

Crisis-05 Crisis of Authority

by Stephen Olford

Recognizing Jesus Christ as Lord is essential for our salvation and for living a life that is pleasing to God.

Duration: 57:22

Scripture: Acts 2:36, Romans 14:7

Topics: "Accountability To God", "Sharing The Gospel"

Description

In this sermon, the preacher emphasizes the importance of being accountable to God in both life and death. He reminds the audience that every person will give an account of themselves to God. The preacher highlights the need to confess and proclaim Jesus as Lord through both words and actions. He encourages the audience to actively share their faith and speak about Jesus to others. The sermon references Romans 10:9, which states that confessing Jesus as Lord and believing in his resurrection leads to salvation. The preacher also mentions Romans 14:7-12, which speaks about living and dying for the Lord and the future judgment seat of Christ.

Transcript

I want you to turn with me to Paul's letter to the Romans, and the 14th chapter. Romans, chapter 14. We'll break in, if we may, at verse 7. Romans, chapter 14, and verse 7. For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

For if we live, we live to the Lord. If we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord.

For to this end, Christ died and rose and lived again, that he might be Lord, both of the dead and of the living. But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.

So each of us shall give an account of himself to God. I also want to welcome those who have joined us for this mid-week meeting, and especially this evening session on the theme we've adopted for this Keswick year, and it's called Crises of the Christian, or, if you prefer, the crises of the Christian. And tonight we're dealing with the crisis of authority.

Last night was the crisis of integrity, and I missed all you colony friends. But you had a good excuse not to be here, and you'll have to hear the tape on that. The crisis of authority.

I suppose if one could reduce our Christian creed to the simplest form, and what a magnificent presentation of a creedal statement we had tonight. If we could reduce the Christian creed to its simplest form, it's, Jesus is Lord, which was expanded to, Jesus Christ is Lord. And from Genesis to Revelation, really that is an amplification of this central truth, that Jesus Christ is Lord.

Experientially, that should be our experience tonight. Eschatologically, as we heard this morning so magnificently, all of history moves on to that climactic moment where everything in heaven and on earth and under the earth is going to declare that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father. So our theme tonight is the crisis of authority.

Under whose authority do you live your life? Is it under the authority of self? Or is it under the authority of Jesus Christ is Lord? There's no great spot here. It's one or the other. It's one or the other.

Now it's interesting how Paul introduces this subject in this particular passage. Paul is dictating a letter to a church he'd never visited. A church meeting in various houses, as the church did in those early days.

A church under persecution, under the vigilantes of the Roman Empire, and especially of Caesar himself and his cohort. And the church was prospering. In fact, the faith of this church had been heard all around the world, the then inhabited world.

But there were problems in that church. And it's amazing that the Holy Spirit should take time to record problems that we might assume were so irrelevant and unimportant. The two problems mentioned right here, apart from the tolerance that we should have for each other and the recognition that we should have for each other, without discrimination and without judgmentalism, the two problems were days and diet.

Days and diet. There were those who believed in keeping certain holy days, while others said, every day is holy for me, and I don't look upon any day as particularly special. Others had scruples about diet.

They wouldn't eat certain food. And they had reasons for that. And Paul reminds these believers that they're not to judge one another on these issues.

Because some people have scruples, and they have reasons for those scruples, and we should respect those scruples. And the strong shouldn't say to the weak, you're so weak, you're totally immature, you need to go to another place, and vice versa. But instead of taking sides with these factions in the church at Rome, Paul breaks right in and says this tremendous statement, with which I opened our reading, no one lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.

If we live, we live unto the Lord. Not unto my brother and my sister, even though that must be taken into account. But ultimately the Lord.

If we die, we die unto the Lord. And then he makes this tremendous statement. It's a crucial verse in the New Testament, and especially in the epistle of Paul to the Romans.

To this end, for this object, Christ both died, number one, rose, number two, and literally lived again. For our purpose tonight, we could say he died, he rose, he lived. Why? That he might be Lord.

Period. And Paul's answer was this. If we all come under the structure of that sovereign authority of Jesus Christ, and answer to him, and answer to him alone as the body, we shall find our oneness in him.

And these divisions, these divisions that are threatening to split the church, will be resolved. And we'll discover that we have mutual recognition of one another, and we shall have mutual toleration of one another. Why? Because we've come under his Lordship.

Under his Lordship. Under his Lordship. The crisis of authority.

But I want to exegete this word, this text, and apply it to us in a very practical way tonight. And before we leave this place, it be my prayer that our song will be, Glory, Hallelujah. Jesus Christ is Lord.

Is Lord. Now let me start by just pointing out that there is a sense in which you can't even be saved unless you recognize that he is God, and therefore Lord. No man can call Jesus Lord but by the Holy Spirit.

That's how Paul the Apostle, Paul, came into salvation. Who art thou, Lord? And then, Lord, what will you have me to do? And something happened in his heart which was confirmed a little later in the street called Straight. In a little room where blinded, he waited for God's messenger to come and teach him the word of God more perfectly.

But I find that in the word of God, this matter of Lordship is a matter of progressive sanctification. We face the crisis of his Lordship every time we face areas in our lives that sometimes become unfolded in a week just like here at Keswick. And we discover there are areas in our lives that weren't under his Lordship.

That weren't under his Lordship. And if we're going to be set free, we've got to recognize his authority in that area as well. Most of you have heard the name of F.B. Meyer if you're students of Christian literature.

And if some of you young people haven't heard the name of F.B. Meyer, let me tell you that he was a Baptist minister in England in another age where, I want to tell you, preaching was at its best. And he was one of the most outstanding orators as a preacher. As a preacher.

I've read his biography. That man had such a way of swaying crowds that he could affect political issues. When he stepped onto a neutral platform and spoke to those issues, the country waited for his voice.

But you know there was a strange absence of anointing upon him. He had the rhetoric. He had the eloquence.

He had the power to communicate. But he didn't have the anointing. The unction of the Holy Spirit.

But he was a hungry, thirsty man. And he went to Keswick. He went to Keswick Convention.

And he heard a message that deeply disturbed him. It was a message that he saw fleshed out in a sportsman. A wonderful figure in those days.

We call him in America the Babe Ruth of F.B. Meyer's day. He was not a baseball hitter. He was a cricketer.

A more superior game. You see, baseball has rules, right? But cricket has laws. And you talk about the laws of cricket.

Not the laws of baseball. As a matter of fact, cricket has become a synonym for fair play. And even here in America you may have heard this term.

If somebody is trying to be a little bit devious, you say, hey, that's not cricket. The laws of cricket. The man was C.T. Studd, who became a missionary to China and then to Africa.

And Norman Grubb has written a book on his life. C.T. Studd was under the authority and lordship of Jesus Christ. And he exuded the power of the Holy Spirit.

And Meyer went to him and said, Studd, what's the secret of your life? He said, the secret of my life is, I've given every key to Jesus Christ as Lord. He has a right to every area of my life. Every key.

And then he turned to F.B. Meyer and he said, have you given him every key? And Meyer said, yes, he's got the bunch. He said, I didn't ask that. I said, have you given every key? Not the bunch.

Have you given every key? And that troubled this preacher. He went home and he couldn't sleep. He got up and he went into his study.

And he began to search his heart. And envisioning it as a kind of a home with many, many rooms, he went through each room of the home of his life. And said, Lord, you've got the key of that room.

You've got the key of that room. You've got the key of that room. And suddenly he came to a door marked private, strictly private.

And he knew that Jesus Christ wasn't Lord of that room. Do you know what it was? His power to preach. His power to preach.

He was scared stiff that if he handed the key of that room to the Lord Jesus, he would be asked to preach messages that weren't popular. He'd be asked to change some of his styles in communicating the message which attracted attention to himself instead of to the Lord Jesus Christ. And a tremendous battle ensued.

But you know, he yielded. And he said, Lord, take that key. And F.B. Meyer became the man that you find in every Christian bookstore today.

Especially his wonderful book, *The Christ Life for the Self Life*. And his wonderful biography. And his wonderful commentary on Hebrew.

The Christ Life for the Self Life. Every key. I want to start right away by asking, has he every key of your life tonight? I mean every key.

The key of your sex life. The key of your courtship. The key of your marriage.

The key of your reading. The key of your television. The key of your eating.

The key of your drinking. The key of your service. The key of your bank book.

Has he every key? Is he Lord of all? Glory, hallelujah. Jesus Christ is Lord. Now what does this text teach us? It teaches us three tremendous things I want you to learn tonight.

To this end Christ both died and rose and lived again that he might be Lord. I want you to notice first of all what I'm going to call the right or right of his Lordship. The right of his Lordship.

If you prefer, the right of his authority over your life. The right of his authority over your life. For we're talking about the crisis of authority.

To this end Christ both died and rose and lived again, or lived, that he might be Lord. You say, what rights has he? Number one, he has the right to purchase you. And he's done that already.

He's done that already. To this end Christ died that he might be Lord. You know, we don't understand the Lordship of Christ unless we associate his Lordship with his death and burial and resurrection.

He died to purchase you as Lord. As a matter of fact, the very word Lord means proprietorship or ownership. Inherent in that word is the idea of ownership and proprietorship.

When the Lord Jesus Christ died at Calvary's Cross, you know something? Young man, young woman, couples here tonight, older people here tonight. When Jesus Christ died on Calvary's Cross, he bought you outright. That's why the Bible tells us that the church which God has purchased with his own blood.

That's why Paul says you're not your own, you're bought with a price. Therefore glorify God in your body and your spirits which are his. That's why Peter says you're not redeemed with corruptible things as silver and gold but with the precious blood of Christ.

You'll be bought outright. That mind is not yours, it's his. Those eyes are not yours, they're his.

Those ears are not yours, they're his. Those lips are not yours, they're his. That tongue is not yours, it's his.

That brain is not yours, it's his. Those hands are not yours, they are his. Those feet are not yours, they're his.

That body is not yours, it is his. He is Lord. He has the right to purchase you.

And he purchased you on Calvary's Cross. Why? Because you were a slave, carnal, sold unto sin. And you were about to be destroyed.

And he broke into the situation and with his own blood he redeemed you, he bought you, he purchased you. And you're his. You're his by creation.

You're his by redemption. You're his by direction. But you're his, you're bought.

He died to purchase you. But he rose to pardon you. He rose to pardon you.

Christ both died and rose that he might be Lord. That he might be Lord. There's a wonderful little verse tucked away here in the fourth chapter of this epistle.

And it reads like this. And I was meditating upon it this afternoon. Jesus Christ, our Lord, the last two verses.

Jesus Christ, our Lord, who was delivered on account of our offenses and raised on account of our justification. He rose to pardon you. We know that Jesus pardoned people even before he went to the

cross because he was God of very God.

He said, your sins be forgiven you, to that paralytic. And his critics cried out, only God can forgive sins. Well, of course, he was God.

But he went to the cross to demonstrate and vindicate that fact in that he died and rose again that you might be justified, declared righteous, pardoned. I love the story. I love the story of Thomas.

Doubting Thomas, who wasn't there when Jesus first appeared in resurrection. And said explicitly, except I see in his hands the print of a nail and in his feet and thrust my hand into his side, I will not believe. The next time the Lord Jesus appeared, Thomas was there.

And that precious savior, with gentle rebuke and yet with charm, absolute charm, says, Thomas, come to me. Put your hand into these scars of mine. There's my hand, there's my side.

Don't be faithless, but believing. Here he was standing in resurrection power with the marks of Calvary. And what was the response to Calvary and to resurrection? What was the response? Thomas dropped on his knees and he cried, my Lord and my God.

He is Lord. That's why you can be pardoned. Won't you say tonight, my Lord and my God.

Perhaps you've never prayed that prayer. My Lord and my God. He died to purchase you as Lord.

He has the right. He rose to pardon you as Lord. He has the right.

He lives to possess you as Lord. He has the right. You see, man was made to be inhabited.

And if he doesn't inhabit you, as you are hearing in song tonight, by the power of the indwelling Christ, if the Lordship of Christ isn't made real in you tonight by the indwelling Holy Spirit, then, my friend, you are indwelt by another spirit. It was to religious people, I repeat, to religious people that Jesus said, You are of your father the devil. Jesus talks about the spirit of Satan, of the devil working in the children of disobedience.

So, my friend, if you are not indwelt by the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit tonight, then you are indwelt by an evil spirit. And I want to say something very important here. Unless you make Jesus Christ Lord, you're a sitting duck for the devil.

That's true even of Christians here tonight. I want to illustrate it. I want to illustrate it.

First, with the life of Peter. You remember after Peter made that tremendous confession of faith, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God. Jesus said, Peter, I want to tell you something.

Flesh and blood hasn't revealed this to you. My Father has revealed this to you by His Spirit. This is a tremendous revelation you have, that I am the Christ, the Son of the living God.

You read the next few verses, and Jesus says in a more sober tone, I am going to the cross. I'm going to be taken by Jews, and I'm going to be taken by Romans, and I'm going to be taken by Greeks, and I'm going to be crucified, and I'm going to die, and I'm going to rise again. And Peter immediately takes hold of him.

It's a strong verb. And rebukes him, and says, no way, no way. You're going to get power, you're going to get glory, you're going to get your kingdom through some other means, not by way of the cross.

You're not going through that suffering. You're not going to go to Calvary. No way, Lord, no way.

And Jesus had to turn to the man who said, Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God, and said, Satan, get behind me. For your talking language, that is totally carnal. Language calculated to dodge Calvary.

And you're an offense unto me. Now Peter had to wait until after the resurrection to learn that lesson completely, because he wasn't prepared to make Jesus undisputed Lord, and bow to what Calvary means. You know what happened? When the chips were down, he denied his Lord with oaths and cursing.

And this Peter, who said, Lord, if everybody runs away from you, I won't, I won't, I won't, had to giggle a little girl, and some questions concerning his association with Jesus, he denied his Lord, and then went out with oaths and cursing. Unbelievable, unbelievable. Illustration number two, Ananias and Sapphira, members of the church in Jerusalem, they had seen Barnabas come and lay down his rich treasures through the sale of real estate in Cyprus, and heard that his name had been changed from Joseph to really the fulfilled man, Barnabas, Barnabas.

Paraphrase, the spirit-filled man. And Ananias said to Sapphira, if that's how we get filled with the Holy Spirit, let's also bring a gift and put it down. But don't give everything, don't give everything.

Give part in the name of the whole. And they decided to deceive the church and to lie to God. And they came, first one and then the other, and presented their gift and made their little statement.

And the discerning Peter said, you have not lied unto men, you've lied unto God. And instantly the judgment of God fell on husband and then on wife. They dropped dead, were wrapped up in grave clothes and buried.

Why? Because Jesus Christ wasn't Lord. You are a sitting duck for any attack of Satan unless Jesus Christ is Lord. Not only tonight but day by day with a reaffirmation as you face a new day with all its challenge.

So I say to the youngest young person here, and it's wonderful to see so many young people here tonight, is Jesus Christ Lord of your courtship? Is He Lord of the friends you are after? Is He Lord of your private life? Is He Lord of all? Is Jesus Christ Lord? He has the right to be Lord. Why? He purchased you. He pardoned you.

He possesses you if you are born again at all. Make Him Lord. Undisputed Lord.

So go a little deeper into the text and notice not only the rights of His authority and Lordship, but notice the realm of His authority and Lordship. There are two realms mentioned here. He is Lord both of the dead and the living.

Now I want to reverse that. He is Lord both of the living and the dead. There are only two realms, life and death.

Either we're in the realm of the living or we're in the realm of the dead, says Paul. And He is Lord of both. He's Lord of the living.

He's Lord of the dead. In life we are responsible to Him. In death we are accountable to Him.

In life we are responsible to Him. He is Lord of the living. He is Lord of the living.

Do you know what are the greatest problems in America at this hour? In the home, in the church, in the community, in the nation, and in every area you can think of. It is one word, irresponsibility. Irresponsibility.

As far as Christians are concerned, I believe it is a direct result of preaching cheap grace. Turning the grace of God into lasciviousness, a form of antinomianism that we were talking about. In other words, let's sin.

For the more we sin, the more the grace of God will be poured out. And so you have all the sexual perversions. You have all the lying.

You have all the cheating. You have all the shallowness of preaching. You have pulpits become nothing more than what I would call a vaudeville show.

And we have all this going on. Why? Why? Because Jesus Christ isn't Lord. We are irresponsible.

We live irresponsibly. But I want to remind you that Jesus Christ is Lord, whether we acknowledge Him or not. And it doesn't matter in what area we talk about tonight.

He regards us as responsible for our deeds. Not only our deeds, our thoughts. Not only our thoughts, our motives.

Unless Jesus Christ is Lord, oh my friend, I want to tell you, you're heading for disaster. You're heading for disaster. But let me hurry to point out, if we are responsible to Him in life, we are accountable to Him in death.

We'll doubtless be hearing something about that tomorrow morning after that tremendous message on the Lord's return at the Bible study this morning. But I want to remind you, Christian people, that what Paul says here is absolutely true. Every man shall give an account of himself to God.

To this end, Christ both died and rose and lived again, that he might be Lord. So then, every one of us shall give an account of himself to God. For in that day, as today, every knee shall bow, every tongue confess to God.

One day, a great white throne is going to be raised and suspended in space. And all who have rejected Jesus Christ as Saviour and Lord will be judged according to their deeds. And because they have not named Him Lord in this life, they'll be sent into everlasting darkness.

The Bible calls it hell, the second death. That's Solomon us, and I want you to face that. But there is another judgment, it's called the judgment seat of Christ, the behemoth, where all of us are going to be judged.

It's a subject we don't hear very much about today. But it's mentioned right here in this chapter, it's mentioned in 1 Corinthians 3, it's mentioned in 2 Corinthians 5. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ, and we shall be judged for the things done in the body, whether they be good or bad. We shall not be judged as sinners, that was done at the cross.

We shall not be judged as sons, we are being judged now and disciplined as sons, that we might produce the peaceable fruit of righteousness. But at the judgment seat of Christ, we shall be judged as servants. And if we've lived under His Lordship, in the power of the Holy Spirit, we shall be able to come before that judgment seat of Christ and say, Lord Jesus, here am I, and the children you've given me, the people I've witnessed to, here am I, Lord.

And we'll present our gold and silver and precious stones, and we shall hear Him say, well done, good and faithful servant, enter into the joy of my Lord. If we haven't lived under His Lordship, and therefore have lived carnally and selfishly, we'll have nothing to hand to Him than the wood and hay and stubble, the straw of a wasted life. And we'll see those substances, symbolically speaking, burned up, and we'll have the inexorable shame of picking up the charred embers of our wasted lives and putting those charred embers into His pierced hands.

We are responsible to Him in life. We are accountable to Him in death. Why? Because Jesus Christ is Lord, the realm of His authority as Lord.

We've looked at the right. Those are the realms. But all authority structure has rules, and we have the rules of His authority right in our text here, right in our text.

Now, in the prophetic present, the Apostle Paul projects that day as if it were right there in the church in Rome, and he quotes from the Old Testament, and he says, listen to the language. He says, as I live, says Yahweh, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. Now, we sang that in a chorus a few moments ago, and it has a tremendous implication.

One day, as I pointed out already, all in heaven, all on earth, and all under the earth are going to bow the knee and confess that Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of God the Father. Do you know this? That even Satan, even Satan, who will be thrown into the bottomless pit, will have the abject humiliation of bowing at the feet of Jesus and saying, you are Lord, and then have to go to hell. Not only to hell, the bottomless pit.

But I want to say, and I want to say it from the depths of my heart, the principles that will obtain in that day, obtain and prevail right now. And they really are two rules that are of comprehensive ramification. One, submission to Christ as Lord.

Two, confession of Christ as Lord. Let's look at it together. First of all, submission to Christ as Lord in every area of our lives.

In every area of our lives. Submission to Christ as Lord in every area of our lives. That's the bent knee.

That's the bent knee. That's submission. That's submission.

Now the Bible teaches us, as I'm going to be explaining more explicitly tomorrow night, that there are three circles that represent our lives. There is the circle of the home life, there is the circle of the church life, there is the circle of the world life. And in each of those areas, Jesus Christ must be Lord.

We must submit to His Lordship, first of all, in the home. In the home. We must recognize the authority of the home.

And you know how God has organized and structured the authority of the home? The husband must bow to the rulership of Christ as head. As head. Head of the home.

The wife is to submit to the leadership of the man as head of the home. The children are to submit to the wonderful care and protection of husband and wife. What we call parenthood.

Why? Because God has ruled it that way. Children, obey your parents in the Lord. Wives are to obey their husbands.

And the word obey is in the Bible. Obey. Not just submit.

Obey. And the husband is to obey his Lord in everything. And when that chain of command works out, as we're going to see tomorrow, that's when the Holy Spirit floods the life with agape love, and the home comes together as a home should be.

And without it, the home is destined to destruction. And you young people getting married now, and you young people thinking of getting married, I want to tell you, unless Jesus Christ is Lord of your home, I want to tell you, you are headed for disappointment and disaster. But it's not only unconditional submission in the area of the home.

It's unconditional submission in the area of the church. In the area of the church. Jesus Christ is the head of the church.

And as the head of the church, he has appointed his leaders in the church. And those leaders in the church have an awesome responsibility. And I speak for a moment to pastors here, but I also speak to members here.

And I'm speaking now from verses that are rarely heard today. Because the preacher's a puppet today, or a pope, one or the other. But when I read my Bible, I hear these words.

And God is speaking by the inspiration of the Holy Spirit. And he says, to leaders, to leaders, and to members, obey them that have the rule over you. Literally, the rulership, the leadership over you.

And submit yourselves. For they watch for your souls, as they that must give an account, that they may do it with joy and not with fear. For that would be, listen, that would be unprofitable unto you.

Unprofitable unto you. Where? At the judgment seat of Christ. When a preacher stands behind this holy desk, his task is to preach the inerrant truth of God, and demand obedience to truth.

Not to him, not to rhetoric, not to eloquence, but to truth. For truth is preached for obedience. And if it's not for obedience, you're not preaching.

But with doctrine there must be discipline. And failure to obey must be disciplined in the church. Disciplined in the church.

And when that authority is disregarded, a church becomes just like, listen, apostate Israel long ago. There was no judge or king in those days, and everyone did that which was right in his own eyes. And that is characteristic of both churches.

We're talking about lordship. We're talking about authority. And that's the word of God.

And what about the world? What about the world? Listen to this text, and I could quote many more. Submit yourselves to every ordinance of man, to every creation of man, for the Lord's sake. You say, what does

that mean? It means everything that you do.

It means punctuality at your job. It means writing that examination paper without cribbing. It means filling out your tax income tax form correctly and honestly.

It means keeping the speed limit where it says 65. It's 65. It means giving the right shade.

It means behaving as a considerate Christian. It means all those things. It means everything where the rubber touches the road.

He is Lord. It means respecting your leaders. Not because they happen to be perfect men, because we'll never have a perfect society down here, but that you respect the leadership and the officialdom behind it, as Paul teaches in this very epistle in the 13th chapter, that all leaders are ordained of God.

Bush, right now, President George Bush is a deacon under God. A deacon under God. And if he doesn't behave as the President should do, he's going to answer.

He's going to answer one day. If he's a sage man at the judgment seat of Christ. If he isn't, at the great white throne.

We can't fool with God. We can't fool with God. And I don't care how China's running its government now, one kind of government is better than anarchy.

There's either democracy or dictatorship, but anarchy is absolute disaster for any country, as we see right now in Lebanon. God recognizes power. And the wonderful thing is that the gospel with its dynamism can work in every kind of authority.

Because ultimately, God is on the throne. But when it comes down to you and me, He must be Lord in the home. He must be Lord in the church.

He must be Lord in the world in which you live. Unconditional submission to Jesus Christ as Lord in every area of life. Have you got the message? You got the message? But I want to add something more.

And it's the climax of all we have to say. Not only the bended knee, but the open mouth. Not only unconditional submission to Jesus Christ as Lord in every area of life, but unashamed confession of Jesus Christ as Lord in every area of our life.

Now, many of us here in silence can say, Yes, Lord, I bend my knee. I bend my knee. And I'm obeying that message.

And I'm going to make Him Lord in my home. I'm going to make Him Lord in my church. I'm going to make Him Lord in my world.

Lord, I really mean that. And then you leave this place with sealed lips. And opportunities occur right, left and center.

And you don't open your mouth to confess Jesus Christ as Lord. You have repudiated His Lordship. If we understood Lordship, if we understood Lordship aright, I want to tell you something.

There'd be nothing, nothing fulfilling every church with people, people seeking Jesus Christ. Because every day of our lives, we would be witnessing, witnessing, witnessing. And I want to tell you, even though

there is an element that will never respond to the gospel of Jesus Christ, they have destined themselves to destruction anyway.

I want to say there are a lot of hungry people, a lot of hungry people, who want to hear the message of life, but they can't hear it with sealed lips. That's why Paul says in this very epistle, in chapter 9, Romans 10 rather, and 9, he says, If thou shalt confess with thy mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in thine heart that God hath raised him from the dead, thou shalt be saved. Now that's how a person comes into salvation.

But salvation is not just initial, it's continual. We go on confessing, because Paul says, How can people hear this message of faith unless, unless they preach? And how shall they preach except they be sent? And he's talking about, he's talking about confessing, proclaiming Christ as Lord. Now obviously, you've got to confess Him by the way you live, as well as by the way you speak.

For if the way you live does not match the way you speak, you've cancelled out what you say. You've cancelled out what you say. You speak with your eyes, you speak with your lips, you speak with a handshake, you speak with those vibes that come out of your personality, that you're consciously walking in the light under the power of the Holy Spirit.

But you speak with your lips when you enunciate, when you spell out very simply how you love Jesus, how you love Jesus, how you love Jesus. How many of you have said a word for the Lord Jesus today on the beach? How many of you have said a word, perhaps, to somebody in the shop? How many of you have witnessed to the Lord Jesus this past month? Maybe this past year. I want to say something, and I want to say it from the bottom of my heart.

I believe, I believe that we've copped out. Billy Graham would be the very first man to admit it if he were to stand here to say, I see my friend for fifty years a bosom pal. We've talked about this and prayed about it.

And I thank God that just recently there in that great metropolitan area of London, he was able, with 230 live links, to speak to 1.2 million people. And thousands have come to Christ. And God has used this man of God as the spokesman for evangelism.

But we've copped out and said, leave it to Billy Graham. We'll live very comfortably, thank you. And you've sealed your mouth.

We've left it to the televangelists and see what's happened there. And we've left it to pulpiteers. And do you know what the average, average in this country is? The evangelical pastors of our land represent the worst witnessing group.

And I say it to our shame. Only five percent of evangelical pastors have led people to Christ one on one. Five percent.

It's left to the pulpit. It's left to the pulpit. I believe a church should be a worshiping community where the Word of God is so expounded that people just drink it in and take it in and then go out Monday, Tuesday, Wednesday, Thursday, Friday, Saturday witnessing, confessing to Jesus Christ.

And whether or not Jesus Christ is Lord, following this week, will be determined by how often and when you confess Jesus Christ. Jesus Christ as Lord. In your daily witness.

In your daily witness. At work, at play, in the community, on the golf course, the racquetball court, wherever it is. Confessing Jesus Christ as Lord.

Now my question is, as you face this crisis of authority, at what point, at what point are you going to say, Glory, Hallelujah, Jesus Christ is Lord of all. For I want to finish with John Hudson Taylor's great statement, Jesus Christ is either Lord of all or not Lord at all. Now sure, new areas of your life are going to be exposed.

Perhaps even tomorrow night, tomorrow morning. But the attitude that you set tonight will determine whether you bring His Lordship and authority over those areas immediately, without any question. Because as far as I know, Lord Jesus, everything is under your Lordship.

You have every key. Every key. Now you all heard me give my testimony briefly on the opening night of this Keswick week.

And I told you there was a tremendous crisis I faced on Lordship, at Keswick Convention, on the issue of where I would serve Christ. Under the ministry of that wonderful man, my professor and mentor of homiletics, Dr. Graham Scoggins. And subsequently I heard him preach that same message at Keswick, and give an invitation.

Later on he shared with us something that happened in that great convention. Many came forward to declare publicly and confess that Jesus Christ was Lord, in the line, as they made their commitment in that great evening service. But one young lady remained behind, looked up into his face and said, Dr. Scoggins, I want Him to be Lord.

I want Him to be Lord. I want Him to be Lord of all. But I'm scared stiff that He will send me to Africa.

I don't want to go to Africa. I don't like mosquitoes. I don't like snakes.

I don't like this. And I just don't want to make Him Lord. Without having to pause, Graham Scoggins opened his Bible at Act 10, and read that story of the vision that God gave to Peter when he was a racist and discriminated against Jews and Gentiles.

Or rather, discriminated against Gentiles being a Jew. And God had to teach him a lesson. And He caused a vision of a sheep to come down from heaven, of all manner of animals.

And there was a command, Rise, Peter, kill and eat! And shrinking back from eating everything, Peter said, Not so, Lord. And pointing at those words, not so, he left the story and he said, Young lady, no slave dictates to his master. No Christian dictates to Jesus Christ as Lord.

The issue is clear. Either you say tonight, Not so, or you strike those words out and you say, Lord. But you can't say both.

It's a contradiction in terms to say, Not so, Lord. You can't say, Not so, Lord. And leaving his Bible open at that page and that sentence, he slipped away while that girl sat there and looked at those words.

Very quietly he prayed in the distance there that God would break through to that life. He looked over and saw her shoulders convulsing as she wept. He came quietly behind and looked over her back onto that Bible.

Now, tears stayed. And guess what she had done? She had poured out the words, Not so. And she was quietly saying, Your Lord.

Your Lord. You are Lord of all. I put it to you tonight.

Not so, Lord. You can't say both. Tonight you go out saying, Not so.

You take the consequence. Or you say tonight, Lord. You are Lord of all.

For in the theme of tonight, glory in the highest. Jesus Christ is my Lord. Let's bow together in prayer.

As we've done each night, I'm opening the altar again tonight to front of this auditorium. For unashamed submission. And an unashamed confession to Jesus Christ as Lord.

The crisis of authority. We've come a long way since the first night. We've been traveling down the crises, we need to say it.

But to me, there is a sense in which tonight is pivotal. Absolutely pivotal. And there may be Christians here who've been on the way longer than I have.

And you could come and expound this passage much more profoundly than I can. But somehow or other, like a dear man who came to me last night and hugged me, he said, Two years ago, I came to one of the evening services and was convicted by a remark you made about a casual Christian. The casual Christian.

And I was so convicted, I repented. And surrendered my life to Christ as Lord, especially in relation to my daily devotion. And I haven't missed my devotion for two years.

And I want to thank you. And he gave me a big hug. You can't be casual.

Or callous. Or even callous. About tonight's message.

And I want to ask, have you given him every key? Every key. Every key. Of every area of your life.

Is he Lord of all? And if this applies to all of us. And we jam the aisles. Because we want to respond and respond without shame.

Without sham. Without shrinking to the fact that we're making him Lord of all. Or reaffirming his Lordship in a way that God has impressed upon your spirit tonight.

Then I don't want you to hold back. I don't want you to hold back. Because I want to tell you this.

All the fullness of blessings in the Holy Spirit that we're going to talk about tomorrow night. Will not take place. Unless this issue of Lordship is settled tonight.

Is settled tonight. I want to pray a simple prayer I sometimes use in my quiet time. And I'm going to pray it twice.

First to show you how it goes. And then for you to pray it in your own heart. And then I'm going to ask you to confess.

That you have meant that prayer. And you intend to follow this crisis by a process. This act of commitment.

By an attitude of communion. That Jesus Christ is Lord. Here are the words.

Lord of every thought and action. Lord to send. And Lord to stay.

Lord in writing, speaking, giving. Lord of all things to obey. Lord of all there is of me.

Now and evermore to be. Will you pray that prayer? Lord of every thought and action. Lord to send and Lord to stay.

Lord of writing, speaking, giving. Lord of all things to obey. Lord of all there is of me.

Now and evermore to be. Lord hear the prayers that ascend to heaven. And here tonight do the most permanent and lasting work.

For your glory and for the blessing of your people. For we know that to make Jesus Christ Lord. Is to glorify the Father.

Hear this prayer Lord. And harvest the fruit of response here tonight. We ask it in the name of Jesus Christ our Lord.

Amen.

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