



Lord of All?

“God tested Abraham, and said to him, ‘Abraham!’ And he said, ‘Here I am.’ Then He said, ‘Take now your son, your only son Isaac, whom you love, and go to the land of Moriah, and offer him there...” —Genesis 22:1-2

Ed Dobson, a passionate minister was teaching a congregation about the importance of “*putting all on the altar*” in total submission to the Lordship of Christ. After the gottesdienst (service), one old German farmer approached him to talk about this. He told the minister how he owned eight cows, they were all dying, and of course this would eventually mean significant financial loss. The man had dreaded the whole idea and was very stressed-out as he struggled over what might happen and the ensuing difficulty in accepting this as God’s will. How could such a bad thing even be allowed by such a good God? But then he explained that, “*Because of your message tonight, I have found peace. Tonight I put them all on the altar.*”

What became of his bovines I don’t know, but I do know that the Lordship of Christ touches every area, every relationship and every concern of our lives. And honesty and intimacy in prayer helps in this. If we are willing to submit to Jesus, any loss in life will be seen as an opportunity of giving back to God what is rightfully His and trusting Him to provide for us what is needed. We all hate loss but God allows it sometimes for our development and His glory. The Bible says, “***All things work together for good to those who love God, to those who are the called according to His purpose***” (Rom. 8:28).

We don’t have to understand everything. When God told His friend, Abraham, to sacrifice his son, Isaac, He seemed to be undermining His own purposes. Isaac was the “*son of promise*” through whom God would bless the world. How could God turn so fickle on his leader? Yet with all that was happening, Abraham’s faith had grown strong. He might have felt baffled and totally perplexed by the divine command, but “***Abraham said, My son, God will provide himself a lamb***” (Gen. 22:8). In fact, God did just that. It was in the Person of His only Son, Jesus Christ. Two fathers suffered a similar pain. Now Abe and his Friend, our heavenly Father, could really relate to each other on a different level. Abe was closer and trusted God more.

The issue is the same for us. Can we entrust everything to God—our possessions, job, health, ministry and family? Have you made what matters to you most, God’s deal? If we commit ourselves to Christ daily – and all through the day – as we thank Him heartily for

every blessing, our confidence in Him will survive any test. We will learn to trust Him like never before.

*You have longed for sweet peace and for faith to increase,
And have earnestly, fervently prayed;
But you cannot have rest or be perfectly blest
Until all on the altar is laid. —Hoffman*

A person who has come to the Lordship of Jesus Christ is a person who knows and acknowledges the supremacy of the Holy Spirit and lives according to the Spirit. —C. Smith

*If you have received the Spirit and are obeying your Lord, you find He brings your spirit into complete harmony with God, and the sound of your goings and the sound of God's goings are one and the same.
—Oswald Chambers*

Submission to God must be total, not half hearted. And you can't leave Jesus out of this! He is the only way to the Father. This means allowing Jesus to be Lord moment by moment -- loving Him with everything that's in you. When we don't allow Him to be Lord, people will get hurt, the church will be hurt and the Kingdom won't advance as it should. Lordship means taking our hands off of what belongs to Him. It means "Hello, quit playing boss of the Church!" How many Christians have the attitude; *I'll serve Christ when I agree with His commands?* How many pastors have the attitude; *God has made me the head of my church and if they don't agree with me, they're history?* But the church is Christ's, we are Christ's and Jesus leads for the benefit of all. Do we really pray over each issue and look to apply the right verses to the specific challenges we face in our meetings, or does someone merely shoot from the hip in the Name of Jesus ...only to miss Him completely with an apparently good, but shoddy decision?

Shortly before he died in 1963, A. W. Tozer wrote the following: "*Jesus Christ has today almost no authority at all among the groups that call themselves by His name. The present position of Christ in the gospel churches may be likened to a king in a limited, constitutional monarchy. The king (sometimes depersonalized by the term "the Crown") in such a country is no more than a traditional rallying point, a pleasant symbol of unity and loyalty much like a flag or a national anthem. He is lauded, feted and supported, but his real authority is small. Nominally he is head over all, but in every crisis someone else makes the decisions. On formal occasions he appears in royal attire to deliver the tame, colorless speech put into his mouth by the real rulers of the country.. [Even if His headship] is taught as a theory in the classroom, it is rarely applied to practical living. The idea that the Man Christ Jesus has absolute and final authority over the whole church and over all of its members in every detail of their lives is simply not now accepted as true by the rank and file of evangelical Christians.*"

After all these years since this was written, it would be difficult to argue that things have changed a whole lot. Sure, there are cool new lazer-techno-ways of 'being church' or 'doing church' these days. And in some of them, in certain areas of ministry, God is allowed to be the 'Boss'. However, for most of us, in most of what we do, we seek to retain total control of our own lives, using our talents and time as we choose. Our priorities are not His priorities and we don't take what He has to say about how to go about our daily lives very seriously at all. As David Watson wrote in 1978: ***We have neglected our prayer life; we have stopped listening to God; we have been caught by the covetous spirit of our affluent society, and worshipped the false god of materialism. We have exchanged our knowledge of God for heady disputes about theological words, or for religious or social activism. We have forgotten how to be still before God, trapped as we are in the vortex of modern life. We have lost our sense of direction.***

As a result, our busy way of life and conduct are pretty much indistinguishable from that of moderately upright nonbelievers. Surely, the reason why the church is no longer impacting and changing our culture is that we have become like the world! HOW SAD! We are to be other-worldly without coming off as strange.

The other day I had the privilege to serve Lord and Lady Morris. I made dinner reservations for them at a five star restaurant. It was kind of funny as I did, because the hostess at the restaurant kept asking me for the Morris' first names. I kind of had a hunch that she might be going against etiquette or British protocol of sorts in this but I became sure after looking at the expression on Lord Morris' face when he overheard her... he gently corrected her by saying "*It's always only Lord and Lady Morris.*" It was interesting to hear. Of course I feel that all lords need to be shown respect as well as other people do. This man explained how he was a member of the *House of Commons* for 33 years and not too long ago he received permission to appear before the *House of Lords* where he was then accepted to be a part. He now serves as a member of the *House of Lords* and that's something, because no other person has been apart of both houses before. Anyway, he allowed me to chat with him and ask about his responsibilities. Can you imagine how he pours over, inspects and stamps every new UK law? What an important assignment. The next day the Morris' requested a "*porter to be dispatched with a trolley*" to his room for they were planning to fly to Washington DC for business. The personnel at the Hotel Bell-stand looked a bit confused when I relayed the request for him. It was like a request from another world -- they normally don't get asked for a "porter with a trolley to assist a lord."

But think about this: Jesus has a more important assignment today. There's no other Lord of lords under heaven that can act as our High Priest and save us (Acts 4:12). Shouldn't our Lord get the respect He deserves from His subjects inside and outside of His church? We are to reverently and humbly confess Jesus before men, knowing that when we do, we can be sure He will confess us before the Father in heaven. Jesus Christ is the Son of God, our Savior and Lord. We may not know all the theological gravity behind those words -- after all, Peter didn't when he confessed Jesus as Christ -- but we can make a commitment to know Him and follow Him until we do know more. Jesus asks us to open our hearts to his Lordship and begin the wonderful journey toward a fuller knowledge

and experience of Him. Have you settled the Lordship issue or have you only settled the Savior issue? Maybe you've not yet been born again? He loves you and expects obedience because you are not your own. Turn from your sins and certain judgment ahead (that's real popular to hear..). He can empower you today! Don't put it off. Give yourself to the Lord who paid for you with His own blood. ***"You were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's"*** (1 Co. 6:20).

PRAYER: Living God and Holy Father, I believe you sent Jesus as your Son to save me. I repent of bull-headedness, ego, worldliness and self-will. I'm so sorry for hurting you. I confess to you that I want Jesus to be Lord of my life on a daily basis, because I believe him to be your sinless Son and my Savior, who died on a cross to pay the full penalty for my sins. Save me now, in a moment of time as I voice these words. I really mean it. Fill me with your Spirit so I can live a committed life and be used. It is through your Son, the pure Lamb promised in Scripture and in Jesus' mighty Name that I pray this. Thanks, amen!

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