

THE LORD JESUS CHRIST

There is a heresy that has been adopted by many in the church today. That heresy says that Jesus can be your **SAVIOR** apart from being your **LORD**. I would like to explore that with you. In order to start, we will have to establish the definition of sin. My Websters dictionary defines sin as "transgression against divine or moral law, esp. when committed consciously;... to depart from the path of duty prescribed by God...".

The fall of man came when Adam and Eve partook of the fruit of the tree of the knowledge of good and evil. The problem was not with the fruit but with the fact that God had forbidden them to eat the fruit of that tree. To this point Adam and Eve had obeyed God. It was the disobedience that was the sin that caused the fall.

When we say "THE LORD JESUS CHRIST", we are saying several things. The term "Lord" denotes his authority. Lord means (supremacy) or supreme in authority, or the one who controls. "Jesus" is His given name. It was a common Jewish name of the time. "Christ" is His title and means "Messiah, Anointed One, consecrated". This speaks of His divinity. He can not be divided. If you want to take Christ as your savior, you must also accept Him as your Lord. We see that the Lordship of Christ is essential for salvation. Romans 10:9 ***"that if you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved;"*** Jesus has a right to be our Lord and to tell us what we should do because He bought us with His blood. I Corinthians 6:19-20 ***"Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own?" For you have been bought with a price: therefore glorify God in your body.*** I Cor. 7:23 says, ***"You were bought with a price; do not become slaves of men."***

So what does it mean when we say that someone is a lord? We are not familiar with lordship in this country. In old testament times a lord had full control over their slaves or serfs. They could even put to death those who displeased them. When we take Christ as our Lord we are saying to Him that He has total autonomy over our life. What ever He wants to do to us, with us, in us, through us, about us, is all

right with us. If that is not what we mean, then we do not take Him to be our Lord and if He is not our Lord then He can not be our Savior. This is not as much of a leap in the dark as it would appear to be at first glance. If we understand the nature of Christ then we know that He will never do anything that will not be for our ultimate good. In Hebrews 11:6 we read, ***"And without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who seek Him."*** Do bad things ever happen to Christians? Yes! Christians loose loved ones, have spouses betray them, get raped, beaten, persecuted, become disabled, and all of the things that happen to those who are not Christians. The big difference is that Jesus said . ***"Let your character be free from the love of money, being content with what you have; for He has said, 'I will never desert you, nor will I ever forsake you.'"*** Hebrews 13:5. Again in Romans 8:35 we read, ***"Who shall separate us from the love of Christ? Shall tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword? Just as it is written, 'For thy sake we are being put to death all day long; We were considered as sheep to be slaughtered.' But in all these things we overwhelmingly conquer through Him who loved us. For I am convinced that neither death, nor life, nor angels, nor principalities, nor things present, nor things to come, nor powers, nor height, nor depth, nor any other created thing, shall be able to separate us from the love of God which is in Christ Jesus our Lord.*** If we conclude that we do not want Christ to rule over us, then who will we chose? People say that they want to be in control of their own life. That sounds good on the surface but can we really run our own life? For that to be true we must be able to be free from other influences. There are all kinds of things that will steal that control from you. What about pain, sickness, loss of eye sight, other people, desires, feelings, wars, laws, etc. Being your own god is the oldest religion on earth. Adam and Eve were charter members and Satan was the founder. Eve told the serpent that they would die if they ate from the forbidden tree. We pick up the conversation in Genesis 3:4-7 ***"And the serpent said to the woman, 'You surely shall not die! For God knows that in the day you eat from it your eyes will be opened, and you will be like God, knowing good and evil.'*** ***When the woman saw that the tree was good for food, and that it was a delight to the eyes, and that the tree was***

desirable to make one wise, she took from its fruit and ate; and she gave also to her husband with her, and he ate. Then the eyes of both of them were opened, and they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves loin coverings.” Their self rule lead immediately to bondage and it has done the same ever since.

I would like to talk about whether we can have Christ as savior and not as Lord from the standpoint of logic. If we say to Christ that He can be our savior but not our Lord, then I would assume that we would live contrary to His direction and will. But disobedience to God is, by definition, sin. That means that we will be living in sin. The way that we must deal with sin is to confess that sin, repent of it , and ask for God's forgiveness. But repentance means that we don't do it any more which means that we must obey Him from then on. That makes Him Lord. We read in

I John 2:1-5 ***"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also for those of the whole world. And by this we know that we have come to know Him, if we keep His commandments. The one who says, 'I have come to know Him.' and does not keep His commandments, is a liar, and the truth is not in Him; but whoever keeps His word, in him the love of God has truly been perfected. By this we know that we are in Him:"*** Does this leave any question about whether you can have Christ as savior and not as Lord? John continues in

I John 3:4-11 ***"Everyone who practices sin also practices lawlessness; and sin is lawlessness. And you know that He appeared in order to take away sins; and in Him there is no sin. No one who abides in Him sins; no one who sins has seen Him or knows Him. Little children, let no one deceive you; the one who practices righteousness is righteous, just as He is righteous; the one who practices sin is of the devil; for the devil has sinned from the beginning. The Son of God appeared for this purpose, that He might destroy the works of the devil. No one who is born of God practices sin, because His seed abides in him; and he cannot sin, because he is born of God. By this the children of God and the children of the devil are***

obvious: anyone who does not practice righteousness is not of God, nor the one who does not love his brother. For this is the message that you have heard from the beginning, that we should love one another;"

Holiness is not an option. Many people take great comfort in the hymn that says, "Just as I am without one plea..." and say "see, God accepts me just the way I am." Like so many heresies, this one has just enough truth to make it dangerous. While it is true that we come to Christ just the way we are, it is also true that He doesn't expect us to stay the way we were. We read in I Peter 1:14-16 "***As obedient children, do not be conformed to the former lusts which were yours in your former ignorance, but like the Holy One who called you, be holy yourselves also in all your behavior; because it is written, 'You shall be holy, for I am holy.'***" God never demands of us anything that is impossible. You may say that you can't be holy but God demands it, so if you can't be holy then you need to depend on God to help you to accomplish it in your life. I might remind you that there are always two options when you are tempted to do wrong; yes and no. You and I can use either one of those options but we are the ones that make those choices.

When we bought the 120 acres that my wife and I now live on, I was surveying some of the trees on the land and I thought that some of them might be walnut trees. I asked a friend what he thought. He looked at the trees and said, "I will let you know in the fall, if they have walnuts on them then they are walnut trees and if they don't have walnuts then they are not walnut trees." The same thing is true of Christians. The fruit that we bare is not a means to heaven but rather an indicator of the direction that we have chosen, wether it be heaven or hell. In Luke 6: 43-46 Jesus says, "***For there is no good tree which produces bad fruit; nor, on the other hand, a bad tree which produces good fruit. For each tree is known by its own fruit. For men do not gather figs from thorns, nor do they pick grapes from a briar bush. The good man out of he good treasure of his heart brings forth what is good; and the evil man out of the evil treasure brings forth what is evil; for his mouth speaks from that which fills his heart. And why do you call Me, 'Lord, Lord,' and do not do what I say?"*** Fortunately, we are not left to do all of this on our own. In John 15:1-11 Jesus says to us, "***I am the true vine, and My Father is the vinedresser. Every branch in me that does not bear fruit, He takes away; and***

every branch that bears fruit, He prunes it, that it may bear more fruit. You are already clean because of the word which I have spoken to you. Abide in Me, and I in you. As the branch cannot bear fruit of itself, unless it abides in the vine, so neither can you, unless you abide in Me. I am the vine, you are the branches; he who abides in me, and I in him, he bears much fruit; for apart from me you can do nothing. If anyone does not abide in Me, he is thrown away as a branch, and dries up; and they gather them, and cast them into the fire, and they are burned. If you abide in Me, and My words abide in you, ask whatever you wish, and it shall be done for you. By this is My Father glorified, that you bear much fruit, and so prove to be My disciples. Just as the Father has loved Me, I have also loved you; abide in my love. If you keep my commandments, you will abide in my love; just as I have kept My Father's commandments, and abide in His love. These things I have spoken to you, that My joy may be in you, and that your joy may be made full.

It is true that we need to depend on Jesus to be able to live as we should, but it is also true that we have the power to decide who we will follow. God can not tolerate a rebel in Heaven. Our choices have to be made, tested, and proven irrevocably, before we enter that gate. We will serve something or someone. The evidence of who or what that is, will be plain to see by looking at our fruit here.

So, what if we do sin? What should we do? I return you to a scripture that we used earlier; 1 John 2:1-2 ***"My little children, I am writing these things to you that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ the righteous; and He Himself is the propitiation for our sins; and not for ours only, but also of those of the whole world."*** It is up to us to keep check on our behavior and compare it with what we read in God's word. It is up to us to keep short accounts with God and to confess and repent of anything that is not pleasing to Him. It is up to us not to tempt God by saying, "I know that this is wrong but I can always repent and be forgiven later." I don't think that God will play that game with you!

In review, we decide who our Lord will be. We decide when to repent. We decide weather we will follow Jesus or take our chances by playing games with our soul.

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