

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

(Topic # 10)

By Garry J. Moes

With respect to those who are members of the church, they may be known by the marks of Christians; namely, by faith, and when, having received Jesus Christ the only Savior, they avoid sin, follow after righteousness, love the true God and their neighbor, neither turn aside to the right or left, and crucify the flesh with the works thereof. But this is not to be understood as if there did not remain in them great infirmities; but they fight against them through the Spirit all the days of their life, continually taking their refuge in the blood, death, passion, and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they have remission of sins, through faith in Him. -- Belgic Confession

Introduction

We undertake to examine here the question of the relationship between Christ's roles as Savior and Lord. "Simply stated the question is this: Must there be a commitment to Christ as Lord of one's life in order to be saved?" The issue may be framed in the form of these additional questions: Does Christ have to be Lord for a person to be saved? Can the Saviorhood and Lordship of Christ be separated for the purposes of salvation, or are they ultimately indivisible? Is the acknowledgment of Christ as Lord an essential ingredient of regeneration through which saving faith is effected?

At the root of such questions is the issue of the nature of salvation. Is "salvation" basically equivalent to justification by faith? How does justification come about? Does the New Testament teach that justification is ultimately inseparable from sanctification, *i.e.*, does "salvation" include both of necessity? "The importance of this question cannot be over-estimated in relation to both salvation and sanctification. The message of faith only and the message of faith plus commitment of life cannot both be in the Gospel; therefore, one of them is false and comes under the curse of perverting the Gospel or preaching another Gospel. (Gal. 1:6-9)"

The historic replies to these questions are widely divergent. Charles C. Ryrie, representing one end of the spectrum, answers rhetorically from an assumption: "As far as sanctification is concerned, if only committed people are saved people, then where is there room for carnal Christians?" There is no such room, answer those at the other end. "...[M]en and movements have so often given the impression that the acceptance of the Lordship of Christ is a second experience of grace, or a sort of optional addendum to the Christian life," says James A. Stewart. "So great has been this perversion that many congregations are astounded when they hear the true Gospel of the Lordship of Christ. They believe we are preaching a new Gospel." Arthur W. Pink states flatly, "No one can receive Christ as his Savior while he rejects Him as Lord. Therefore, those who have not bowed to Christ's sceptre and enthroned Him in their hearts and lives, and yet imagine that they are trusting Him as Savior, are deceived."

The Theological Possibilities

As Ryrie suggested above, it has been generally held in the recent debate that there are but two theological possibilities: either Christ is inseparably both Savior and Lord or these offices within Him may be separated in their effectualness in the Christian life. In the *first*, Christ is at once both Savior and Lord and He comes to us as such, exercising His mastery in the lives He has redeemed. Through this mastery, implemented by and through the Holy Spirit, we also come to Him as such, acknowledging His Lordship as part and parcel of redemption. In the *second* possibility, Christ is Savior first, then (perhaps optionally) Lord later. Hence, Christianity is, in its best manifestation, a two-stage process, and Lordship is a second, subsequent step after receiving Christ as Savior. In support of the first view, Kenneth L. Gentry writes:

The Lordship view expressly states the necessity of acknowledging Christ as the Lord and master of one's life in the act of receiving Him as Savior. These are not

two different, sequential acts (or successive steps), but rather one act of pure, trusting faith. It takes little theological acumen to discern the vast differences between the Lordship and non-Lordship views of the presentation of the Gospel.

Ryrie describes the second option in these terms:

Very often these days dedication is mixed up with salvation....salvation concerns my personal relationship to Jesus Christ as my substitute for sin....dedication concerns the subjection of my life to Jesus Christ.... Simply stated dedication concerns whether I will direct my life or whether Christ will.... It faces the Christian with the question of who will be the master of the years of his life.

Definitions

It is inescapable that we must understand the true nature of justification and sanctification if we are to sort out the realities of this crucial issue. We must understand, that is, whether "salvation" consists in both of these two components or merely one. If one, which one? And what, then, is the essential character of the other? We begin our journey of understanding with an attempt to define the pertinent words in the vocabulary of redemption, among them the following: *saviorhood, justification, lordship, sanctification, salvation, grace, faith, and repentance.*
Saviorhood

Biblical theologians agree that the concept of saviorhood has to do with God becoming incarnate as a man in order to die on a cross and redeem man from the penalty and power of sin. The Bible says that it was God the Son Who accomplished this work on the Cross of Calvary.

C.C. Ryrie says that the saviorhood of Christ is defined by the title "Lord Jesus," which he says means the God-Man. Christ died to save men from the penalty of sin, but this is an entirely separate work from Christ the Master who sanctifies.

Why is Lord Jesus (meaning God-Man) such a significant statement...? It is because this is the essence of our salvation since it focuses on the uniqueness of the Savior.... If *Lord* in the phrase means *Master*, then the claim to uniqueness is absent. If Lord in the phrase Lord Jesus means Jehovah-God, then Jesus is unique, and this is the very heart of the message of salvation in Christianity.

...[N]o other kind of savior can save except a God-Man. Deity and humanity must be combined in order to provide a satisfactory salvation.... The Savior must be a man in order to be able to die and in order to be identified with the curse of man. And He must be God in order that that death be effective for an infinite number of persons. When Paul wrote of the Gospel to the Romans...he elaborated on two essential facts about Jesus Christ--His humanity...and His deity.... He did not add anything about Christ's sovereign control over the lives of those who accept Him as an essential part of the Gospel.... The God-Man saves; the Master controls and sanctifies.

Lordship

Except for Ryrie, most New Testament scholars see the concept of Lord (*KURIOS*) and Lordship as much more than just the uniqueness of Christ being God. Lordship has to do with the concepts of ownership and sovereign rulership which demand necessary obedience and submission. K.L. Gentry notes that in the book of Acts alone, Christ is referred to as "Savior" only twice while He is called "Lord" ninety-two times. He comments that "this designation of Christ as Lord must have some soteriological significance because of the frequent mention of His full title in their evangelistic preaching." After a lengthy lexical study, Gentry concludes as follows:

The linguistic evidence points quite strongly to the conclusion that *kurios* emphasizes controlling authority. When used of Christ in the frequent Gospel preaching of Acts and the Epistles, it most certainly has to do with the acceptance of Jesus Christ as Lord to be Savior.

The evidence that *kurios* refers historically to the idea of rulership is overwhelming. The ascription of *kurios* as a divine appellation is properly understood only on the basis of this supreme rulership. Therefore, when either God the Father or God the Son is called *kurios*, it must be in recognition of the fact of sovereign rulership.

William Childs Robinson agrees that the term "Lord" is not intended to express exclusively "the meta-physical nature of deity, but of the sovereign authority of the Most High. God is the term of pure exaltation, while Lord carries with it more expressly the idea of sovereign rulership in actual practice, evoking obedient service." Monroe Brewer, in the context of developing a biblical theology of missions in the Old Testament and New Testament, sees the concept of *Lordship* as defined in two ways: obedience to God as Creator and obedience to God as Savior. He comments:

The Lordship of God can be seen over two general realms, both of which clearly demonstrate what God as Lord has done for us. The first realm is the physical realm of creation, in which God as Creator made all mankind. The second realm is the spiritual realm of salvation, in which God as Savior made possible the saving of His fallen creation.

As Creator, if God is the only Lord who has created everything and rules over all His creation, then all men must know He is Lord over them as their Creator.... As Savior, the Lord of the universe must subdue all enmity to Himself. Those throughout the nations of the world who have not acknowledged nor submitted to God's redemptive Lordship in salvation are alienated from and enemies of God (Eph. 4:18; Rom. 5:10).... The Lordship of God demands active involvement, making disciples among the nations (Matt. 28:19-20), until every knee shall bow to Him (Phil. 2:9-11). Because God is Lord and has acted on our behalf in creation and salvation--because of what He has done--we are compelled to extend His Lordship to His creatures who do not yet acknowledge and submit to Him as their Creator and Savior.

Faith

Any decision on our essential issue of the nature of Lordship is thoroughly bound to an understanding of *faith*. Historically there have been several broad views of the nature of faith. Augustine unequivocally states one case by saying that "faith is nothing else than to think with assent." Calvin, whose definition undoubtedly went well beyond the following, aligns with Augustine in emphasizing the *cognitive aspect* of Christian faith. Calvin adds to Augustine's "assent" the deeper concept of "knowledge." "Now we have a complete definition of faith, if we maintain that it is a firm and certain knowledge of God's benevolence toward us."

Over against this view of the *cognitive* nature of faith, Luther and others posit a *volitional* element. To Luther, "*fides qua fiducia*"--faith is an act of the will in which one wholeheartedly trusts God. Faith, as an exercise of the will, thus displays the nature of a "work." Lewis Sperry Chafer stressed the volitional aspect of faith when he wrote:

By believing, an individual wills to trust Christ. It is an act of the whole man, not just his intellect or his emotion. While intellectual assent is not of real faith, and merely a stirring of the emotions is short of faith, believing is a definite act in which the individual wills to receive Christ by faith.

Ryrie helps little with his overly simplified reference to faith as mere "belief," which bears no necessary relationship to obedience or commitment. Faith, in this view, seems to be nothing more than a *mindful credence, persuasion, settled opinion* or *conviction* that Christ has acted redemptively. As such, his view may be said to be within the *cognition* school. Discussing the Ephesian "believers" of Acts 19:18-19, Ryrie says,

...[T]hey did not burn their books of magic as soon as they had become believers. As believers they had continued to practice and be guided by the superstitious magic of their heathen background.... There were people at Ephesus who became believers in Christ knowing that they should give up their

use of magic but who did not give it up....their unwillingness to give it up did not prevent their becoming believers. Their salvation did not depend on faith plus willingness to submit to the Lordship of Christ in the matter of using magical art.

The vast majority of New Testament scholarship sees "obedience" as an integral part of saving faith.

Generally speaking, the Non-Lordship proponents present Christ as Savior to be accepted by faith only, devoid of any idea of commitment to Him.... Faith in Christ tends to be little more than accepting the facts of His deity and atonement apart from any idea of obeying Him. The Lordship view, however, teaches that inextricably bound up in the idea of faith in Christ is the understanding that the One believed in is to be absolutely trusted and obeyed.

This third view of faith as something beyond mere intellectual *assent* and something radically beyond active *volition*, is well enunciated by Arend J. ten Pas, in keeping with the Calvinist reformers' view. "Both Ryrie and Chafer make a serious mistake at this point.... The Reformation position *is not* that a man is saved by faith *plus* commitment, or surrender, but rather a man is saved through faith *that* commits and surrenders. Faith that does not commit and surrender is not saving faith." The idea that obedience proceeds innately from faith is underscored by W.E. Vine:

PEITHO and *PISTEUO* (obey and believe) are closely related etymologically; the difference in meaning is that the former implies the obedience produced by the latter... When a man obeys God he gives the only possible evidence that in his heart he believes God.... *PEITHO* suggests an actual and outward result of the inward persuasion and consequent faith.

Woven carefully in a somewhat hidden fashion through a number of answers within the *Heidelberg Catechism* is an additional facet of our search for a definition of faith. This facet is that faith is a divine work wrought in the heart of the redeemed as a necessary outgrowth of the gift of grace. After an exposition of the central doctrines of the Christian religion, the *Catechism* declares that a belief in these central truths generates a "profit" to the believer of imputed righteousness. The *Catechism* insists that this righteousness is not given "on account of the worthiness of my faith, but because only the satisfaction, righteousness, and holiness of Christ is my righteousness before God, and I can receive the same and make it my own in no other way than by faith only."

Q: But does not this doctrine make men careless and profane? ["carnal Christians"?--*GJM*]

A: By no means; for it is impossible that those who are implanted into Christ by a true faith should not bring forth fruits of thankfulness.

Q: Since, then, we are made partakers of Christ and all His benefits by faith only, whence comes this faith?

A: From the Holy Spirit, who works it in our hearts by the preaching of the holy Gospel, and confirms it by the use of the holy sacraments.

Here then we see faith as an divinely implanted instrument for appropriating the benefits of Christ's gracious work of redemption; and this work, by its very nature, must produce fruits of obedience. Implied in this is the notion that faith is a *reliance* upon Christ for the benefit of justification, a benefit which, in turn, necessarily issues forth in the sanctifying fruits of the Holy Spirit. The *Canons of Dort* speak of this in saying that the recipients of the "gift of faith" "in due time, though in various degrees and in different measures, attain the assurance" of their redemption "by observing in themselves with a spiritual joy and holy pleasure the infallible fruits of election pointed out in the Word of God--such as, a true faith in Christ, filial fear, a godly sorrow for sin, a hungering and thirsting after righteousness, etc."

Repentance

The *Canons* hold that the infallible fruits of God's justifying grace include "a godly sorrow for sin" and a hunger and thirst for righteousness. If true, this indicates that *repentance* is an integral part of saving faith. Repentance, in Scripture, is a *turning*, a *conversion*. "Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts; and let him return to the Lord, and He will have compassion on him, and to our God, for He will abundantly pardon" (Isaiah 55:7). Again, Scripture indicates that this turning is possible only because of God's initiative in grace, for "...the kindness of God leads you to repentance" (Romans 2:4).

Those who deny that saving faith includes obedience to the Lordship of Christ insist that repentance *not be added* to faith as an additional condition of salvation. "...[I]t is clear that the New Testament does not impose repentance upon the unsaved as a condition of salvation.... The whole array of 150 New Testament passages which are the total of the divine instruction, are incomplete and misleading if repentance must be accorded a place separate from, and independent of, believing."

In other contexts, however, Chafer declares that when *repentance* is defined as a "change of mind," then it is synonymous with believing. "It is asserted that repentance, *which is a change of mind*, enters of necessity into the very act of believing on Christ...." "Therefore, it is as dogmatically stated as language can declare, that repentance is essential to salvation and that none could be saved apart from repentance, but it is included in believing and could not be separated from it."

Ryrie states that the content of the "change of mind" in repentance has to do with the identity of Christ as the God-Man. Repentance does not have to do with sin nor a change in lifestyle. It is a Christological focus:

The context of repentance which brings eternal life, and that which Peter preached on the day of Pentecost, is a change of mind about Jesus Christ. Whereas the people who heard him on that day formerly thought of Him as mere man, they were asked to accept Him as Lord (Deity) and Christ (promised Messiah). To do this would bring salvation.

Dr. Ray A. Stanford, the former president of Florida Bible College, was among the first of recent writer (before Ryrie) to strip repentance of any relationship to sin. He remarks:

If you look up "repent" or "repentance" in a modern dictionary you will read definitions like the following: "regret; to feel sorry for sin and seek forgiveness; to turn from sin." Based on these definitions, preachers have been going about earnestly trying to get men to quit their sinning, or at least work up a genuine sorrow for sin. But is this the divinely appointed task of Christians--to get men to change their way? NO! This kind of preaching often leads to another form of self-righteousness and self-reformation--not to salvation. Does a sinner have to turn from or give up his sins to be saved?

Stanford answers his own question in the negative and says repentance simply means that an unsaved man is "to Change His Mind about how to reach God, and accept God's way of salvation. The person must *Change His Mind* from any idea of religion he may have to save him...."

Christ is not saying "Turn from your sin," but that they should recognize that they are sinners.... Even if one doesn't know Greek, it is obvious from the passage itself that the meaning of "repent" here cannot be "sorrow for, or turning from sin." ... Notice that the Bible states here that we are to proclaim repentance *Toward God*. Nothing here about turning from sin.

A champion of the Lordship doctrine, John F. MacArthur, Jr., agrees that repentance "does not mean you must do works of penance or correct your behavior *before* you can turn to Christ." But MacArthur hastens to add that when one repents and turns to God, he will "discover that changed behavior is the inevitable fruit." He cites in this context Philippians 1:6: "*He* will begin a good

work in you that He Himself will see through to completion" (*NASB*). Repentance, MacArthur argues, "is not merely a positive 'decision for Christ.'"

We cannot simply add Christ to a sin-laden life, then go on loving sin, as if giving lip-service to Him somehow sanctifies all our wickedness. Repentance means turning from our love of sin, and turning to Jesus Christ for salvation: "Repent ye therefore, and be converted" (Acts 3:19).

Specifically, repentance means "turn[ing] away from all your transgressions" (Ezek. 18:30). It means confessing and forsaking your iniquities (Prov. 28:13). It means abhorring your sin, being full of indignation against it (2 Cor. 7:11)....

Repentance means you turn now and follow Jesus.... But you cannot follow Him halfheartedly. The full invitation is this: "If anyone wishes to come after Me, let him *deny himself, and take up his cross daily*, and follow Me" (Lk. 9:23, emphasis added). "No one, after putting his hand to the plow and looking back, is fit for the kingdom of God" (v. 62).

In this MacArthur is in a long line of writers, of various theological persuasions, who see repentance as related to the sin of man. Repentance for these men is an integral part of faith unto salvation. Charles H. Spurgeon, for example, writes:

Repentance is the inseparable companion of faith. All the while that we walk by faith and not by sight, the tear of repentance glitters in the eye of faith. That is not true repentance which does not come of faith in Jesus, and that is not true faith in Jesus which is not tinged with repentance. Faith and repentance, like the Siamese twins, are vitally joined together.

Faith and repentance are but two spokes of the same wheel, two handles of the same plough. Repentance has been well described as a heart broken for sin, and from sin; and it may equally well be spoken of as turning and returning. It is a change of mind of the most thorough and radical sort, and it is attended with sorrow for the past and resolve of amendment in the future.

Repentance of sin and faith in divine pardon are the ways and woof of the fabric of real conversion.

Harry A. Ironside, an ardent dispensationalist, affirmed that repentance is an integral part of saving faith and is directly related to the issue of man's sin. Ironside sees it as a prerequisite to faith.

No man can truly believe in Christ, who does not first repent. Shallow preaching that does not grapple with the terrible fact of man's sinfulness and guilt, calling on "all men everywhere to repent," results in shallow conversions; *and so we have myriads of glib-tongued professors today who give no evidence of regeneration whatever*. Prating about salvation by grace, they manifest no grace in their lives. Loudly declaring they are justified by faith alone, they fail to remember that "faith without works is dead.

Another dispensationalist, E. Schuyler English, rejected any separation of repentance from saving faith through "dispensationalizing" the Gospels:

There are some godly Bible students who oppose the teaching and preaching of repentance for this age.... They submit that salvation today is entirely by grace and that therefore the act of repentance on the part of the sinner suggests that there is something that he can do toward his salvation. But we believe this to be false reasoning....

K.L. Gentry, after a lengthy lexical analysis of the terms for repentance in the New Testament, concludes:

Such a faith as required by Christ is a forsaking faith, thus, a repentant faith. Though it is impossible to separate true faith from true repentance, both are still present in the act of faith in Christ. To turn to God is to turn from sin. The negative aspect of conversion may be the repentance or turning from sin, while the positive aspect of conversion may be understood as reaching to Christ in self-abnegating faith.

M.R. Vincent, another lexical expert on words of the New Testament, writes regarding *METANOIA*:

METANOIA (repentance) is therefore, primarily, an "after-thought, different" from the former thought; then a "change of mind" which issues in regret and in change of conduct.... "Repentance," then, has been rightly defined as "Such a virtuous alteration of the mind and purpose as begets a like virtuous change in the life and practice."

Salvation, Justification, Sanctification, and Grace

Recognizing that "salvation" is a comprehensive term for a multifaceted work of God, L.S. Chafer writes:

According to its largest meaning as used in Scripture, the word "salvation" represents the whole work of God by which He rescues man from the eternal ruin and doom of sin and bestows on Him the riches of His grace, including eternal life now and eternal glory in heaven. "Salvation is of the Lord" (Jonah 2:9). Therefore it is in every aspect a work of God in behalf of man and is in no sense a work of man in behalf of God.

Although recognizing "salvation" as a comprehensive or multifaceted work, those who deny *Lordship* as integral to salvation also separate *justification from any necessary relationship to sanctification*. One can enjoy the judicial position of the former without necessarily practicing the latter. This involves the whole issue of dividing Christianity up into two general classes of Christians: (1) the "carnal" Christians and (2) the "spiritual" Christians or "disciples."

It seems clear that L.S. Chafer built a system of theology on the basic axiom or presupposition of a total dichotomy between *LAW* and *GRACE*. These are two mutually exclusive poles in Chafer's thinking and this fundamental conception becomes a veritable criterion of reduction running throughout all of Chafer's theology. Chafer related the whole of the Christian life to *Grace*--both justification and sanctification. He writes,

{Grace} is the rule of conduct regarding the daily life of those who are saved by Grace in this dispensation.... This gracious rule of life is complete in itself and stands alone in the Scriptures, disassociated from any other, and uncomplicated.

As Chafer looked at Titus 2:11-12, he saw two completely different ministries of grace at work: (1) on the one hand, there is a *grace* which has appeared bringing [potential] salvation to all men; (2) on the other hand, *grace* teaches the company of *saved men* how to live the Christian life (*i.e.*, sanctification). Chafer's dichotomy of *grace* prevented him from applying the second verse (2:12) to the status of those who would become Christians. He is adamant that such cannot be done: The Word of God makes no appeal to the unsaved for a betterment of life. There is but one issue in this dispensation between God and the unregenerate man, and that is neither character nor conduct; it is the personal appeal of the Gospel of the grace of God. Until the unsaved receive Christ, who is God's gift in grace, *no other issue can be raised*.

Concerning Titus 2:12 and the "teaching of Grace: which are the "rule of conduct" for Christians, Chafer remarks:

The common practice of presenting the great standards of Christian living indiscriminately to mixed congregations by preaching, and to people in general through public print, *is a tragedy of infinite proportions*. If the unsaved are present when the teachings of grace are discussed, there should be a Gospel

appeal made *by which the unsaved are classified and excluded from any share in those teachings.*

There can be little doubt that Chafer's dichotomy of one universal ministry of grace for the unsaved (*i.e.*, general call or potential justification) and another particular ministry of grace for the "saved" (*i.e.*, sanctification) is merely a result of his presupposition that Grace and Law are mutually exclusive. Regarding Law, he is not able to see the Mosaic Law as one particular, historical manifestation of Universal Divine Law. Whereas Paul remarks in I Corinthians 9:21 that he is under "the Law of Christ," Chafer would transmute the concept of New Testament Law and swallow it up entirely in "pure grace":

...[I]t is seen that the teachings of grace do not *include* the precepts of the law as such; but that they *exclude* those precepts. However, no vital principle contained in the law is abandoned. It will be observed that these principles of the law are carried forward and are restated in the teachings of grace; not as law, but as principles which are revised, adapted, and newly incorporated in the issues of pure grace.

Chafer has a very antinomian view of the Christian life whereby Law is separated from Grace, justification is separated from sanctification, and Christianity is divided up into two classes--"the great mass of carnal Christians" and "Spirit-filled Christians." He writes further:

Is it not imperative that the children of God should be placed within the bounds of reasonable law? *Absolutely No!* The Christian's liberty *to do precisely as he chooses is as limitless and perfect as any other aspect of grace.*

Should it be objected that this is an idealism which is effective only with a limited company of believers who are so yielded to God as to be Spirit-filled, and that the great mass of carnal Christians must be held by rules, the reply would be that carnal Christians are no more subject to law than are the spiritual Christians. God does not countenance the attitude of the carnal Christian to the extent of providing a rule of government for him.

Charles Ryrie defines the limits of a Christian's liberty "to do precisely as he chooses" in this way:

The unsaved man has only one capacity, but the Christian has two. This means that the unsaved person has only one course of action--to serve sin and self, or to leave God out of his life--while the believer has an option. He may serve God, and as long as he is in a human body he may also choose to leave God out and live according to the old nature.

R.B. Thieme, in a statement that must stagger any lover of the truth, further defines the supposed Christian liberty "to do precisely as he chooses" by saying:

It is possible, even probable, that when a believer out of fellowship falls for certain types of philosophy, if he is a logical thinker, he will become an "unbelieving believer." Yet believers who become agnostic are still saved; they are still born again. You can even become an atheist; but if you once accept Christ as saviour, you cannot lose your salvation, even though you deny God.

Ray A. Stanford thinks that justification must be separated from sanctification lest we preach a false gospel which comes under the curse of Galatians 1. He views "salvation" as little more (if any) than justification:

Any teaching that demands a change of conduct either toward God or man for salvation is to add works or human effort to faith; and this contradicts all Scripture and is an accursed message (Gal. 1:8,9; Deut. 27:18). Study the book of Galatians. Remember, the closer a counterfeit comes to the truth, the more people it will fool. Don't be fooled. Yes, a Christian should make every effort to discipline his life, to lay aside every weight and the sins which so easily beset him, but this has to do with *SERVICE*, which can come *AFTER* salvation. Salvation is always a gift; nothing to do ourselves.

At least one writer who denies a dichotomy between Law and Grace nevertheless makes a distinction between justification and sanctification based on the distinctives of what he sees as the three parts of man: spirit, soul, and body. Earl Cripe describes justification as salvation of the spirit, sanctification as salvation of the soul or "life" of man, and glorification as the salvation of the body. He concedes, with most orthodox interpreters, that justification is solely the work of God and irrevocable. Justification, he says, is received through both the gracious and sovereign election of God and the free acceptance of that grace by man. But sanctification is, in his view, entirely the responsibility of man, and this aspect of salvation can be "lost" when a "life" of holiness is repudiated or neglected. A day gone by in sinfulness is a day never to be recovered. Yet at the end of such a wasted life, the once-justified man is assured of the final aspect of his salvation, glorification of the body. Through it all, the Law remains available as a gracious gift of God for the justified man who wishes to "save" (sanctify) his soul (earthly life) through obedience. God has made provision through His word and Spirit for a man to choose life in this way and enjoy its promise of temporal benefits, but he also may neglect this great opportunity--to his earthly detriment, but not his eternal detriment.

Other writers and theologians who do not work within the confines of a theology characterized by a Law/Grace dichotomy see a necessary relationship between justification and sanctification. Again Spurgeon:

Dear friend, salvation would be a sadly incomplete affair if it did not deal with this part of our ruined estate. We want to be purified as well as pardoned. Justification without sanctification would not be salvation at all.

Faith is the root of obedience, and this may be clearly seen in the affairs of life.... When a patient believes in the physician, he carefully follows his prescriptions and directions. Faith which refuses to obey the commands of the Saviour is a mere pretense [*e.g.*, John 14:15], and will never save the soul. We trust Jesus to save us; he gives us directions as to the way of salvation; we follow those directions and are saved. Let not my reader forget this. Trust Jesus, and prove your trust by doing whatever he bids you."

D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones writes:

Do we realize that if we truly understand the doctrine of justification by faith we have already grasped the essence and nerve of the New Testament teaching about holiness and sanctification? Have we realized that to be justified by faith guarantees [*i.e.*, necessitates] our sanctification, and that therefore we must never think of sanctification as a separate and subsequent experience?

These find their foundation in John Calvin, who states unequivocally:

Therefore Christ justifies no one whom he does not at the same time sanctify. These benefits are joined together by an everlasting and indissoluble bond, so that those whom He illuminates by his wisdom, he redeems; those whom he redeems, he justifies; those whom he justifies, he sanctifies.

G.C. Berkouwer sees a necessary relationship between justification and sanctification since the latter is a correlate of saving faith, and like justification, is grounded in the mercy of God's grace.

Hence it is not true that believers are children of God--justified, purified, sanctified, called, and loved--without having to heed the voice of admonition. This antinomian error not only denies the true sanctification of believers but has lost sight of the holiness of God and his sanctifying influence. Because it is God who sanctifies, this admonition is fully integral with the Gospel of grace.... Hence the sanctification of believers is never an independent area of human activity.... [This] is supplanted by the idea, clearly advanced in the Scriptures, that the sanctification of the believer is a corollary of his faith.... For this reason, the Scriptures are full of the call to action: believers, bestir yourselves! Only a completely perverted exegesis can assert the contrary.

In his analysis of the necessary relationship between justification and sanctification, Robert D. Brinthead analyzes the paradoxical tension between the two which is a result of the separation of Christ's two advents. He argues that justification assures us of what we have in principle, while sanctification is the development of that principle which will one day be a finished work.

Sanctification cannot exist without justification, "for the heart of sanctification is the life which feeds on justification" [Berkhouwer, *Faith and Sanctification*, p. 93]. And justification cannot exist without sanctification any more than light can exist without heat. Justification and sanctification must be seen as two parallel lines which cannot meet this side of glory. Justification looks back to the finished work of God in Jesus Christ and declares, "...ye are complete..." (Col. 2:10); sanctification points us away to the return of Christ and says, "Not...already perfect..." (Phil. 3:12). Justification pronounces us already pure (1 John 1:9); sanctification commands us to cleanse ourselves from all filthiness of the flesh and spirit (2 Cor. 7:1). Justification clothes us in Christ's victory (John 16:33); sanctification means pressing on to overcome (Rev. 3:21). Justification tells us that the battle is won (Isa. 40:2); sanctification nerves us on to "fight the good fight of faith" (1 Tim. 6:12). Justification is resting in God's completed work (Matt. 11:28; Heb. 4:1-10); sanctification is pressing on toward the mark (Phil. 3:14). Here is the paradox of being and seeking to become; of being righteous by faith and sinful in nature; of "possessing all things," yet "having nothing" (2 Cor. 6:10).

Why does and why must this paradox between justification and sanctification exist? It exists because of the separation of the two advents of Christ.... In "the times between" we must live by faith--knowing that we are righteous, yet still seeking to become righteous; believing that death has been destroyed, yet waiting for the sight of death to disappear; confessing that our sins have been put away, yet anxious that we feel sin no more.

It is from this separation of these two advents--Christ has come, and Christ will come--that we have the paradoxical relationship between justification and sanctification. And because we must relate the "now" and the "not yet," we must live in the tension of having and not having.... Antinomianism tries to destroy the tension by settling for justification and throwing out the absolute necessity of the inward process of sanctification. Perfectionism tries to destroy the tension by getting beyond forgiveness and establishing a relationship with God on the basis of sanctification. Either way human nature wants to reduce the two parallel lines of justification and sanctification to one line this side of eternity. But this cannot be done without heresy. As a train needs twin tracks and must operate on both, so it is with a sound soteriology. And just as a train cannot jump one rail without jumping both, so it is with justification and sanctification.

A Survey of Biblical Texts

To this point, we have done little more than survey the contrasting *assertions* of the various antagonists in the debate over the *Lordship* issue. By reviewing these assertions, we have attempted to understand the possible definitions of the key concepts involved. In some instances, we have provided limited evaluations of the contrasting assertions and understandings. We now survey the pertinent biblical material in hopes of laying a definitive foundation for conclusions which will follow.

Christ as Lord

Christ is called "Lord" (*KURIOS*) more than 700 times in the New Testament. The contention that "Lord Jesus" simply means "the God-Man" is *not supported* by the New Testament. *KURIOS* clearly denotes "sovereign rulership." The following are a few of the more important texts which have become a battleground in this whole issue:

1. John 20:28

The context of John 20:24-29 is the contingency of Thomas' belief: Thomas wants to see empirical evidence of the resurrected Christ. His confession in verse 28, "my Lord and my God" is meaningless if *Lord* simply means "Jehovah-God." Acknowledgment of the Lordship of Christ, in terms of His being the Sovereign Master, is a natural correlate to saving faith. This is entirely consistent with the whole of Johannine Theology (*cf.* 1 John 2:4, John 14:15, etc.)

2. Romans 10:9-10

The gymnastics which have been used to explain away this text are effete and self-serving. The meaning of *Lord* here is clearly defined by the context (10:6-15): 10:13 is a quote from Joel 2:32 (LXX) where *KURIOS* translates the Hebrew *YHWH*. Any casual perusal of the Old Testament reveals that whatever else *YHWH* means, it fully connotes the idea of sovereign rulership. See especially the revelation of the divine name in the contest of Exodus 6:2-8.

3. Acts 2:36

Again, theological expediency has wrenched this verse from its context, resulting in an unnatural interpretation of its significance. Ryrie attempts to rescue the situation by defining the context according to Romans 1:4. This fails because the verbs "declare" (Rom. 1:4) and "made" (Acts 2:36) are unrelated. *Lord* in Acts 2:36 is not to be defined by Romans 1:4, but by its own context, which is Acts 2:30-35. *The quote from Psalm 110:1 in Acts 2:34-35 clinches the matter:* one has only to look at Psalm 110:1-3 to see that *Lord* there (*ADON*) unmistakably denotes sovereign rulership. This is what Peter means when he says, "God has made him both Lord and Christ" (2:36). Note well that the Gospel appeal follows in 2:37ff.

4. 1 Corinthians 12:3

The contrast in verses 2-3 of this chapter is between the unregenerate state and Christians who are filled with the Spirit. As usual, Ryrie attempts to define *Lord* in verse 3 as *Jehovah-God*, "...for the simple reason that unsaved people can and do say Lord, meaning 'Sir,' in reference to Christ" The logical fallacy in this kind of reasoning is self-evident. Paul is not speaking about people who can merely utter words of respect or disrespect. The context here is spiritual matters (12:1), and the term *Lord* is defined by its meaning in 12:5, where Paul speaks of "varieties of ministries." Verses 4-6 demand that the term *Lord* connote sovereign direction (*e.g.*, of the "varieties of ministries") and not just Jehovah-God. The latter would render 12:5 meaningless as it related to 12:4 and 12:6.

5. 2 Corinthians 4:5

Paul says here that he and Timothy *et al* preach "Christ Jesus as Lord." Can *Lord* here mean "Jehovah-God"? Some might think so, since 4:4 speaks of "the glory of Christ, who is the image of God." But Paul clearly has the normal meaning of Lord in mind here (*i.e.*, Sovereign Master) since in verse 5 he contrasts "ourselves...as your *bond-servants*" with "Christ Jesus as *Lord*." For Paul, it is not His "bond-servants" (*doulos*), but Christ as Lord (*KURIOS*, Sovereign Master) who constitutes the focal point of Gospel preaching. We are to preach Jesus Christ as such a Lord (*cf.* the anarthrous *KURION* in the Greek text).

Any Biblical Theology of the New Testament which does not recognize the Lordship of Christ as integral to the proclamation of the Gospel is myopic and inadequate. Furthermore, *Lordship* in the New Testament, as it applies to Christ, clearly means Sovereign Ruler, Master, etc., evoking the attendant nuances of obedient service and submission. Paul's fullest statement of the concept of Lordship is in Philippians 2:9-11, where Christ's Lordship extends far beyond the realm of just the "saved." The name of Jesus is to bring every tongue of the entire universe to confession: "Jesus Christ is Lord," *i.e.*, Christ--the Matchless Cosmic Sovereign.

The reader is referred to the aforementioned article of K.L. Gentry, "The Great Option: A Study of the Lordship Controversy," for a lengthy lexical analysis of *KURIOS* in the New Testament. We again cite Gentry's conclusion:

The evidence that *KURIOS* refers historically to the idea of rulership is overwhelming. The ascription of *KURIOS* as a divine appellation is properly understood only on the basis of this supreme rulership. Therefore, when either God the Father or God the Son is called *KURIOS*, it must be in recognition of the fact of sovereign rulership."

Saving Faith in the New Testament

It is difficult to improve upon any of the New Testament word studies of "faith" which have been done by Gentry, Bultmann (*TDNT*), Becker, and Michel (*DNTT*). Several observations are in order:

1. The concept of "faith" in the New Testament is related to one basic Greek root--*PITH*, which means "to find." The two main Greek terms in the New Testament for "believe" or "trust" both come from this root--*pisteuo* and *peithomai*

The stem *PEITH-* (*PITH- POITH-*) has the basic meaning of trust.... The same stem is also the basis of the formations with *PIST-*. Trust can refer to a statement, so that it has the meaning to put faith in, to let oneself be convinced, or to a demand, so that it gets the meaning of obey, be persuaded.

2. The phenomenology of faith, as revealed in the Bible, shows that *saving faith* is far more than "mere assent" or "acknowledgment." The faith that saves actually has a number of vital and integral elements:

Active Willful Trust: John 1:12 (belief, receiving Christ); John 5:40-44 (unbelief, unwillingness to receive Christ); John 6:28-29 (belief, the work of God); John 6:35 (belief, coming to Christ); John 6:58 (belief, partaking of Christ); 2 Timothy 1:12 (belief, entrusting oneself to Christ).

Obedience: Romans 1:5, 16:26; Romans 15:8, 16:19; John 3:36 (*pisteuo=peithomai*); 2 Thessalonians 1:8 (obedience to the Gospel); Hebrews 3:18,19 (unbelief as disobedience), Hebrews 4:2,6; Hebrews 11:8.

Repentance: Romans 2:4; 2 Peter 3:9; Acts 11:18; Luke 24:47; Acts 2:38; Acts 5:31; Acts 20:21. Repentance is far more than a "change of mind" about who Christ is. Repentance is related to *the issue of sin*, which also includes unbelief in Christ. In Acts 2:38, repentance was necessary in the first place because the godless men whom Peter addressed were responsible for the crucifixion of Christ--2:23,26, a heinous sin. There are numerous passages through the Bible where repentance is directly related to the question of sin. Some of these are: Rev. 9:21 (repent of murders, etc.); Heb. 6:1 (repentance from dead works); Rev. 3:15-19 (repent of apostasy); Luke 16:27-31 (repent of unbelief); Ezek. 33:11 (repent of evil ways); Rev. 2:20,21 (repentance from immorality); Isaiah 1:15-17 (repentance from evil deeds). Repentance involves a turning ("from" and "to") and is an integral part of conversion--*From* sin and dead works: Rev. 9:21 (*ek*), Heb. 6:1 (*apo*); *toward* God: Acts 20:21 (*eis*), Acts 26:20 (*eis*). Notice the same kind of turning involved in *conversion* (*epistrepho*): Acts 3:26 ("By turning every one of you from your wicked ways"); Acts 14:15 ("You should turn from these vain things to a living God"); 1 Thess. 1:9 ("You turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God"). True repentance is that which brings about a turning from sin and dead works unto a new lifestyle of service unto God. This is clearly that perspective of the New Testament. Repentance has not taken place where there is no "turning from." (See Isaiah 1:16-17). Repentance also has fruit: 2 Tim. 2:25 (an acceptance of truth); Matt. 3:8 (a change of lifestyle); Acts 26:20 (appropriate works).

Directedness: Saving faith has the quality of directedness: we believe *upon* or *into* Christ. See John 3:16 (*pisteuo eis* + accusative); Gal. 2:16 (*pisteuo eis*); Acts 16:31 (*pisteuo epi* + accusative); 1 Tim. 1:16 (*pisteuo epi* + dative).

3. The Bible warns about a "faith" that will not save (James 2:14-26). Any faith that is divorced from the appropriate expression of works is not a faith that "saves" (James 2:14-17). Paul is as

explicit as he can be concerning the inseparability of the life of good works from the new creation in Christ, which God has sovereignly accomplished "by grace through faith" (Eph. 2:8-10). James notes, for example, that even demons "believe" a certain amount of theology and yet are damned (2:19). The Johannine literature likewise teaches the inextricable relationship of saving faith and appropriate works. Any theology which divorces them runs afoul of such texts as John 14:15, 1 John 2:4, John 15:1-10, etc. The tendency of traditional dispensationalism has been to separate justification from any *necessary* relationship to sanctification and equate "salvation" with only justification. As we shall see in the next section, that is simply not the perspective of the New Testament. An individual cannot be justified and then continue to live a life of static non-sanctification. This is James' whole point in chapter two, and it is an explicit teaching which cuts right across Ryrie's conception of the "carnal Christian" who chooses to "leave God out" of his life and "live according to the old nature." The phrase "justified by works," which occurs three times in James 2:21-25, is a *metonymy of effect for cause*. James' use of the phrase becomes a bold expression of the necessary relationship which exists between justification and sanctification: the true faith that saves (justifies) is the faith that also produces appropriate works (sanctifies). In James' thinking, "to be justified by faith" is equivalent to saying "to be justified by works" **when the latter works are the fruit of genuine faith**. To James, these works are indispensable and distinguish saving faith from its non-soteric counterfeit (*cf.* 2:19). We note the observation of O. Michel:

...James is conscious of the need to prove faith (1:3; *cf.* 1 Pet. 1:7). He demands renunciation of all conduct that conflicts with living faith and confession. For him faith and obedient conduct are indissolubly linked. Faith understood merely as [profession] is not able to save. Only through obedience and conduct which fulfills the commandments of God does faith come to completion (James 2:22). The opponent that James has in mind does not attack faith but exempts himself from obedience.

The Scope of Salvation in the New Testament

Our task is to discover the *perspective* of the New Testament with regard to what it means to be "saved."

First of all, the New Testament sees a *necessary* relationship between justification and sanctification: 1 Cor. 1:30 (Christ Jesus became to us righteousness, sanctification, and redemption); Eph. 2:8-10 (To be saved "by grace, through faith" is to be created in Christ Jesus unto good works. God has prepared these beforehand [*proetoiimazo*] for us to walk in them); Titus 2:11-12 (The same grace that brings salvation is the grace that disciplines [*paideuo*] us for sanctified living); Titus 2:13-14 (The purpose of Christ's sacrifice is the redemption of his people from lawlessness and their purification for holy living); 1 Tim. 4:7-10 (We are to labor and strive for the discipline of godliness since it is profitable for the present life and the life to come. Note that in 10b Paul links this to our hope of salvation in God the Savior); James 2:14-26 (Justification is accomplished through a faith that works; hence justification and sanctification are correlates; this is salvation); 2 Thess. 2:13 (The sanctifying work of the Holy Spirit is an integral part of salvation).

Secondly, obedience and holiness are not an "option" in the Christian life: Heb. 12:14 (Pursue after the sanctification without which no man will see the Lord); Phil. 2:12-13 (We are to work out our salvation with fear and trembling); 1 John 2:4 and John 14:15 (The one who does not obey the commandments of Christ is not a Christian; he is a liar); 1 John 3:1-10 (The children of God are those who purify themselves; the children of the devil are those who practice lawlessness, which is sin); Heb. 5:9 (Christ is the Source of eternal salvation to those who obey him); 1 Tim. 6:11 (The man of God is one who pursues after righteousness, godliness, etc.); Titus 2:13-14 (The sacrifice of Christ was for the purpose of both redemption from sin and purification).

Thirdly, the New Testament teaches that there is a standard or rule of conduct for Christian living. It is called the Law of Christ. He is the Lawgiver in the New Testament: Matt. 5:17-19 (Christ has come to fulfill the law; we are to keep the commands of the Law of Christ); 1 Cor. 9:21 (Paul is

not without the law of God, but is under the Law of Christ); James 1:22-2:13 (James says that Christians are to live according to the Law of Liberty, something which Paul calls the Law of the Spirit of Life [Rom 8:2]; this law which James speaks of is a definite rule of conduct, because it includes the Moral Law of the Old Testament [cf. James 2:8-11]); 1 John 2:4 (To be a Christian is to obey the Law of Christ); Gal. 5:6 (The faith which justifies is the faith which works through love, keeping the commandments of Christ); and finally, Matt. 7:23, 1 John 3:4, and Titus 2:14 (Sin is lawlessness).

In *summary*, the New Testament *perspective* on "salvation" is that forensic justification will issue forth in a life of progressive sanctification, while we "pursue after the holiness without which no man will see the Lord" and "work out our salvation with fear and trembling." It is true that all Christians are at different stages of the progressive sanctifying work. Obedience and holiness are not an "option" in the Christian life, and Christians *may not* (indeed the genuine Christian *will not* and *cannot*) "choose to leave God out and live according to the old nature." New Testament law is the focal point for the obedience of faith, and this is the Rule of Conduct for Christian living. The Law of Christ in the New Testament also includes the Moral Law of the Old Testament.

The Core Principle: Regeneration

At the heart of Scripture's teaching on the inevitability of sanctification issuing forth from true faith is the first principle of *regeneration*. This principle and the term that describes it are best understood in two inextricably related biblical concepts without which there would be no salvation: *Union with Christ* and *The New Birth* which results from that union. D. Martyn Lloyd-Jones gets to the crux of the matter when he writes:

We are actually in union with Christ and to him. You cannot have read the New Testament even cursorily without noticing this constantly repeated phrase--"in Christ"--"in Christ Jesus." The apostles go on repeating it and it is one of the most significant and glorious statements in the entire realm and range of truth. It means that we are joined to the Lord Jesus Christ; we have become a part of him. We are in him. We belong to him. We are members of his body.

And the teaching is that God regards us as such; and this, of course, means that now, *in this relationship, we are sharers in, and partakers of, everything that is true of the Lord Jesus Christ himself.*

As John MacArthur points out, our union with Christ "results in some very dramatic changes." The first change that happens to us as a result of our union with Christ is that we, like Him, are justified, that is, found innocent in the court of God's judgment against sin. It is a change in our *standing before God*. This is a judicial declaration, an entry in the ledger, and from it we receive, in principle, the benefits of the atonement of Christ. It is principial--yet nonetheless absolutely real and effectual. Justification is not, however, the "actual change in the sinner's character." But again, because we have been united with Christ, that change of character also surely takes place--it cannot be otherwise. If Christ is holy (sanctified), we who are united to Him ("in Him") must also be conformed to His image and likeness. We are, in the most profound reality, partakers of Christ, partakers of the divine nature (2 Peter 1:3-4).

How does this union come about? It comes about through what Scripture calls the *New Birth*, re-gensis. Or as Scripture also describes it, we are "born of God." In the deepest of all mysteries, a man once born of the flesh is, as a partaker in Christ's resurrection, born again of the Spirit. He has "God's seed" within him. To put it plainly, the newly born child of God has God's spiritual "genes," His life-generating "DNA," if you will. In Christ, our spirits become "genetically" Christlike. This is why He is called the Firstborn of many sons and our Brother, and why God is so aptly called our Father. "How great is the love the *Father* has lavished on us, that we should be called *children of God*! And that is what we are!" (1 John 3:1a, italics added).

The Apostle John in this passage goes on to contrast the children of God with the children of the devil. They are murders (they do not have the life force within them) because they are genetically the offspring of the devil. This is why the world hates the believer. The worldly man can do none other, because his spiritual genes compel him to do the work of his father. "He who does what is sinful is of the devil, because the devil has been sinning from the beginning. The reason the Son of God appeared was to destroy the devil's work. No one who is *born of God* will continue to sin, because *God's seed* remains in him; he *cannot* go on sinning, because he has been *born of God*" (1 John 3:8-9, italics added).

John adds immediately that this is the great distinctive between the children of God and the children of the devil: "This is how we know who the children of God are and who the children of the devil are: Anyone who does not do what is right is not a child of God; nor is anyone who does not love his brother" (John 3:10). Here we find in absolutely pure form a reference to the Law of Christ: Love God above all ("do what is right") and love the brother ("thy neighbor as thyself"). It is Christ's own summary of the whole of the Law. You can find Him saying it in Matthew 22:37-40 (see also Mark 12:28-34 and Luke 10:25-28). Unmistakably, regeneration requires and logically produces an ethical response. And that response is inevitable for the true regenerate because of his union with Christ, the holy and righteous one.

We are born again--*regenerated*--given a new heart, a new spirit, and a new love for God (Ezek. 36:26; 1 Jn. 4:19-20). We become partakers of the divine nature (2 Pet. 1:3-4). We are raised to walk in newness of life (Rom. 6:4). And the old sinful self is put to death: "Knowing this, that our old self was crucified with Him, that our body of sin might be done away with, that we should no longer be slaves to sin; for he who has died is freed from sin" (Rom. 6:6-7).

It is essential here to understand the radical character of the transformation which comes in regeneration. We have been born entirely new. The old self, though lingering to torment us, is no longer *our true self*. We are not split personalities. We are not a life-form or life-force with a dark side and a light side. The old self has been crucified with Christ. We are now commanded to "lay aside" the old corpse with its putrefying corruption and be renewed (Eph. 4:22-23). If we do not, the old infested corpse will infect everything it touches. The good news is that we are perfectly empowered to throw it aside. "Walk by the Spirit, and you will not carry out the desire of the flesh. For the flesh sets its desire against the Spirit, and the Spirit against the flesh; for these are in opposition to one another, so that you may not do the things that you please" (Gal. 5:16-17). Contrast now Chafer's statement cited earlier: "The Christian's liberty *to do precisely as he chooses is as limitless and perfect as any other aspect of grace*" (emphasis added). The unbroken thread from justification (the Cross) through regeneration (the Resurrection) to sanctification (the Walk) to glorification (Full Life Eternal) is thus clear.

Because they are justified--declared not guilty and covered with the perfect righteousness of Christ--sin and death have no claim over them.

Moreover, because they have been justified from sin's penalty, they are also sanctified--liberated from sin's absolute tyranny. The old self is crucified and the body of sin nullified. That speaks of the change of character that is wrought in regeneration. Believers are emancipated from the total corruption of their natures that rendered them unable to do anything *but* sin. They are free to love and obey God.

Again, it must be emphasized that the old self of the redeemed man has been crucified with Christ. But what is to be said then of the power of this old self? Why, if it is defeated and dead, does it appear to continue to war against us?

From Scripture we must see that the old self as such does NOT continue to war against us. We must see this old nature for what it is, the *old, dead nature*. It cannot plague us another moment. Then what phenomenon are we witnessing within us that so often seems to be a struggle between the old nature and the new creature. To what is St. Paul himself referring in his famous, desperate, agonizing dialogue about his inner warfare in Romans 7?

It has often been concluded from this chapter that the saved man is indeed a kind of spiritual schizophrenic--a house divided, a creature at war with himself, or, worse yet, a trapped and tragic victim of two internal warring factions. Yet this conclusion is wrong. It is Manichaean error. What we sense as internal spiritual warfare is real, but it is not war between a living old nature that represents half of our being and a vital new creature which represents the other half. No, the struggle is between the **new spiritual creature** and those of our **own fleshly members** which, prior to regeneration, were instructed, programmed, molded, informed by that old self when it was still alive. We are, after all, the same physical, social, emotional beings before and after our spiritual regeneration. In the former existence, the old spiritual self, an offspring of the devil, shaped those members--our mind (including our senses) and heart--into its demonic image. The old self was the basic operating system of our heart and mind, which are the same heart and mind we have always had and which we take initially as baggage into our new existence. What the old self devised and taught was what motivated the heart and informed the mind. When, through the gift of regeneration, we are *first* given a new operating system, a new spiritual nature, we still have the old ill-motivated heart and misinformed mind. While the old spirit is dead and now inoperative, the effects of its work linger in our heart and mind, for our heart and mind have been utterly poisoned by the old system. But we find now that the Spirit, Who began a good work in us (regeneration), is determined to complete it (Phil. 1:6). Through the Word and Spirit, our heart and mind become renewed. We find we have, through the operation of the Word and Spirit, the beginnings of a new inclination in our heart and a new knowledge in our mind.

It was the same Paul who agonized in Romans 7 who could instruct the churches of Ephesus to cast off the old dead self and put on the new self. Note carefully the words and phrases we have emphasized in the following quotation from the Epistle to the Ephesians, for they speak precisely of the renewal of the regenerated heart and the mind in Christ Jesus, Lord of our behavior:

This I say, therefore, and testify in the Lord, that you should not walk as the rest of the Gentiles walk, in the *futility of their mind*, having their understanding darkened, being alienated from the life of God, because of the *ignorance* that is in them, because of the *blindness of their heart*; who being past feeling, have given themselves over to lewdness, to work all uncleanness with greediness. But you have not so learned Christ, if indeed you have heard Him and have been taught by him, as the truth is in Jesus: that you *put off, concerning your former conduct, the old man* which grows corrupt according to the deceitful lusts, and *be renewed in the spirit of your mind*, and that you *put on the new man which is created according to God, in true righteousness and holiness* (Eph. 4:17-24, NKJV).

We submit that Paul recognized this even in the course of his agonizing in Romans 7, for at one point he says of the *sin* against which he is warring: "But now, *it is no longer I who do it, but sin that dwells in me* (vs. 17), that is, in his "fleshly" members (vs. 18), his heart and mind. We find no mention of the notion that the old sinful self is still in control. But we do find mention that the *inheritance* of that old self is still present within his members. The new self--which he calls his "will" and his "inward man"--is clearly present and is the *real* Paul. It is a newborn will that delights in the law of God. "I find then a law [principle], that evil is *present with me, the one who wills to do good*. For I delight in the law of God according to *the inward man*" (vss. 21-22).

What are we to say then of the "carnal Christian"? We are to say that he is an oxymoron. He is an ontological impossibility. The words do not go together. One is either carnal or a Christian. Consider Romans 1:17, where the righteous are said to live in reliance (faith) on the gospel of Christ, and 1:28, where those who reject the knowledge of the gospel are given over to debased

minds which cause them to live debased lives. The Christian is a new *spiritual* creature, born of God. Carnality is by definition *fleshliness*, the essence of the old creature, born of the devil and slain with Christ. Yet, in love, we must recognize the very real struggle of the true Christian in his war with sin and the "fleshly" heritage of the old self. There may be for him times of defeat, for he is "not *yet* totally free from sin's reach." He is "still prone to sin's seductive power." He is still walking in sin's presence in that he is still in a sinful world, which may lure and attack him from all sides. He is "still vulnerable to sin's enchantment." Yet we do him no favor when we, for the sake of preserving some misplaced, insistent, dispensational, theological antagonism against the Law of God, offer him the option of remaining in defeat. We show him the highest love when we inform him of the victory that has been won for him and point him to the opportunity *he* now has for victory and blessedness in a life pleasing to God.

The Apostle John, by the Holy Spirit, says it as plainly as it can be said: "No one who lives in him keeps on sinning. No one who continues to sin has either seen him or known him." Skeptics have asked what manner of teaching this is in light of the fact that professing Christians clearly *do* sin. How many sins may they commit, it is asked, and still maintain their standing as Christians? May they commit three sins a day, but not four? A thousand in a lifetime, but not more?

These are inappropriate questions in support of a specious argument. The issue here is not essentially a quantitative one. It is qualitative. The issue is the *inclination of the heart*, for it is the heart that, according to the Gospel, is renewed unto salvation. A *profession* of Christ without an *inclination toward* Christ must be labeled what it is: *hypocrisy*. And no hypocrite has any inheritance in the Kingdom of Heaven (see Job 13:16, KJV).

"With respect to those who are members of the church, they may be known by the marks of Christians; namely, by faith, and when, having received Jesus Christ the only Savior, they avoid sin, follow after righteousness, love the true God and their neighbor, neither turn aside to the right or left, and crucify the flesh with the works thereof. But this is not to be understood as if there did not remain in them great infirmities; but they fight against them through the Spirit all the days of their life, continually taking their refuge in the blood, death, passion, and obedience of our Lord Jesus Christ, in whom they have remission of sins, through faith in Him."

Final Conclusions

A. The issue of so-called "Lordship Salvation"--of whether one should "make" Christ his Lord--is a false issue. Christ is and always has been Lord, whether one recognizes Him as such or not. When a man is born of God and united with Christ, Christ *is* both his Savior and Master. The New Testament does not separate Christ as Savior from Christ as Lord.

B. Lord does not mean just "Jehovah-God," but Sovereign Ruler, Moral Governor of the universe, to whom every knee is to bow.

C. Regeneration is not effected through assent to or acknowledgment of Christ as the God-Man. Regeneration is a gift of God effectuated when He unites us to Christ, thus causing us to share in His Resurrection. This regeneration produces within us a saving faith, the means or instrument, (*dia pisteos*) through which the justifying sacrifice of Christ and the sanctifying righteousness and obedience of Christ are imputed to those who rely upon that sacrifice and obedience for their salvation. The elements of saving faith thus include trust, directedness, repentance, and obedience, none of which are meritorious "works" nor depreciate grace.

D. Traditional dispensationalism is wrong in its zeal to isolate the "pure lamp of grace" from the "taint of works." This is related to three things: 1) a misunderstanding of the nature of saving faith; 2) a misunderstanding of the inter-relationship of law and grace; and 3) a misunderstanding of the New Testament perspective concerning the necessary relationship between justification and sanctification.

E. Scriptural passages in the New Testament which talk about "belief" as the means to salvation must not be isolated from the total context of what it means to have saving faith in Christ.

F. A sinner does not come to Christ on his own terms. Indeed, an individual does not come to Christ at all, but Christ comes to him. And when Christ comes, He comes on *His* terms. The terms of New Covenant salvation in Christ are these: that God is all in all, that God in Christ works *all* that is necessary for our salvation, including the generation of a new heart inclined unto obedience and works of thankfulness ordained by Him and pleasing to Him.

G. The "time of salvation" is that occasion--either instantaneously or progressively realized--when an individual is awakened to the knowledge of his new birth and recognizes his need to rely upon Christ in faith. At this time, it is perfectly biblical to confront the individual with the issue of his acknowledgment of and obedience to the Lordship of Christ, without any paranoia of "adding works to salvation."

H. It is recognized that some people do make a verbal commitment to trust Christ in faith and become "believers" without facing the issue of Christ's Lordship. However, the experience of the subsequent lack of obedience by some--those who fall back into the unregenerate lifestyle--only shows the fallacy of the notion of "decisional regeneration," an unbiblical concept. Furthermore, *the experience* of such disobedience cannot become the basis for a theology of "carnal Christians," nor for a theology where Christ as Savior is separated from Christ as Lord.

I. The New Testament does not recognize two general or universal classes of Christians: 1) those who believe in Christ as Savior and may or may not remain carnal and immature indefinitely (the "carnal Christians"); and 2) those who are obedient to Christ as Lord and become His spiritual "disciples." This basic conception is an artificial expedient which has been devised to account for the general state of non-sanctification in many areas of evangelical Christianity.

J. The plain, clear, unvarnished reality of New Testament Law must be affirmed in any theology of the Christian life. New Testament Law is the focal point of the obedience of faith, which Paul defines in Galatians 5:6 as "faith working through love" (*cf.* John 14:15). New Testament Law includes the Moral Law of the Old Testament, the Word of Christ in the New Testament, as well as the commandments of Christ and the Sermon on the Mount.

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