

Jay Wegter, Teacher

The Lordship of Christ (part one)

I. THE DEITY OF CHRIST (HE IS GOD).

A. The pre-existence of Christ affirms His deity.

- 1.) When we speak of Christ's pre-existence, we are referring to the fact that He has existed from all eternity—before the universe was made. Christ in His pre-existence *precedes all things*; He is *before all things* (Col 1:17).
- 2.) Christ's eternal pre-existence is taught in John 1:1. *In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God.*
- 3.) Christ spoke of His eternal pre-existence. *Glorify Thou Me together with Thyself, Father, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was* (Jn 17:5; 6:62).
- 4.) The O.T. speaks of Christ's eternal pre-existence. *From you One will go forth for Me to be ruler in Israel. His goings forth are from long ago, from the days of eternity* (Mic 5:2).

B. The role of Christ as Creator and Upholder affirms His deity.

- 1.) All things were *created by Him and for Him* (Col 1:16).
- 2.) All things in creation are *upheld by Him* (Col 1:17; Heb 1:3).
- 3.) All things *came into being by Him* (Jn 1:3). *The world was made through Him* (Jn 1:10).

C. The works of Christ testify that He is God (only God can do these things).

- 1.) He forgives sin (Col 3:13; Mk 2:5-12).
- 2.) He bestows eternal life (Jn 10:28).
- 3.) He receives and answers prayer (Jn 14:14; Acts 7:59).
- 4.) He will raise the dead and judge them at the resurrection (Jn 5:21; 28-29; 11:24-25).
- 5.) He builds the Church and keeps it (Eph 4:7-16; Mt 16:18).
- 6.) He exercised absolute authority over the laws and institutions of God (*over Law*, Mt 5:31-38; *the Temple*, Mt 12:6; *the Sabbath*, Mt 12:8; *the Kingdom*, Mt 16:19).
- 7.) He is the final Judge of the world (Acts 10:42; 17:31; Jn 5:21-23, 26-29).
- 8.) Only One who is fully God could bear the infinite penalty for sin (Is 53:6). A being who is merely a creature and not God could never *reveal God* to man (Col 1:15); could not *bring man back to God* (1 Pet 3:18); could not be the perfect *Mediator between God and man* (1 Tim 2:5).

D. The claims that Christ made of Himself could only be true of God.

- 1.) He spoke of Himself as the supreme object of saving faith (Jn 14:1; 3:36).

- 2.) He claimed that all other relationships must yield to Him. He requires that the believer must keep Him first in the affections (Mt 10:37; Luke 14:26).
- 3.) He claimed that all the spiritual and eternal needs of humanity are met and satisfied in Him. Consider all of the “I Am’s” that came from His lips: “I am” the: *Bread, Way, Living Water, Door, Shepherd of the sheep . . .* **He provides:**
 - Knowledge of God (Mt 11:27; Jn 14:6)
 - Rest for the soul (Mt 11:28-29)
 - Security from danger (Jn 10:28-30)
 - Fruit-bearing ability and energy (Jn 15:5)
 - Rivers of living water and abundant life (Jn 7:37: 10:10)
 - Sanctification, redemption, and righteousness (1 Cor 1:30; Heb 2:11; 12:2)
 - Completeness for the believer (Col 2:10)
- 4.) He repeatedly preached Himself as *God’s eternal truth incarnate* (Jn 14:6).
- 5.) He demanded and received divine worship. Men and angels are created; they rightly refuse to receive worship (*Apostles said no*, Acts 14:11-15; *Peter said no*, Acts 10:25-26; *Angels said no*, Rev 19:10; 22:8-9). (Christ received worship *from His disciples and followers*, Mt 14:33; 28:9, and *from those upon whom He worked miracles*, Mt 15:25; Jn 9:38). Worship was accepted by Christ though Christ had declared that men should worship God alone (Mt 4:10).

E. Christ’s oneness with the Father affirms His deity.

- 1.) Christ’s oneness with the Father is such that, according to Scripture, man’s attitude toward Christ is man’s attitude toward God:
 - To know Him is to know God (Jn 8:19; 14:7)
 - To see Him is to see God (Jn 12:45; 14:9)
 - To believe in Him is to believe in God (Jn 12:44; 14:1)
 - To hate Him is to hate God (Jn 15:23)
 - To honor Him is to honor God (Jn 5:23)
 - To receive Him is to receive God (Mk 9:37)
- 2.) The Father commands worship of the Son (Heb 1:6)
- 3.) The host of heaven worships the Son (Rev 5:8-14)
- 4.) Finally all will worship Christ the Lord (Phil 2:10-11)

F. Christ has titles that belong only to One who is truly God.

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| Only begotten Son (Jn 3:16) | “Thy throne, O God” (Heb 1:8) |
| Mighty God (Is 9:6) | The First and the Last (Rev 1:17-18) |

God blessed forever (Rom 9:5)	Lord of Glory (1 Cor 2:8; Ps 24:8-10)
Lord of all (Acts 10:36)	King of Kings, Lord of Lords (Rev 19:16)
Lord and Savior (2 Pet 3:2)	The True God and Eternal Life (1 Jn 5:20)
The Holy and Righteous One (Acts 3:14)	Immanuel (God with us) (Is 7:24)

II. THE INCARNATION OF CHRIST

A. Christ's incarnation refers to the eternal Son of God becoming human.

- 1.) Jesus Christ was conceived by a miraculous act of the Holy Spirit in the womb of the virgin Mary with the result that the Second Person of the Triune God was joined eternally to a real body and nature (Mt 1:18; Lu 1:35). Christ now has both fully human and divine natures.
- 2.) The Gospels use “born” and “conceive” in the narrative accounts which deal with the birth of Christ—but Christ has existed eternally, therefore His birth is also expressed in terms that reveal the fact that He came from heaven to earth:
 - *The Word became flesh* (Jn 1:14)
 - *He partook of flesh and blood* (Heb 2:14)
 - *He descended from heaven* (Jn 3:13)
 - *He came into the world* (1 Tim 1:15; Heb 10:5)

B. The purposes of the incarnation. God became incarnate in Christ in order that He might:

- 1.) ***–Die for sinners, and thus save them from their sins.*** The wages of sin is death (Rom 6:23). Death involves the separation of the body from the soul. In order that the eternal Son of God might experience the reality of death, He clothed Himself in flesh and blood (Heb 2:14). Jesus was born in order to die—that He might taste death for everyone (Heb 2:9).
- 2.) ***–Share with men His own eternal life.*** Jesus tells us that He came that *they might have life, and that they might have it more abundantly* (Jn 10:10). The incarnation of Christ and His substitutionary death for us was the only way God could impart His life to guilty dying sinners. Jesus, the Good Shepherd, *gives His life for the sheep* (Jn 10:11). *Without God made flesh* there can be no eternal life for sinners.
- 3.) ***–Know human life from the inside by personal experience.*** Hebrews 2:17 tells us that *He had to be made like His brethren in all things, that He might become a merciful and faithful High Priest in things pertaining to God*. We are never to forget that the Lord whom we worship has lived our life. He has experienced suffering, and crisis of soul. He has tasted poverty, rejection, betrayal, temptation, and heartbreak. He has perfect empathy and compassion upon His people, for He is a sympathetic High Priest (Heb 2:18; 4:14-16).

- 4.) –**Judge the world in righteousness.** His earthly experience has also perfectly fitted Him to be the Judge of all mankind. The Father has committed all judgment to the Son *because He is Son of man* (Jn 5:22, 27). How wonderful, comforting, and awesome it is to know that on the Judgment Seat before which we must all appear, and on that Great White Throne before which the lost must stand, there will sit One who is both Son of God and Son of Man. This is the glory of the incarnation: it gave to us a Savior, and to the world a Judge, who knows the problem of human existence by personal experience—this is grace beyond compare.
- 5.) –**Reveal in Himself the ideal humanity.** We Christians ought to walk, writes John, *even as He also walked* (1 Jn 2:6). Peter adds that, *Christ also suffered for us, leaving us an example that you should follow in His steps* (1 Pet 2:21). Christians are followers of Christ. We must keep affirming that we are to walk as He walked. The Son of God incarnate also reveals what we shall be hereafter. *We know that when He appears we shall be like Him* (1 Jn 3:2). This is staggering to our understanding—the Man, Christ Jesus enthroned in the heavens is the guarantee of what we shall be (Heb 2:7-8; 6:19-20). We must keep our eyes fixed upon Him in order to make steady progress toward glory (Heb 12:1-3).
- 6.) –**Provide an everlasting revelation of Himself in visible human form.** Jesus said, *He that has seen Me has seen the Father* (Jn 4:9). Thomas, falling down at His feet offers the final verdict of those who really know Him, *My Lord and my God* (Jn 20:28). By the resurrection of our Lord in His incorruptible body, and its subsequent glorification, the incarnation became an everlasting fact—the eternal Son of God will forever be united to our human nature. In Christ we see the Image of the Invisible God (Rev 21:22-23). Wonder of wonders, our Great God is eternally *flesh of our flesh and bone of our bone*. Let all the saints proclaim, Worthy is the Name of Jesus (Rev 5:12-14).

QUESTIONS:

- (I. A-B) 1.) Read Colossians 1:16-18. Did Christ create physical structures only (the material universe) or, did He also create angels? Why does the text say that *all things have been created for Him?* (v.16).
- (I.C-D) 2.) When one considers the claims that Christ made about Himself, is the option open to us that perhaps He was merely a ‘good man’ (the greatest who ever lived, but not divine)? Explain your answer.
- (I. A-F) 3.) Consider the evidence for Christ’s deity that is new to you? Which of these supports for His deity made a unique impression upon you? (Review I. A-F in your outline.)

(I. A-F) 4.) When Christ was on earth, He was surrounded by people who did not believe in Him. Most saw Him only as a man (Mt 13:53-58; Jn 7:5). It was not Christ's physical appearance that attested to His deity (Is 53:2-3). What did testify to His deity?

(I.C.8.) 5.) We know that the Son of God had to take on our human nature in order to redeem sinners, but why was it necessary for Him to be God in order to redeem us?

(II.B.2) 6.) Read Colossians 3:1-4. In what ways do you regard Christ to be *your life*?

(II.B.3) 7.) The fact that Christ knows about life's struggles from personal experience is meant to deepen our confidence in Him. Read Hebrews 2:18 and 4:14-16. Are you willing to make it your habit to cry out to Christ when you are tempted?

(II.B.3) Does Christ desire that you to go to Him for grace and mercy when you are facing struggles? What verse(s) in the book of Hebrews bids us to go to Him for grace and mercy?

(II.B.4) 8.) The fact that God the Father has given His authority to judge over to Christ ought to both comfort us and sober us. Read II.B.4 again and John 5:22, 27. Why is this truth that Christ is Judge a source of comfort? Why is it a source of reverential fear?

(II.B.5) 9.) Fixing our eyes upon Jesus (by faith in His Word) will have what kinds of effects upon the life of the Christian? (See Hebrews 12:1-4ff.)

(II.B.6) 10.) Read Revelation 5:12-14. The vocation (life calling) of the saints in heaven begins on earth now. Do you take delight in worshipping Christ now? What are some ways that you could excel still more in worshipping Him now?

The Lordship of Christ (part two)

I. CHRIST'S PERFECT *SUITABILITY* TO SAVE SINNERS.

A. Christ (and all that He is) is God's gift to sinners (Jn 1:12-13; 3:16).

- 1.) Christ is our 'peace' with God (Eph 2:14; Mic 5:5). He is the Mediator of a better covenant (Heb 8:6; 1 Tim 2:5). His shed blood is the basis of the new covenant (1 Cor 11:25-27). Christ Himself and His finished work is our *covenant* with God (Is 42:6; 49:8).
- 2.) God's plan to save sinners through Christ was hidden from all eternity, therefore the Apostle Paul refers to Christ and the Gospel as *God's mystery* (Eph 3:3-6; 9). This *mystery*, once hidden, has now been made known through the preaching of the Gospel (Rom 16:25-27). God's saving purpose *has been revealed by the appearing of our Savior Christ Jesus, who abolished death, and brought life and immortality to light through the Gospel* (2 Tim 1:10).
- 3.) Not only is Christ God's gift to us, the elect are God's gift to Christ (Jn 17:6).

B. Christ removed the obstacles that stood in the way of a love relationship with God (1 Jn 4:7-11, 19; 1:3-7).

- 1.) Christ was given by God to be the *propitiation* for our sins (1 Jn 4:9-11). Christ's sacrifice on Calvary's cross (His work of propitiation) averted the wrath of God from believers. Having been delivered from the wrath of God, Christians now enjoy an unending love relationship with God (Rom 5:5-9; 2 Cor 5:14-15).
- 2.) Christ's death for us *reconciled* believers to God (Rom 5:10). His death delivered us from our rebellion which blocked our fellowship with God. By His reconciling work, Christ removes the *enmity* and *hostility* from the heart of the believing sinner (Col 1:21-23).
- 3.) Christ's work for us *brought us all the way to God* who is our true home (1 Pet 3:18). Through Christ we have boldness and confident access to God (Eph 3:11-12). *In order to experience this confidence in prayer, the soul must feel entirely delivered from guilt. The conscience will find solid rest in Christ's obedience and satisfaction rendered on our behalf* (Heb 9:14).

C. Through spiritual union with Christ, believers have a new nature.

- 1.) At the moment of our new birth, Christ takes us into spiritual union with Himself. So fully is the believer identified with Christ that what Christ earned for us is rightfully ours *as if we had earned it ourselves* (1 Pet 1:3-5; Col 3:3-4). His dying and raising is applied to us personally—it is the basis for newness of life in Him. "In Christ" is used of the believer 216 times by the Apostle Paul.

- 2.) All the believer's blessings are *in Christ* as a source. All the benefits of Christ's living, dying, and rising are communicated to us by *union with Him*. The sovereign grace of God alone puts us in union with Christ (1 Cor 1:30-31; Jas 1:18). The Father poured out His infinite grace upon us *in Christ; the One whom He loves*. That means that all of God's grace comes to us in Christ (Eph 1:3-6; 1Cor 1:30-31). Christ is the believer's '*Source Person*' (boundless supply) for every spiritual blessing.
- 3.) The believer's union with Christ was *planned* in eternity (Eph 1:4). It was objectively *actualized* in Christ's death and resurrection (Rom 6:5). It was subjectively *realized* (applied) in the baptizing ministry of the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:13). At the moment of salvation, the Holy Spirit *unites* the believer to Christ (1 Cor 12:13).

D. Union with Christ is the assurance that we will ultimately be made like Christ.

- 1.) It pleased God that the fullness of the divine nature (God's character and attributes) should be in Christ who is Head of the church. Christ is the wellspring of goodness, eternal life, power, love, light, and mercy. These qualities are in Christ and are communicated from Him to His church. Each individual believer is God's *workmanship, created in Christ* (Eph 2:10).
- 2.) Believers have a new nature which is Christ's own nature formed in us. Scripture states that we have become *partakers of the divine nature* (2 Pet 1:4). In other passages the divine nature is called *the new man* (Col 3:10; Eph 4:20-24); and the *new creation* (2 Cor 5:17); *His seed* (*God's seed*) (1 Jn 3:9). In Christ a new life is imparted to us (Jn 10:10).
- 3.) Our new nature in Christ ensures that we are destined *to be conformed to the image of Christ* (Rom 8:28-30; Eph 1:4; 2 Thess 2:13-14). Christ will *transform the body of our humble state into conformity with the body of His glory, by the exertion of the power that He has even to subject all things to Himself* (Phil 3:21). *When He appears, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is* (1 Jn 3:2-3).

II. THE GLORY OF CHRIST.

A. God's gift of Christ is an infinite honor because by His obedience the whole church was made righteous (Rom 5:19).

- 1.) Those in Christ have a *God-approved* righteousness. *He made Him who knew no sin to be sin on our behalf, that we might have the righteousness of God in Him* (2 Cor 5:21; Rom 10:4).
- 2.) God is the eternal source of all wisdom, grace, goodness, and love. These qualities were in Christ who makes them available to the church. *Power, mercy, strength, and grace are communicated from the God the Father, Son, and Holy Spirit to all the believers in the world.*

3.) God's almighty power created faith in the souls of the elect which enabled them to receive Christ (Eph 1:19-20; 2:5-8; Jn 1:12-13). *But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and righteousness, and sanctification, and redemption, that just as it is written, "Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord"* (1 Cor 1:30-31).

B. The wonderful eternal purpose of God was to glorify Himself by Christ being made man. God's mystery. . .is Christ Himself, in whom are hidden all the treasures of wisdom and knowledge (Col 2:2b-3).

- 1.) *Christ being made man* brings infinite glory to God because in Christ the perfections of the Godhead are made visible to us. *For God, who said, "Light shall shine out of darkness," is the One who has shone into our hearts to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ* (2 Cor 4:6).
- 2.) God's majesty is made manifest in the Person of Christ and in His work of saving guilty sinners. *The majesty of God revealed in Christ is the greatest 'good' in the good news.*
- 3.) Satan tries to keep the Gospel from being believed and understood by sinners. Where the Gospel is not believed, the glory of Christ is hidden from sinners. *In whose case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelieving, that they might not see the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God* (2 Cor 4:4).
- 4.) The glory of God and the glory of Christ are the same. The Gospel reveals the glory of Christ (2 Cor 4:4). To see God's glory in the face of Christ is the goal of Gospel preaching. For the sinner comes to *know God savingly* by beholding the glory of God in the face of Christ (4:6).

C. Beholding the glory of God in the face of Christ not only saves the soul but also sanctifies (2 Cor 3:18).

- 1.) To believingly 'see' God in our nature, dying and bleeding for us, eradicates our sinful fear and suspicion of God. Faith in the Gospel opens up to the understanding Christ's full sacrifice. *If I see Him who is the atonement to be God-man, then I see an offering so vast, and so extensive in its applications, that every crevice of the conscience must be reached* (A. A. Bonar).
- 2.) What is the beauty of Christ? It is God in Him—Christ is the great representative of God's glory to us. God makes Himself known in the Son—Christ is the expression of the invisible God. *The chief reason faith is given is to see the glory of Christ and to meditate on its effects.*
- 3.) We must frequently meditate on the glory of Christ to be free from earthly cares and affections. The Gospel as *the glory of Christ* is the indispensable key to ongoing holiness. *But we all, with unveiled face beholding as in a mirror the glory of the Lord are being transformed into the same image from glory to glory, just as from the Lord, the Spirit* (2 Cor 3:18).

4.) *Only the saved see and savor the glory of Christ.* Only a continual view of the glory of Christ will stir us up and encourage us to watch and continually fight against the deceitful workings of sin. *To experience the things of Christ's glory has the power to make us want to do the things that please Him* (John Owen, *The Glory of Christ*).

D. How can we begin to meditate on the glory of Christ?

- 1.) **Consider** that *seeing Christ's glory* is the only way to obtain holiness, comfort, and preparation for eternal life. It must be your objective to *grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ* (2 Pet 3:18).
- 2.) **Commune** with Christ by going to Him for mercy, grace, love, righteousness, and power. His love received is powerful—it enables us to bear fruit for the glory of God, and it enables us to love others supernaturally (Jn 15:5, 8-12).
- 3.) **Think about** the glorious truth that God is putting His love, wisdom, power, and grace on display in our redemption. He is magnifying Himself by bringing us from dust to glory. The glory of Christ reveals to us that God has forever joined together *His own glory* with *our eternal good*—they meet eternally in Christ.
- 4.) **Dwell upon** all that God is toward you in Christ. God has given the Son so that in Him we have *right-standing, sonship, adoption, justification, redemption, acceptance, and favor*. In Christ we see God's heart of love and grace toward us.
- 5.) **Remember** how often you are in need of the spiritual comforts that only Christ can bring. Scripture says that '*Christ in you*' [is] *the hope of glory* (Col 1:27). *Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit* (Rom 15:13).
- 6.) **Know** that Christ takes pleasure in His people in spite of their indwelling sin. He is eager to commune with us. When Christ 'shows us' Himself (His glory) He brings with Him peace, comfort, joy, and assurance. To '*feast with Him*' means that we will experience these spiritual refreshments in the course of our fellowshiping with Him (Rev 3:20).
- 7.) **Realize** that Christ died in order to reveal the glory of God. God was acting graciously toward you in the incarnation, humiliation, death, and resurrection of Christ. God has brought about our salvation by giving us the knowledge of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:6). God's eternal wisdom, His love and pity, and His infinite goodness are put on display in the Gospel of Christ (Rev 1:5-6).

QUESTIONS:

(I.A.1-2) 1.) Why is the Person of Christ and His redeeming work referred to as *God's mystery*?

(I.B.1-2) 2.) Read Colossians 1:19-23. Write down each word that described our condition as unbelieving sinners. What words describe the saving benefits Christ has brought to the believing sinner.

(I.B.1.) 3.) Read 1 John 4:7-21. According to vv. 12 and 16, what is the chief evidence in a believer's life which shows that he knows God and experiences God's love?

(I.B.3) 4.) What counsel would you offer a believer who was not experiencing complete deliverance from guilt? (Hint: How does God deliver the conscience from guilt? See Hebrews 9:14; 1 Pet 2:24. See 1 John 1:9. Are confession and repentance involved?)

(I.C.1-2) 5.) Read Ephesians 1:3. Is every spiritual blessing given to us solely *in Christ*? Read Ephesians 1:4-14. How many times does Paul use the phrase *in Christ*, or *in Him*? Why is this phrase significant?

(I.D.1-3) 6.) Read 2 Thessalonians 2:13-15. Consider our destiny (that we will *gain the glory of Christ*—we will be conformed to His likeness). How is the promise of our glorious destiny in Christ to affect our present walk?

(II.A.1-3) 7.) Review this portion of your outline (II. A. 1-3). What *qualities* in Christ were 'exerted' or exercised in order to bring about the formation of the church?

(II.B.1-4) 8.) Explain this statement: *In the Gospel we discover who God is by looking at Christ and seeing what He has done for us.*

(II.C.1-4) 9.) The *glory of Christ* is both broad and wonderful. It includes His Person, His offices (Prophet, Priest, and King), His attributes, His redeeming work, His humility, His ministry, His exaltation, and His miracles. How does beholding the *glory of Christ* enable us to 'see' by faith the invisible God?

(II.C.3-4) 10.) Read 2 Corinthians 3:18. Why do you think that *beholding the glory of Christ* has the power to gradually transform us into the image of Christ? (Hint: According to Psalm 115:8, and 135:18, we are transformed into the likeness of what we trust and glory in.)

II.D.2) 11.) Read John 15:5-12. Why do you think that *fruit-bearing* is a byproduct of abiding in Christ's love? What does it mean to abide in Christ's love? How is that done?

(II.D.3-4) 12.) Read 1 Peter 1:2-9. To have Christ as one's *supreme treasure* is a source of inexpressible joy. And, to discover that in Christ—God has joined His eternal glory to your eternal good thrills the soul. Comment on the joy described in 1 Peter 1:2-9.

II.D.5-6) 13.) If you are not in the habit of meditating upon God's Word, you may find this discipline to be a struggle at first. One help in getting started is to know that Christ 'meets' with us when we turn our thoughts to Him (See John 14:21, 23, and Ephesians 4:17). Name some of the spiritual comforts He is ready to impart to the believer.

Jay Wegter, Teacher

The Lordship of Christ (part three)

I. SAVING FAITH: A *SPIRIT-IMPARTED RECOGNITION OF WHO CHRIST IS.*

No one can say, “Jesus is Lord,” except by the Holy Spirit (1 Cor 12:3b).

A. work of the Holy Spirit is required for a person to recognize Christ as Messiah and as supreme Lord of heaven and earth.

- 1.) God testifies to the fact that man is born dead to the things of God (Eph 2:1-3). Sinners are aware of God, but are *blind to His glory*, thus the things of God are not viewed as precious, as life, as wisdom, and as infinitely desirable.
- 2.) Only when a man or woman is brought to recognize Christ will he love and worship Him and gladly submit to His Lordship.

B. Knowledge of God in Christ is not a mere matter of *intellectual apprehension*, it is a matter of spiritual discernment, to be derived from the Spirit.

- 1.) To fall at the feet of Christ as Lord is only attainable by the work of the Holy Spirit. God must *shine in the heart to give the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ (2 Cor 4:6; Mt 16:17; Gal 1:17; 1 Cor 2:10; 14).*
- 2.) When the Lord said to His disciples, “Who do you say that I am?” “Peter’s response was, “Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God.” The Lord said to Peter that his answer was the result of the Father’s revelation (Mt 16:17).
- 3.) *Peter had not arrived at his belief by mere reason: ‘flesh and blood’ had not worked out the problem; there had been a revelation to him from the Father who is in heaven. The truth had been written on his heart by the heavenly Spirit. This is the only knowledge worth having as to the Person of our Lord (C. H. Spurgeon).*
- 4.) The fact that sinful man is dependent upon the Spirit’s gracious working does not remove responsibility from man. God commands men everywhere to seek Him diligently. *Turn to Me, and be saved, all the ends of the earth; For I am God, and there is no other (Is 45:22). Seek the Lord while He may be found; Call upon Him while He is near. Let the wicked forsake his way, and the unrighteous man his thoughts (Is 55:6-7). God is now declaring to men that all everywhere should repent, because He has fixed a day in which He will judge the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead (Acts 17:30b-31; Strive to enter. . . Luke 13:24).*

II. WHEN THE APOSTLES PREACHED THE GOSPEL, THEY PREACHED THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST.

A. Christ's Lordship was the central confession of the Christian community.

- 1.) *To all who are in Rome, beloved of God, called to be saints: Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ (Rom 1:7).*
- 2.) *To the church of God which is at Corinth, to those who are sanctified in Christ Jesus, called to be saints, with all who in every place call on the name of Jesus Christ our Lord, both theirs and ours. . . (1 Cor 1:2).*

B. For the Apostles, Christ's Lordship was a key part in presenting the Gospel.

- 1.) *For in this way the entrance into the eternal kingdom of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ will be abundantly supplied to you (2 Pet 1:11).*
- 2.) *To 'recognize' Christ as Lord is to recognize His authority in every sphere. For He must reign until He has put all His enemies under His feet (1 Cor 15:25). And on His thigh He has a name written, "King of kings, and Lord of lords" (Rev 19:16). To be saved is to be transferred into Christ's Kingdom (Col 1:13).*
- 3.) *The Apostles preached the Lordship of Christ. In the book of Acts, the word "Savior" occurs only twice in the book of Acts (5:31; 13:23). The title "Lord" is mentioned 92 times; "Lord Jesus" 13 times; and "Lord Jesus Christ" 6 times. In the N.T. Jesus is referred to as "Lord" 822 times. The word "Savior" is only used 24 times (Ernest Reisinger, *Lord and Christ*).*
- 4.) *It is popular today to speak of a person deciding to make Jesus Lord. But in reality, it is not the believing sinner who makes Christ Lord. Jesus is Lord already. God has made Him Lord of all. Therefore let all the house of Israel know for certain that God has made Him both Lord and Christ—this Jesus whom you crucified (Acts 2:36; Phil 2:9-11). Sinners are commanded to seek God, but it is the regeneration by the Holy Spirit which produces faith, repentance, humility, and submission to Christ who is Lord (Titus 3:5-7).*

III. FAITH RESPONDS TO CHRIST'S LORDSHIP WITH SPECIFIC ACTIONS AND DESIRES.

A. True saving faith wants Christ without exception.

- 1.) *False faith* wants the benefits of salvation (escape from hell), but not the loving rule and reign of Christ over one's life (Lu 14:26, 33).
- 2.) *True saving faith* is willing to have Christ unconditionally (without exception). This is illustrated by our Lord's parables in Matthew 13. *The kingdom of heaven is like treasure hidden in a field, which a man found and hid; and for joy over it he goes and sells all that he*

has and buys that field. Again the kingdom of heaven is like a merchant seeking beautiful pearls, who, when he had found one pearl of great price, went and sold all that he had, and bought it (Mt 13:44-46).

B. True saving faith wants Christ as He is set forth in the Scriptures.

- 1.) Christ is set forth in Scripture as our Mediator and Great High Priest (1 Tim 2:5; Heb 4:14). As Priest, Christ secures pardon and peace for His people by His death on Calvary's cross. His ongoing work as Priest is intercession for His sheep. *I pray for them. I do not pray for the world but for those whom you have given Me; for they are Yours. And all Mine are Yours, and Yours are Mine; and I am glorified in them (Jn 17:9-10; Rom 8:34; Heb 7:25).*
- 2.) As Mediator Christ has three offices: Prophet (*to instruct us*); Priest (*to redeem us*); King (*to rule us*). Only the person with *true saving faith* desires the ministry of all of Christ's offices in his life. A person with *false faith* wants Christ's role as Priest (to save them from hell), but not Christ's role as King over their life. Many use the name "Lord Jesus" but do not obey Him and submit to Him as Lord and King. Jesus said that they will be cast out forever (Mt 7:21-23).
- 3.) Consider Christ's role as King: *He calls us out of the world to Himself. He gives us His laws, promises, and warnings. He rules His church by His Word. He governs His people by bestowing saving grace and by correcting us, preserving us, and supporting us in our temptations and sufferings. He sovereignly chooses our trials and chastisements. He restrains and overcomes our enemies and He powerfully orders all things for His glory and our good. And, He will ultimately take vengeance on those who do not know God and who do not obey the Gospel (2 Thess 1:5-10).*

C. Saving faith wants Christ in spite of the inconveniences that follow a commitment to Him.

- 1.) Those with *false faith* want the eternal benefits of salvation (heaven), but they have never counted the cost of following Christ (Luke 14:25-33). Jesus said, *If any man will come after Me, let him deny himself, and take up his cross daily, and follow Me (Luke 9:23).*
- 2.) Those with a *false faith* never make the sacrifices necessary to bear fruit. Jesus said of 'temporary believers', *And those on the rocky soil are those who, when they hear, receive the word with joy; and these have no firm root; they believe for a while, and in time of temptation fall away (Lu 8:13).* In 'good soil' believers, the Word dominates exceptionally (Lu 8:15).
- 3.) Those with *true saving faith* follow Christ in spite of inconveniences that come with a commitment to Christ. As a result, they are fruitful in Christ's service (Gal 6:9).

True saving faith is characterized by the following:

- Continuance in trusting Christ, and in devotion to Him and His service.

- Desire to be useful in the service of Christ.
 - Attendance to Christian duty.
 - Love of prayer, the Word of God, and worship with His people.
 - Devoted love of the brethren.
 - Progress in the knowledge of Christ, and of self, and sin.
 - Progress in loving holiness and hating sin.
- 4.) In light of the above description of *true faith*'s response to Christ's Lordship, there is a legitimate place for biblical self-examination. 2 Corinthians 13:5a states, *Test yourselves to see if you are in the faith; examine yourselves!*

QUESTIONS:

(I.A.1-2) 1.) When God's Spirit bestows regeneration (the new birth), He *shines into the heart to give the light of the knowledge of the glory of God in the face of Christ* (2 Cor 4:6). In your own experience was there a *recognition* of Christ's willingness to save you as well as a *recognition* of Christ as Lord of all?

(I.B.1-3) 2.) Read Matthew 16:13-17. Why did Jesus say that Peter's answer, given in verse 16, was not the result of 'flesh and blood' reasoning (or natural reasoning)?

(I.B.4) 3.) How would you answer someone who said the following: *God has predestined those who will be saved, so there is no use for a sinner to try to find God.*

(II.A-B.1-2) 4.) Read Colossians 1:12-14. To be delivered from sin is to be delivered from the domain of _____, and transferred to the _____ of His beloved Son.

(II.B.1-3) 5.) According to 2 Peter 1:2-4, those who come to know God in Christ are *delivered from what*? Do you see your own salvation in these terms? Are you experiencing the deliverance spoken of here?

(II.B.4) 6.) Read Acts 2:36 and Philippians 2:9-11. Which of the three terms is *least accurate*: a.) The believing sinner *makes Jesus Lord*. b.) The believing sinner *recognizes Jesus as Lord*. c.) The believing sinner *submits to Jesus as Lord*. Why do you think that accurate terminology is important here?

(III.A.1-2) 7.) Read Matthew 13:44-46. A person who *recognizes* the preciousness of Christ and His kingdom will: a.) Sell everything and become homeless. b.) Give his wealth to the church. c.) See that Christ is the only true treasure, and will therefore make any sacrifice to have Him.

(III.B.1-3) 8.) Read Romans 8:31-34. According to this passage, what encouragements and comforts may be drawn from Christ's intercession for believers?

(III.B.2-3) 9.) The believer's submission to Christ as Lord and King involves obedient responsiveness to the discipline Christ brings. Read Revelation 3:19-21. What response does Christ seek when He disciplines us (v. 19)? What additional words in vv. 20-21 also describe our response to His discipline?

(III.C.1-2) 10.) Read the *Parable of the Soils* in Luke 8:4-15. In v. 14, what kinds of 'pressures' in life revealed that this person had a *false faith*? What are the characteristics of *true saving faith* found in v. 15?

III.C.3) 11.) Review the marks of true faith found in III. C. 3 in the notes. Write down the characteristics in which you need the most spiritual growth. What do you plan to do to contribute to this growth?

(III.C.4) 12.) Read 2 Corinthians 13:5. Why do you think that the Apostle Paul would command the members of a local church to examine themselves? Should some level of self-examination (Biblical self-confrontation) be a part of our daily prayer time (see Ps 139:23-24)? Why is it that only true believers welcome being 'searched' by the Lord (also see Hebrews 4:12-13ff.).