you see, "How does a person get to Heaven?" you will probably get ten different answers. And it is very likely that none would be correct.

In the final analysis, there are only two schemes of salvation that are taught by all religions. One is that man saves himself; the other is that God saves a man. They say that man saves himself by reforming or cleaning up his life before he is saved in order to merit salvation; or that man saves himself by promising to keep the Ten Commandments before he is saved; or man saves himself by obedience. Others teach that man saves himself by behaving. Those who teach Lordship salvation say that man saves himself by making Jesus Lord of his life. Romans 1:16 says, "For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Jesus Christ: for it [the Gospel] is the power of God unto salvation to everyone that behaves..."? No, "...to every one that *believeth*."

The only thing you can do with the Gospel is believe it. The Gospel is the good news of how Jesus Christ came to this earth, how He died on a cross in our place for our sins, how he was buried and rose again the third day. That is the Gospel.

Don't confuse the truth with the Gospel. The Gospel is the truth, but all

truth is not the Gospel. It is the truth that I wear a necktie to church, but that is not the Gospel. It the truth that I brush my teeth every morning, but that is not the Gospel. All truth is not the Gospel, but the Gospel is the truth.

When I preach on Hell, I preach a Bible truth that ought to be preached and one that Jesus preached, but it is not the Gospel. hell is not good news; Hell is bad news. If I preach on judgment, I preach the truth but not the Gospel. But when I preach that Jesus loved sinners, that He died in the sinner's place to pay the sinner's debt, that He was buried and after three days God raised Him form the dead to show His satisfaction with the payment, then I preach the Gospel.

An old preacher spoke to a large crowd of young preachers. Before leaving the platform, one young pastor said to him, "Sir, before you leave, give us a word of advice." The old preacher thought for a moment, then said, "My preacher brethren, make it plain to men how they are to saved."

Far too many preachers are muddying the Gospel. The waters of the grace of God must be kept crystal clear. It disturbs me when preachers scramble the grace of God with works. Paul said, "Though we, or an angel from heaven, preach any other gospel unto you...LET HIM BE DAMNED!" Strong language, but that is how God feels about preachers who pervert the Gospel. Paul says that even an angel is to be damned for preaching another gospel.

Something about us religious humans make us want to add to the Gospel. We want to help God with our salvation. If we can't help Him save us, we want to help keep ourselves saved.

Adam and Eve gathered fig leaves and sewed them together to make aprons to cover their nakedness. They knew something was wrong and tried to right it before God came to visit. They were happy and well pleased with their fig-leaf religion until God came, then they were embarrassed with their fig-leaf covering and ran and hid themselves. God called them unto Himself, killed an innocent animal (a picture of

the substitutionary death of Jesus), took the skin from the animal and made coats for Adam and Eve. He didn't let them keep one single fig leaf of their own making. Salvation is of the Lord.

You may be satisfied to stand before men with you religion, but are you going to be satisfied when you stand before God Almighty? Remember, God put His Son on a cross, loaded Him down with your sin, and poured out His wrath on His own Son so He could save you from the penalty of sin, which is Hell!

Are you going to be satisfied when you stand before God with fig-leaf religion? There is no promise in the Bible to those who partially believe on Christ; one must trust Him alone and nothing else.

Those who teach Lordship salvation say, "If you do not give over the control of your life to Christ at the moment of salvation, you are not saved."

## **II. Must There Be a Commitment to Christ as the Lord of One's Life in Order to Be Saved?**

Those who teach Lordship salvation say that you cannot divorce His Saviourhood from His Lordship; that you can't accept Him as Saviour without accepting Him as the Lord of your life also; that unless Jesus Christ is Lord of your life, you are not saved. But when you question these same people, you discover that Jesus is not Lord of their lives. I asked one who taught Lordship salvation, "Has Jesus been Lord of your life since the day you trusted Him as Saviour? Has there ever been a time since you were saved when Christ has not been the absolute Lord of your life?" He hesitated a moment, then said, "Well, He has always been Lord, but there have been times when I didn't obey Him."

When we don't obey Him, He is not Lord of Boss. When we are in control, Jesus cannot be in control. In Luke 6:46 Jesus said, "And why ye call me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?" It is inconsistent to call Him "Lord, Lord," and not do what He says. When this man I

mentioned realized that Jesus had not been Lord of his life, he rephrased his statement: "Well, I am not saying that you must absolutely make Him Lord of your life in order to be saved, but there must be a willingness to be controlled by the Lord at the time of salvation in order to be saved."

If there must be a willingness for Jesus to have absolute control over one's life in order to be saved, how long can he wait before he becomes unwilling and disobeys again?

There are not two ways to be saved. One is either saved by grace through faith or saved by grace through faith plus surrender. The Bible says in Ephesians 2:8-9, "For by grace are ye saved through faith; and not that of yourselves: it is the gift of God: Not of works, lest any man should boast." If it is salvation by grace through faith, as this Scripture declares, then it is not salvation by grace through faith plus surrender, or plus anything else. It is salvation by grace through faith. PERIOD!

You say, "Dr. Hutson, don't you believe in surrender?" Absolutely! Wholeheartedly! But not to be saved. Surrender can be right or wrong, depending where you put it. A diamond ring is a beautiful thing on a lady's finger. It brings pleasure to the lady. But put that same ring in her high-heeled shoe, and it causes pain and discomfort.

The surrender of the life to the Lordship of Christ is a beautiful and wonderful thing; but when you make surrender a requirement for salvation, it becomes an ugly, dirty, wicked thing and frustrates the marvelous grace of God!

### **III. Bible Examples of Uncommitted Believers**

Let me give you some Bible examples of uncommitted believers. First, I will call your attention to some who had definite lapses from a fully surrendered life after they were saved. Second, I will call attention to believers who did not commit their lives to Christ until long after they were saved. Third, we will call attention to one in the Bible who trusted

Christ as Saviour but never surrendered to the Lordship of Christ. David is an example of one who had a definite lapse in his surrender. Now David may or may not have surrendered his life to the Lordship of Christ at the moment of salvation, but Jesus dead sure wasn't Lord of David's life when he committed adultery with Bathsheba. David was lord at the time; David was running the show. David may or may not have surrendered to the Lordship of Christ at the moment of salvation, but Jesus Christ was not Lord of David's life when he sent Uriah into battle and had him killed. If Jesus was Lord of David's life, then it is certain that David had a lapse of his surrender. David's life was not committed to the Lordship of Christ when he committed adultery and murder! So If he had committed his life, he definitely had a lapse. If total surrender to Christ was a prerequisite for salvation, then David lost his salvation until he totally surrendered again. But he didn't lose it! According to Psalm 51:12, all he lost was the joy of salvation. He prayed, "Restore unto me the joy of thy salvation." He didn't pray, "Lord, save me because You have not been the Lord of my life." Noah is another example of one saved by the grace of God who, if ever committed to Christ, had a relapse. The Bible says in Genesis 6:8, "Noah found grace in the eyes of the Lord." Noah was saved and may or may not have surrendered to the Lordship of Christ at the moment of salvation. But when the ark landed, Noah got drunk; and in a drunken stupor lay naked before his sons. If Noah had surrendered and committed his life to the Lordship of Christ when he was saved, he certainly had a lapse. You can't say Jesus Christ was controlling Noah's life when he got drunk! Noah was controlling his own life. You can't blame his immoral conduct on the Lord. The Apostle Peter is another example of one who, if ever committed, had a relapse. Peter said, "Though al men forsake thee, I will never leave thee" (Matthew 26:33). But he followed the enemy and warmed himself by the Devil's fire. One of the enemy came and said, "Hey! That fellow there is one of

them; he's one of the Lord's boys."

Peter said, "Oh, no! I don't know Jesus."

Another one said, "Yes, Peter is one of Jesus' followers."

Peter insisted, "No, I don't know Christ. I'm not one of them!"

A woman said, "You are one of His disciples! Your speech betrays you."

And Peter began to curse. He said, "You blankety-blank-blank, low-down, sneakin' woman, I don't know Jesus Christ and never knew Him!"

If he surrendered to the Lordship of Christ in total commitment at the moment of salvation, he certainly had a lapse when he cursed and said, "I never knew Jesus Christ!"

In John 21, Peter quit the ministry. He said, "I go a fishing" (vs. 3). This was a public announcement that he never intended to preach again. "I am through preaching--I quit!" And six preachers went with him! When he got out on the lake in a boat, he took off his clothes and was out there naked in the middle of the night in a boat, fishing. It is all in John 21. If he was surrendered to Jesus Christ totally at the moment of salvation, he was not surrendered totally now. He quit the ministry and never intended to preach again! The Lord had to come and warm his backslidden heart by the fires of John, chapter 21, before he preached in Acts, chapter 2, and had 3,000 conversions.

There are other examples in the Bible of men whom if they were totally surrendered, had a lapse in their yieldedness or commitment after they were saved.

Now let me give you an example from the Bible of some believers who were saved and later made a commitment of their lives to Christ.

In Acts 19 we have the conversion of some people at Ephesus who had been worshipping the goddess Diana. An important part of worship included the superstitious dependence on magical words and charms and saying. Paul had been there two years preaching, and these people had believed on Christ. "And many that believed came, and confessed, and shewed their deeds" (vs. 18). Some of them had believed as much as two years earlier. Verse 19 says, "Many of them also which used

curious [magical] arts brought their books together, and burned them before all men: and they counted the price of them, and found it fifty thousand pieces of silver"--\$9,300 worth of books burned! They were just now burning their books of magic--two years after trusting Christ! These people were saved without surrendering to the Lordship of Christ at the moment of salvation.

We know many believers who trusted Christ as Saviour, then years later quit bad habits such as smoking. We even know some who, like Noah, got drunk after they were saved. Now we are not condoning sin; we are simply showing that Jesus was not Lord of these believers' lives.

I know some Christians who were saved and a year later quit some habits, while others waited several years. As a matter of fact, I don't know one Christian anywhere who surrendered to the absolute Lordship of Christ at the moment of conversion and has continued a life of complete surrender.

One dear man who teaches Lordship salvation told me that if Jesus was not Lord of an individual's life, then that individual was not saved. He also said that he had surrendered to the Lordship of Christ at the moment he was saved. Later this man was dismissed from a Christian organization because of conduct unbecoming of a Christian.

You don't get better to get saved; you get saved to get better. You can't get better until you do get saved. You don't have anything to get better with. In Acts 19 we have people who were saved though they had not totally committed themselves to Christ at the moment of trusting Him as Saviour. Two years later they burned their magic books--two years late! These people certainly contradict the teaching of Lordship salvation.

The third example is one of a lifelong refusal to commit oneself to the Lordship of Christ. If you read only the Old Testament references to Lot, you wouldn't believe he was saved. But the Bible says in 2nd Peter 2:7-8 "And delivered just Lot, vexed with the filthy conversation of the wicked. (For that righteous man dwelling among them, in seeing and

hearing, vexed his righteous soul from day to day with their unlawful deeds;)" Twice in verse 8 he is called "righteous," and verse 7 calls him "*just* Lot"

Now Lot was saved, justified. Second Peter 2:7-8 makes this amply clear. But when you read the Old Testament account of his life, it is plain to see that he was never surrendered to God before or after he was saved.

His Uncle Abraham set out on a journey, and Lot just followed his uncle! In the process, his herd of cattle grew; and his herdsmen began to fight with Abraham's herdsmen. Then they decided they had better separate. This little, puny, potato-string backboneed nephew looked up at this giant of faith, Abraham, who said to Lot, "You choose either direction you want." Lot looked towards the mountains, then toward the well-watered plains of Jordan. If he had been surrendered, he would have said, "Uncle Abraham, I am not even supposed to be out here. I just followed you. You make the choice, and I'll take the one you don't want." But that little pipsqueak took the well-watered plains of Jordan. He wasn't surrendered.

When he went down to Sodom and called the Sodomites "brothers"-- that is not being surrendered. If you call somebody who doesn't believe the Bible a "brother in Christ," you are not surrendered. It shows you don't know much about the Bible. The only man who is your brother is the one who has received Jesus Christ as Saviour. You become a Son of God by faith (John 1:12). When he called those wicked Sodomites "brethren," do you think he was surrendered to Christ?

Two angels came down from Heaven, and Lot took them into his house. The young and old men of the city of Sodom compassed about the house of Lot and clamored and cried, "Send those men out to us that we may know them" (Genesis 19:5). They wanted to commit homosexuality with two angels who came from Heaven. That is where we get the word "sodomy."

Do you know what Lot did? "I have two daughters which have not

known man; let me, I pray you, bring them out unto you, and do ye to them as is good in your eyes: only unto these men do nothing; for therefore came they under the shadow of my roof." Does that sound like a committed Christian? It certainly doesn't!

When God sent an angel down to get Lot out of Sodom, Lot lingered. He didn't want to leave. Finally the angel had to get him by the arm and drag him out of Sodom before the fire and brimstone rained down from Heaven. He was so worldly and uncommitted and unsundered that his sons-in-law laughed at him when he tried to get them to leave. They laughed at his testimony.

But keep following him; his life gets worse. Before fire and brimstone rains down from God out of Heaven, they leave Sodom and Gomorrah. He takes with him his wife and two daughters. His wife looks back and turns into a pillar of salt. Lot goes into a cave with his two daughters and gets drunk. There was no liquor store in that cave, so Lot must have brought that wine with him when he left Sodom. While he was drunk, he committed incest with both his daughters; and both gave birth to babies.

Lot is a Bible example of one never surrendered to the Lordship of Christ, one who never made a total commitment to the Saviour. But we know he was saved because the Bible says so in 2nd Peter 2:7-8.

So you have three Bible examples of uncommitted believers: those who trusted Christ had lapses in their yieldedness or surrender after they trusted Christ as Saviour but did not surrender until some time later, and Lot who never did yield his life to the Lordship of Christ.

#### **IV. Scriptures That Clearly Refute Lordship Salvation**

Not only do Bible examples refute Lordship salvation but clear passages of Scripture refute it also. First Corinthians 12:3 says, "...no man can say that Jesus is the Lord, but by the Holy Ghost." Now keep in mind that one does not have the presence of the Holy Spirit in his life until after he

is saved. Romans 8:9 says, "Now if any man have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his." The Bible says in Galatians 4:6, "And because ye are sons, God hath sent forth the Spirit of his Son into your hearts, crying, Abba, Father." John 3:6 says believers are "born of the Spirit." They are sealed by the Spirit (Ephesians 4:30). If you can't call Jesus Lord without the Holy Ghost, and you must call Him Lord to get saved, and you are not saved without the Holy Ghost, you have a problem!

Romans is a book about salvation. Romans, chapter 3, says that everybody need to be saved. It describes humanity. It lays man out on God's examination table and gives him a divine diagnosis. God looks at man and says, "Their throat is an open sepulchre; with their tongues they have used deceit; the poison of asps is under their lips: Whose mouth is full of cursing and bitterness: Their feet are swift to shed blood: Destruction and misery are in their ways" (Romans 3:13-16). He describes man from the crown of his head to the soles of his feet, and says that he is a totally depraved sinner. In Romans 3:10 God says, "There is none righteous, no, not one." In verse 23 He says, "For all have sinned, and come short upon the glory of God." Romans 3 teaches that everybody needs to be saved!

Romans, chapter 4, gives three ways you cannot be saved. Verses 1 to 4 teach that one cannot be saved by works. Verses 9-12 teach that one cannot be saved by the observance of ordinances. Verses 13 to 25 teach that one cannot be saved by keeping the law.

Romans, chapter 5, tells you the only way to be saved. Verse 1 says, "Therefore being justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ." Justified by what? By surrender? By commitment? By making Jesus Lord of your life? No. "Justified by FAITH."

Romans, chapter 12, is written to those who are already saved, and verse 1 says, "I beseech you therefore, brethren, by the mercies of God, that ye present your bodies a living sacrifice, holy, acceptable unto God, which is your reasonable service."

Notice that Paul refers to them as "brethren," meaning they were

saved. there is no such thing as the universal fatherhood of God and the universal brotherhood of man. The only people who are our Christian brothers are those who have trusted Jesus Christ as Saviour. John 1:12 says, "But as many as received him, to them gave he power to become the sons of God, even to them that believe on his name." Everyone who has trusted Jesus or received Him as Saviour, has become a son of God and is therefore a brother to all others who have trusted that same Saviour.

These people to whom Paul is writing are born-again believers but not committed, surrendered believers; and Paul is pleading with them, in view of all God's mercies, to present their bodies as living sacrifices.

They are saved but Jesus is not the Lord of their lives.

Some say, "But the Bible says, 'If any man will come after me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross, and follow me' (Matthew 16:24).

The Bible says if you don't love the Lord with all you heart, with all your soul, with all your strength, and hate your father and mother and all that, you can't be a disciple. The Bible says if you don't forsake all you have, you can't be a disciple (Luke 14:33)."

That is all true, but remember He is saying, "You cannot be my *disciple*." He didn't say, "You can't go to Heaven." We must not confuse the requirements for discipleship with the requirement for salvation. Every disciple is a believer, but every believer is not a disciple. A disciple is a learner, a student.

God never says to the unsaved man, "Come after Me for salvation." He says, "Come unto me, all ye that labour and are heavy laden, and I will give you rest." But after one accepts Christ as Saviour, then He says in Matthew 4:19, "Follow me, and I will make you fishers of men." We come to Him for salvation and come after Him for service.

It is one thing to trust Jesus Christ as Saviour and quite another to surrender one's life to the Lord. There is such a thing as the dedicated Christian life. And there are carnal Christians, according to 1st Corinthians 3, who have never yielded their lives to Christ. The yielding

of one's life or making Jesus Lord of one's life is not a requirement for salvation. That is Lordship salvation and a perversion of the Gospel.

## **V. Some Arguments of Those Who Try to Prove Lordship Salvation**

Those who teach Lordship salvation say, "But the Bible says, 'Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ and thou shalt be saved.'" Sure it does. But it does not say, "Obey the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."; it is always careful to identify the object of our faith. Our faith, our trust, our dependence must be in the Lord Jesus Christ.

We cannot trust our good works, our good life, our surrender, our baptism, our ordinances or anything else. We must trust Jesus Christ and Him alone for salvation. He plainly said, "I am THE way, THE truth, and THE life: no man cometh unto the father, but by me" (John 14:6).

Why must we confuse the most important message in the world?

Suppose I am going to jump from a building into a net held by four men.

A mechanic is holding one corner of the net, a dentist one corner, an airplane pilot one corner, and an insurance salesman the other corner. I am going to trust them to catch me. Some one could say, "Believe on Mr. Domansky, the dentist, and thou shalt be saved," but that doesn't mean I have to let him pull all my teeth in order to get saved. It simply means that I am going to have to trust him to catch me in that net.

Someone else could say, "Believe on Mr. Smith, the insurance salesman, and thou shalt be saved." But that doesn't mean I have to buy my insurance from Mr. Smith to be saved. It simply means I must trust him to hold that net for me.

When the Bible says in Acts 16:31, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved," it doesn't mean you have to make Him Lord of your life. It simply means you must trust the Lord Jesus Christ for your salvation. Verse after verse in the Bible clearly says that salvation is simply trusting in Jesus Christ. John 3:36 says, "He that believeth on

the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life; but the wrath of God abideth on him."

The man who is trusting anything other than Jesus Christ is not saved. That is plain teaching of the Bible. The man who claims he is trusting in Jesus Christ--plus his ability to yield to the Lordship of Christ, is not fully trusting the Saviour; and there is no promise to those who trust Jesus Christ plus something else, no matter how good the other thing may be. When we get to Heaven, we are going to sing: "Thou art worthy to take the book, and to open the seals thereof: for thou wast slain, and hast redeemed us to God by thy blood out of every kindred, and tongue, and people, and nation" (Revelation 5:9). We are not going to sing: " We are worthy for we have committed and surrendered to the Lordship of Christ." Now when you teach salvation by grace through faith, that one is saved simply by trusting Jesus Christ, some call that "easy believism." But you will not find that expression in the Bible. That is a manmade expression.

It is not easy to get one to trust Christ, Him alone, and nothing else for salvation. As matter of fact, that may be the hardest thing in the world to do.

You are called upon to believe in Someone whom your eyes have never seen. You are called upon to believe in Someone, and you have never met an eyewitness who ever saw Him. You are called upon to believe on Someone whom the so-called scholarship of the day denies. You are called upon to believe in Someone who died on the cross two thousand years ago. You are called upon to believe in Someone of whom the only record you have of Him has been kept by His friends. You are called upon only to believe in His existence, but to believe that by depending on Him you can be justified on the basis that He was made guilty for your sins.

Now that is not easy! It is hard enough to trust someone we see and know, someone we have shaken hands with and talked to. But to trust in Someone whom we have not seen is difficult. That fact that most

religions teach works, ordinances, sacraments, baptism or something else for salvation show how difficult it is to get a person to simply trust in Jesus Christ as Saviour. Salvation by grace is "believism" all right, but it is certainly not "easy believism."

Now don't misunderstand me. I am not saying that you simply admit there is a Christ and thou shalt be saved; I am saying what the Bible says, "Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ, and thou shalt be saved."

The Bible word "believe" means to depend upon, to rely upon, to trust in. Some argue that verse in James 2:19, "...the devils also believe, and tremble." But the devils do not trust Jesus Christ as Saviour; they simply admit His existence.

It is one thing to believe an airplane can fly; it is quite another to trust your physical life to the pilot and plane to take you across the nation.

To be saved, one must trust Jesus Christ completely for salvation.

No Christian in the world can say that when he was saved he totally committed himself to Christ and has since then been absolutely surrendered. Not even those who teach Lordship salvation will say that. They will say, "Jesus has been my Lord, but many times I have disobeyed Him." Then when you disobeyed Him, He wasn't the Lord of your life.

Those who teach Lordship Salvation say, "He's always Lord." "Lord" comes from the Hebrew word Adonai, meaning "Master." It also comes from the word Jehovah, the personal name of God. There are several translations of the word. In that sense, He is everybody's Lord. He is the tadpole's Lord, the bumblebee's Lord, the bullfrog's Lord, the rattlesnake's Lord--but that doesn't mean they are saved. He is Master of the whole universe. He can do what He wants to do, when He wants to do it!

Philippians 2:10-11, declares, "That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus is Lord, to the glory of God the Father." Does that mean that everyone will be saved,

since the day will come when every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord? Of course not. When we talk about Jesus being Lord of one's life, we mean yielding to Him for the control of the life.

Jesus is Lord over many things about every individual--the color of my eyes, my height, my parents, etc. The Lord determined who my parents would be. He was the Boss; He was the Master. The Lord determined my height. He determined the size of my ears, nose, the texture of my skin.

But one important area of my life where He gives me control is my will. God made us free moral agents. We are creatures of choice. He wants to be Lord of our wills, but he doesn't want to force us. He wants us to yield to Him because we want to do so.

He was a willing Saviour, and He will have only willing servants. We trust Him for salvation, and we yield to Him for service.

## **VI. The Teaching of Lordship Salvation Confuses Believers**

I have often heard those who teach Lordship salvation brag that three of four preachers got saved in their service. Some have said, "The youth pastor and three deacons got saved!"

Now I am for people trusting Christ as Saviour who have not already done so, but I am against any teaching that confuses believers.

We heard of a youth director who was supposedly saved after hearing a sermon on Lordship salvation. Then many of the young people who trusted Christ under the youth director's ministry, deciding they must not be saved, went forward and, in the words of the evangelist, were "really saved."

There is no difference between being saved and "really saved." There is no such thing as degrees in salvation. No one is more saved than the other. The Bible says in John 3:36, "He that believeth on the Son hath everlasting life: and he that believeth not on the Son shall not see life;

but the wrath of God abideth upon him." Nothing can be plainer: those who are trusting Jesus Christ are saved, and they have everlasting life. And those who are not trusting Him are not saved, but the wrath of God abideth on them.

Saying one is "really saved" is like going to a funeral home, pointing to a casket and saying, "The person in that casket is dead," then pointing to another casket and saying, "The one in that casket is really dead!" There is no such thing as being dead, deader, and deadest.

One is either dead or alive, saved or lost, guilty or justified, believing or not believing. There is no between. Why do good Christians supposedly get "really saved" under the preaching of Lordship salvation? Because they believe the preacher. If I believed that one must make Jesus Lord of his life in order to be saved, then I would go forward every time I heard a sermon on the subject and get saved because there have been times when I have been a disobedient child, times when I have yielded to my old carnal nature.

The problem is, those who go forward and supposedly really get saved will have the same problem again later because they are not going to live a perfect life. There will be times when they will yield to the flesh; then when they hear a preacher say, "Unless you make Jesus Lord of your life, you are not saved," they will look back and see that Jesus has not been Lord of their lives and reason that if the preacher is correct, then they must not have been saved. So they will go forward again to trust Christ as Saviour, and make Him Lord of their lives so they can really be saved.

Lordship salvation confuses believers and makes them doubt their salvation. The Bible is very plain: the only way to be saved is by trusting Jesus Christ. In John 3:18 Jesus divides the whole world into two groups: "He that believeth on him is not condemned: but he that believeth not is condemned already, because he hath not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." The condemned criminal is the one who has been arrested, tried, found guilty, and sentenced. The

Bibles says the man who is trusting Jesus Christ is not under the sentence; he is not condemned. And he who is not trusting Jesus Christ is condemned. Why? Because he has "not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God." He is not trusting Jesus Christ fully for salvation.