

The Lordship of Christ

by Vance Havner

The Lordship of Christ is the central truth of the Christian faith, demanding absolute loyalty and obedience, and is the ultimate confession of all creation.

Duration: 32:18

Scripture: Zechariah 9:9, Matthew 14:16-21, Mark 4:35-41, John 6:66-69, Acts 9:6, 2 Corinthians 4:5, Revelation 1:8

Topics: "Lordship Of Christ"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher focuses on the concept of the Lordship of Jesus Christ. He emphasizes that while many people may claim to believe in Jesus as Lord, not all are truly willing to submit to his authority in their lives. The preacher highlights the importance of not just proclaiming Jesus as Lord with our lips, but also obeying him in our actions. He explains that salvation is free, but becoming a disciple of Jesus requires a total surrender of everything we have. The preacher references biblical passages such as 2 Corinthians 4:5, Mark 4:35-41, and Luke 14:25-33 to support his points.

Transcript

In 2 Corinthians, the 4th chapter and the 5th verse, Paul tells us what he does not preach and then he tells us what he does preach. For we preach not ourselves, but Christ Jesus as Lord, and ourselves, your servants, for Jesus' sake. If I were to ask you tonight, do you believe in the Lordship of Jesus Christ, you would probably say very comfortably that you do.

But if I could come around and ask you one at a time, is he your Lord? Is he Lord of all you are and all you have? And if you told me the truth, that might be different. Any congregation can sing, bring forth the loyal diadem and crown him Lord of all. But not all who are willing to crown him with their lips are willing to obey him in their lives.

It's been said that there are some truths that are regarded as so true that they lose the power of truth and lie bedridden in the dormitory of the soul. That's a great statement. There are some things that we've heard so much and so long and so often that we've gotten used to them and they don't move us.

They do lie bedridden in the dormitories of our minds and of our souls. One of these truths is the Lordship of Jesus Christ. It has been said that the word Lord is the most lifeless word in the vocabulary of the average Christian.

And yet Dr. A.T. Robertson says that the Lordship of Christ is the touchstone of the Christian faith, and Dr. Campbell Morgan used to say it was the central verity of the Church. I want to say three things about it. First of all, the Lordship of Christ was the initial confession of the Church to begin with.

Romans 10, 9. The early Christians understood that. They understood that when they confessed Jesus as Savior, they were confessing him also as Lord. Dr. Robertson used to say when a Jewish believer confessed Jesus as Lord, he was really saying that Jesus is God because to a Jew, Jehovah meant God.

And he also said that when a Gentile Christian in the Roman Empire said Jesus is Lord, he better mean it because Caesar was not only the emperor but the God of the Roman people. And when a new Christian in Rome said Jesus is Lord, he's crossing up with Caesar, you see, and he might have to pay for his devotion with his life. I've heard my friend Howard Butt tell about one of the early marchers of the Christian Church who was being marched out to the place of execution.

And the rough Roman soldiers were manhandling him, and one of them asked him, where now is your carpenter God? And he answered, he's making a casket for your emperor. My, what an answer. And that's just about what happened.

All the way through the New Testament, beloved, it is never Christ and. You never have to add anything to Jesus. He is Alpha and Omega, he's the first and the last, the beginning and the end, and he's the whole alphabet, not just the first and the last letter.

When you write a letter, you don't have to go out of the alphabet to borrow a letter, they're all there, all that you need. You never need to leave Jesus for anything. When they had a crowd and nothing to eat, you remember how he answered that predicament? He said, they need not depart, give ye them to eat.

That's a great missionary text. This old world never needs to leave Jesus for anything. It doesn't have to turn to communism, it doesn't have to turn to anything else.

The world doesn't need to leave Jesus, it's our business to get the food out to them. They need not depart, get the food to them. But all the way through the New Testament, it is Christ all.

It's always a matter of alternatives, Christ or Caesar, Christ or Belial, Christ or the world, it's always Christ or. Early Christianity demanded a clean break with the world of flesh and the devil. A Christian understood in the early Church that he was supposed to part company with this world when he became a Christian.

And that lasted for several centuries until Constantine became Emperor and he made it fashionable to be a Church member. And the pagans began to join, bringing their idols with them. And the Church lowered her standard to accommodate the living of its new members.

We've never gotten over that mistake. And to this day, although Nero is dead, we have too many Church members who are trying to serve two Lords, Caesar and Christ, God and Mammon. Our Churches have been filled with baptized pagans living double lives, fearing the Lord and serving their own gods, drawing thy God with their mouths and honoring him with their lips while their hearts are far from him, calling him Lord, Lord, and doing not the things which he says.

The second thing I want to say about the Lordship of Christ is that it is the authentic confession of a Christian anytime. 1 Corinthians 12.3 Now, that's a terrific statement. You can call him Lord and not mean it, but you can't call Jesus Lord and mean it by yourself.

It's the work of the Holy Spirit. You can't get saved by yourself. You can't regenerate yourself.

You can't understand the Bible by yourself. It's the work of the Spirit. You can't confess Jesus as Lord by yourself.

It's done by the Holy Spirit. It's not a solitary operation that you can take care of. You can say it, not mean it, because Jesus said, Why call ye me Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say? He even said there would be preachers at that last day who would say, Lord, Lord, we've prophesied and cast out demons and have done wonderful works in thy name, only to hear him say, I never knew you.

You can say it, not mean it, but you can't say it and mean it by yourself. It's through the operation of the Spirit of God. You couldn't save yourself, but when you wanted to be saved and were ready to be saved and ready to trust Christ, then the Holy Spirit did what you couldn't do, and you were born again.

So if you're willing to make Jesus the Lord of your life, and if you want him to be the Lord of your life, and if you will to make him your Lord, then the Holy Spirit comes in and accomplishes what you're not able to do. So it's true all the way down the line. I'm afraid we preachers have created a false impression without meaning to do it through the air.

I think we've given people the idea that accepting Jesus as Savior is one thing and confessing him as Lord is something else. We've made two things out of it, and it isn't two things. We have a great many people today who say, Well, I took Jesus as my Savior.

I could ask you tonight how many of you have taken Jesus as Savior, and most of you would say you have. But if I ask you, Is he your Lord? Most of you, if you told the truth, would have to say no. Well, then you're not saved.

If you are willing to take Jesus as your Savior and not willing to make him your Lord, if you willfully and deliberately reject him as Lord, you don't even have him as Savior. And it is high time that our people were shocked into learning this. Salvation, beloved, is not a cafeteria line where you can go along and take what you want and leave the rest.

You can't take the Savior part and leave the Lord part and be saved. You can't take Jesus on the installment plan. You can't take him on approval like you buy a stock of goods.

You either take him for all he is or you don't take him. Now, some people may not understand all that Jesus is. I don't suppose anybody does when they get saved.

If you take him for all you know him to be at that time, you're saved. But what I'm saying is that any person who will confess Jesus as Savior and deliberately and knowingly and willfully reject him as Lord is not saved. Paul said to the Philippian jailer, Believe on the Lord Jesus Christ.

He gave him all three names, Master, Mediator, and Messiah, all at once. He didn't say, Now you accept the Savior and we'll baptize you and you'll join the Church and you can think over this Lordship of Christ. Maybe later on sometime when we have an education meeting, you can come down the aisle and take him as Savior, but you don't have to do it now.

That's not what he said. He said, Let's have it all over right at the beginning. Jesus Christ demands more absolute loyalty than any dictator that ever has lived.

Hitler, Mussolini, Stalin, no dictator has ever demanded as much allegiance as Jesus. The only difference is he has a right to. Love so amazing, so divine, demands my soul, my life, my all.

You have only one option in this world. You can take Jesus or not take him, but if you ever really take him, your option ends. You don't have any more option.

You belong to him lock, stock, and barrel. You don't have any right to your life. You don't have any right to your pocketbook.

You don't have any right to your future. You don't have any right to anything in this world. You are the bond slave of Jesus Christ, bought and paid for by his blood.

You are not your own. You are bought with a price. You belong to Jesus Christ.

You don't have to tell me what to do. I don't have to tell you. You've been told.

You belong to Jesus Christ. You don't have any say so over your life from the moment you are saved. I remember when I came to Jesus as a country boy in the hills of western North Carolina.

I went out into the woods in the best way I knew how. I trusted Jesus. I came back up.

I remember to the home, and I didn't understand much about the plan of salvation. You don't have to understand it all. You don't have to.

But I remember that I was trying to sing that old song, Jesus, I, my cross, have taken all to leave and fall at ease. Destitute, despised, forsaken, thou from hence my all shall be. I didn't have much sense as a green country boy, but I had enough to know one thing.

I realized I was under new management. I realized that. No theologian had to explain that to me.

I realized I had given myself away to Jesus Christ. Now, have you ever done that? That's what being saved is. And I think our churches and our Christians are in such a sad condition today because we've got a cheap believism that doesn't believe, and a really cheap professionist who never confesses to the Lord.

After all, the word Savior is found only 20 times in the world, and the word is found 40 times. That's his name. Romans 14.9 says, For this cause Jesus died and rose again, that he might be Lord of the dead and of the living.

That's what he lived for, that's what he died for, that's what he rose for. A Christian is a believer, a disciple, and a witness. He ought to become all three at the same time and be all three the rest of the time.

Acts 11 and 26 says we were called disciples before we were ever called Christians. The Great Commission says they'll make disciples. It doesn't say make believers.

Of course, you have to be a believer to be a disciple. But it says make disciples. Now, there's a difference between a believer and a disciple.

God's not out today, beloved, just saving sinners. God's out making saints out of sinners. And they become saints the moment they're saved, and then he works on them, making saints out of them all the rest of their days.

It's instantaneous, and it's progressive, and in some days it's going to be fine. But he's working on it, and he's having a terrible time with some of them. The crisis of conversion must be followed by continuance.

I preached this morning here on, if ye continue in my word. That's what makes you a disciple. I meet some folks who say, well, I took the stand 25 years ago, and some of them are still standing.

They haven't moved since they took the stand. I was up in New Hampshire in a Bible conference, and the missionary sister said that the trouble today with most of us is we're singing and standing on the promises when we're just sitting on the premises. I think that's where most of the saints are today.

When a child is born into a home, that's a thrilling experience, but it takes 20 years to make a man or a woman out of that child. Evangelism is great business, but it's only the beginning. Let's make this plain.

Salvation is free, thank God, not cheap. A thing can be free without being cheap. It costs a plenty.

It costs God his Son, and it costs the Son his life. It's free to you. But the minute you become a Christian, you not only become a believer, you become a disciple, and that will cost you everything you have.

Everything. And it's about time we believed that and that we found it out. The New Testament teaches not only faith in Christ, the new birth.

It teaches following Christ, the new life. My sheep hear my voice, and they follow me. They not only come to me, they come after me.

A believer comes to Jesus, a disciple comes after Jesus. Peter followed Jesus by the Sea of Galilee, and then he denied Jesus later on, and for some days he was not a disciple. How do I know? Because the angel at the sepulcher said, Go tell his disciples and Peter.

Now, you see, he was in a different classification. And then Jesus met him by the Sea of Tiberias and said, Follow me, and he took up where he left off and followed him again. We hear a lot about prospects today.

We're always going after prospects. Had it ever occurred to you that Jesus lost some of his best prospects? And as far as I can see, he didn't try to go after them and lower the terms and make it easier so they'd follow him. In the ninth chapter of Luke, he had three prospects, and the last six verses, two verses to a prospect.

And they looked like they meant business. The first one said, I'll follow you wherever you go. And Jesus said, The foxes and the birds have a place to stay, but I don't.

As if to say, Now, do you know what you're talking about? Have you ever counted the cost? The second said, Let me first go bury my father. Now, let a word first tell the tale. When anything's first ahead of Jesus Christ, you're not going to follow him.

Suffer me first. Whenever you hear a father say that there's something dead in his life that never has been buried, it was a troubling act. Of course, it hadn't yet.

It was the custom to stay around home. The father did die and bury the father. But anyhow, whenever I'm said, Suffer me first, look out for the corpse.

How about the rich, young ruler? That was a good one. He had manners, for he came kneeling. He had morals, for he kept the commandments.

He had money, for he wouldn't turn it loose. If he'd try to join the average Baptist church today, they'd say, get him in a hurry and don't ask him any questions. Make a Frazier out of him.

The Lord wasn't after joiners. I want to know what's the matter with us today that we don't use this psychology now. Here was a crowd of people that followed Jesus.

And we got so excited, we preachers would have been so excited, that we just said, this is a wonderful opportunity. I'm going to make it easier, the more the merrier. They went in great multitudes with him, and he turned and said unto them, gave them three cannots in a row.

If any man come to me and hate not father, mother, wife, children, brethren, sisters, and his own life also, he cannot be my disciple. Now that thinned them out. And then he said next, and whosoever doth not bear his cross and come after me, cannot be my disciple.

Then he told about the man building a tower, and the king going to war, and said likewise, whosoever he be of you that forsaketh not all that he hath, cannot be my disciple. Now that's not our psychology today. He made it hard.

And I'm sure a lot of those folks walked right out on it. And they did in the 6th chapter of John, and I'm sure of that, it says so. We try to make it easy.

Our Lord didn't. When Paul met Jesus, he asked him a who question and a what question. Who art thou, Lord, or thou? Lord comes last in the first question, and first in the second question.

After you meet the Lord, he'll always come first. Who art thou, Lord? Lord, what will you have me to do? Thomas said, My Lord and my God. I want to read to you what one of the greatest Baptist preachers of all time said.

If I said this, you'd think I was overstating it. If the professed convert distinctly and deliberately declares that he knows the Lord's will, but does not mean to attend to it, you are not to pamper his presumption. It is your duty to assure him that he is not saved.

Do not imagine that the gospel is magnified or God glorified by going to whirlwings and telling them that they may be saved at this moment simply by accepting Christ as their Savior while they are wedded to their idols and their hearts are still in love with sin. If I do so, I tell them a lie. I pervert the gospel.

I insult Christ and turn the grace of God into lasciviousness. That was Spurgeon. And that's the truth.

Dr. E.Y. Mullins says that in applying for membership in a Baptist church, two things are necessary. Faith in Christ and, now what? Baptism? No. Faith in Christ and acceptance of his Lordship.

Now, you don't hear much about that now. I quoted here the other morning, Dr. George McDaniel said, Whoever accepts Jesus as his Savior and submits to him as his Lord and takes the New Testament as the law of his life is a Christian. George Pruitt stood on the steps of the Capitol as a young man and said, First of all, and explaining all the rest of Baptist principles, is the absolute Lordship of Jesus Christ.

Dr. Mordecai Hamm, when he started out preaching, took time out to prepare and build his entire ministry on the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We have a lot of people today whose attitude is, Come in, Savior, and stay out, Lord. You can't get saved with that kind of an experience.

Peter said, Not so, Lord. Well, that's a contradiction. If he's Lord, you've got no business saying, Not so.

That won't work. Not so, Lord. I want to say finally that the Lordship of Christ is the final, the ultimate confession of all creation.

Because I read that God hath highly exalted him and given him a name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow in heaven, in earth, and under the earth, and every tongue should confess. Here come these three names again. What are they going to confess? That Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.

The time is coming when everybody, this takes in all the territory, in heaven, in earth, under the earth. That's everybody, isn't it? Everybody is going to confess Jesus as Lord sometime. That's not universalism because most of them will be in hell and it won't save them.

But everybody's got it to do. The next time you talk to somebody who wants to argue about this, don't ask that person, Will you confess Jesus as Lord? Because they've got it to do. Just ask them, When? Now or in hell? Don't ask them, Will you? Tell them next time, my friend, you've got it to do.

Just a matter of picking your place in time. You're going to do it now while you can be saved, or then when it will be too late. Now you see, that's the wonderful thing about preaching the gospel, brother.

We're on the winning side. The time is coming when everybody is going to admit we're right. They don't do it now.

But we've got eternity on our side of the scale, you see, in this proposition. I'm glad I have a Lord like this. When he was down here on earth, he had power, all power, but he didn't use it.

He used it just a little once in a while. He gave us kind of a little sample case he carried around with him, sort of a little specimen of the power that he had once in a while. He'd give us a sample.

You remember the taxes came to you one time? Uh-oh, pardon me for bringing that up. But you remember that, the Lord said, Now there's a fish out yonder with the money in its mouth. You go out there and catch it, and that'll be the tax money.

Wouldn't you like to know where one was with the tax money in its mouth? Only thing is, you'd have to catch a whale these days. But anyhow, the Lord said, There's a fish out there with the money in its mouth. You say that's finished? No, sir, not when the Lord of the universe is talking.

He ought to know which fish. You see what a wonderful Lord we have. He got in a little boat one day and took a nap.

The storm came up and those poor old disciples forgot they had the Lord with them and said, Aren't you, don't you care that we perish? Then he arose and said, Peace be still. And those waters subsided and looked like a looking glass, that old lake was succumbed. I know that a big preacher today says that he said that to the disciples and not to the sea.

I like the way it reads. I like it because they said, What manner of man is this that the winds and the sea obey him? Why, when he rode into Jerusalem, nobody had ever ridden that donkey before. You'd have tried it.

You'd have wound up with your head in the sand and your feet in the air. But the Lord rode into town because he was Lord of donkeys, just like everything else. That ought to be reassuring to some of us in particular.

He was the Lord of disease. Wouldn't you like to have been in a sick room and here was a loved one about to die and the Lord comes in and just touches that brow and next thing you know they're helping get dinner back in the kitchen. Just like that.

He was Lord of death. Nobody ever died around Jesus. You can't find out how to conduct a funeral in Matthew, Mark, Luke and John.

They didn't have any. Thank God they were all resurrections. And there was a funeral.

You can't find a funeral service in the four Gospels. Nobody ever died around Jesus. He broke up funerals.

And if he hadn't have said, Lazarus, come forth, if he hadn't called his name, every dead man in the neighborhood would have come out of the grave because my Lord is the Lord of death. And yet, after I think of all that, the thing that bothers me, beloved, is that I have to stand in churches all over America and beg church members to make that wonderful Lord the Lord of their little lives. And they'll sit back there and dig their heels in church floors and say, yes, I know he's Lord of the universe, but can't have me, can't have my little life.

That's why we don't have revival today. A revival is not a thing in this world but making Jesus Lord of our lives. That's what it is.

You can call it a dozen other things, but you'll have a revival when God's people make Jesus Lord. That's what it is. It's not necessarily a lot of noise.

It involves other things, but when you make him Lord, that takes care of everything. Now, I want to ask you tonight, is he your Lord? Is he the Lord of your body? Oh, the sins of the body that are such a disgrace to the church of the living God today. The way people in Christian work today.

Some of them have to leave town before daylight because their sins caught up with them. Christian workers, church workers, church staff, sins that I never heard about when I was a boy. Sins of the body.

Is he the Lord of your mind? You say, well, I have so many bad thoughts. Well, you can't help the bad thoughts coming to you, but you don't have to open the door and invite them in and tell them, make yourself at home. Is he the Lord of your tongue and the Lord of your temper? Is he the Lord of your spare time? Is he the Lord of your pocketbook? Is he the Lord of your family life? Is he the Lord of what you look at on television? Is he the Lord of your habits? Is he Lord of all? We talk about stewardship a lot today.

I think we ought to talk more about Lordship. Stewardship is our side, but when you make him Lord, I know what you will do about your stewardship. We ought to emphasize his Lordship.

Is he Lord of all? I won't ask you in closing. I haven't preached long. It's not necessary.

If I'd ask you now, everybody that claims Jesus as Savior to stand, I know what would happen. I'm not going to ask that. But I'm going to ask you one thing.

Is he your Lord? Have you ever made him the Lord of your life? The Bible says that if you're not willing for him to be the Lord of your life, you're not saved. A lot of our dear people today haven't found that out. We've got a strange kind of religion that you can't find in the New Testament.

Anybody put near this willingness to say, sure, I'll take Jesus as Savior. I don't want to go to hell. I want to go to heaven.

I'll take him as Savior, and then they won't have him as Lord. But then, my dear friends, you still don't have him. If you're not willing for him to be the Lord of your life, he's not coming in just to be Savior if he can't be Lord.

Because this verse says that if thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus, that means Savior. That's what Jesus means. If thou shalt confess with thy mouth the Savior as Lord.

I want to ask you in all seriousness, my love, is he your Lord? Let's bow our heads in prayer. You've been very attentive tonight. I want to ask you just this.

If he's not your Lord, if he's not Lord of your life, would you be honest enough and humble enough to slip up a hand out there and say, Brother Havner, by lifting up your hand you're saying, No, I must tell the truth tonight. I claim to be a Christian. I say I take Jesus as my Savior.

But to tell the truth tonight, he's not the Lord of all I am and have. God bless you. Yes, I see that hand already.

Yes, yes, all over the place. He's not Lord of all, but I want him to be. How many have you put up a hand? He's not Lord of all in my life tonight, but I want him to be.

Yes, yes, there are many hands. Put them up everywhere. Lift them high.

It's a little hard to see back there. Yes, God bless you. He's not Lord of all.

Out here on the edge, yes. I claim to be a Christian, but Jesus is not Lord of my life. But I want him to be.

God bless you, boy, over there. There are others. Lift it up.

He's not Lord of all in my life. Revival is making Jesus Lord. Are you willing for him to be Lord of your life, beginning tonight? Are you willing for him to be Lord and Master of all that you are and have? I'm not going to ask you to come down to the front.

The Bible doesn't say anywhere in it that thou shall walk down the aisle and shake hands with the preacher. It says here in Romans 10, 9, and that's the way we're going to do it tonight, if thou shall confess with thy mouth that Jesus is Lord. I'm going to ask you to lift a hand in anybody else that's willing to mean business.

We don't want anybody to do it just to be passing away the time. This is serious. I want everyone that's willing tonight for Jesus to be the Lord of your life from this moment on, Lord of all that you are and all that you have.

If you're willing, I'm going to ask you to stand and say just this, no more. This is not a testimony meeting. I'm going to ask you to stand and say just this, one by one.

I confess Jesus as my Lord. My Bible says, Whosoever shall confess me before men, and that's what we want you to do tonight, him will I confess also before my Father which is in heaven. But whosoever shall deny me before men, him will I also deny before my Father which is in heaven.

There's a great day coming. Jesus said if we're not willing to confess him before people down here, he'll not confess us up there. I'm going to ask you, several hands went up over here on this side to my right and to your left.

Up and down this side a number of hands went up. In order to keep quite a number from getting up at one time, I'm just going to ask over on this side. Will you, if you're willing, for Jesus to be the Lord of your life beginning now, I'm going to ask you to do it the way the New Testament says to do it.

Will you just stand where you are and say just this, I confess Jesus as my Lord. If you mean, you said you wanted him to be Lord tonight. I said a while ago, how many of you are willing for Jesus to be the Lord of your life? And you said you did.

Well, let's do it the way the Bible says to do it. If you're willing for Jesus to be the Lord of your life, will you stand wherever you are back there and just say as the Bible says, I confess Jesus as my Lord.

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