

# DISCIPLESHIP (LORDSHIP) SALVATION

## “walking like mere men”

(check also [apptoteach.org](http://apptoteach.org) theology files #107, #108, #702, #711)

### Key question

Must a person submit to Jesus as Lord of every area of their life before they can be truly born again from God?

### Key text

## I Corinthians 3:3

“for you are still fleshly. For since there is jealousy and strife among you, are you not fleshly, and are you not walking like mere men?”

### Introduction

1. How is the Christian community to view a person who professes to believe in Christ as their Savior from the penalty of sin and yet lives a life that is outwardly unchanged and worldly? If a person persists in sinful practices (lying, stealing sexual misconduct, hatred, coveting etc.) after professing to be a Christian, should the Christian community recognize them as true believers or should they be viewed as false believers who have deceived themselves?
2. When the gospel is presented and people are encouraged to trust Christ, should there be a demand of repentance from sinful deeds in order to be saved or is it just a repentance from false beliefs about Christ as our redeemer and hope of eternal life?
3. Both “easy-believism” and a “front end loading” of the gospel are threats to the orthodox faith. Which is worse and which is most prevalent today?

4. *An analogy*

A wealthy man had three sons who were bound for college but each son had no money to enter the elite school that they had chosen to attend. To the first son, the father said, “I will give you a job that will enable you to earn money so that you can one day pay for your education.” To the second son he said, “I will loan you enough money to go to college but if you fail to make good grades or drop out, you will be expected to pay me back all that I have loaned to you.” To the third son he said, “I will give you enough money to go to college with the expectation that you will finish with good grades, but even if you do not meet my expectations, the money is a free gift to you.” Now which of the three sons’ experience illustrates the grace of the father? The answer is that each of the stories illustrates the father’s grace but in different ways and to different extents.

Which of these three sons' experience best illustrates the Christian Gospel? The first son's experience is not unlike the posture of the legalist whereby God enabled him (by grace) to earn his way to eternal life. We might say that in this case the Gospel is "front end loaded" with the requirement of faithfulness. The second son's experience can be likened to those who "back end load" the Gospel with faithfulness. The grace of God in this case is conditioned upon the faithfulness of the person after he receives salvation. If the believer fails to be faithful he loses his eternal life. The third son's experience can be likened to radical grace where the gift is unconditional. It is expected that the believer will be faithful and meet the demands of the Kingdom but even if he does not, he still retains the gift of eternal life.

This analogy frames the debate that continues within the Christian community today. There is general agreement that the experience of the first son does not represent the Gospel. But there is not a clear agreement as to which of the other two sons best illustrates the true Gospel. Is the gift of eternal life conditioned on the faithfulness of the recipient? Is true faith marked by faithfulness? We might call the second son's experience the Discipleship Salvation position and the third son's experience, the Free Grace position.

5. Which of these statements best captures your understanding?
  - a. While all who will be saved are saved on the basis of Christ's substitutionary atonement, it is possible that some will be saved without hearing the gospel as we know it.
  - b. In order to be saved, you must simply hear the gospel and pray the sinner's prayer.
  - c. In order to be saved, you must simply profess sincere faith in Christ as God.
  - d. In order to be saved, you must change your mind with regard to Christ and place your faith in Him apart from yourself, as your righteousness.
  - e. In order to be saved, you must place your trust in Christ and turn away from all known sin in your life (at the time of your profession of faith).
  - f. In order to be saved, you must continually place every area of your life under the Lordship (control) of Christ.
  - g. In order to be saved, you must place your faith in Christ and continue to abstain from all known sin with the power of the Holy Spirit.
  - h. In order to be saved, you must place your faith in Christ as Lord of every area of your life and be baptized by immersion for the remission of sins.
6. What is the meaning of "Lordship Salvation?" Note that a more accurate term might be "discipleship salvation" in that neither position is challenging the Lordship of Christ. The real issue is – Must a believer be a successful follower (disciple) in order to be justified?
  - a. **Not everyone** who professes to be a Christian really is saved.
  - b. We will know true Christians by their **obedience** to the moral law of God.
  - c. We must come **to** Christ and follow **after** Him if He is to save us.
  - d. A true believer **cannot** live in sin.

A. **What is the controversy surrounding "Lordship Salvation?"**

1. The issue has to do with the relationship between
  - a. faith and faithfulness
  - b. grace and law
  - c. confession and conduct

- d. justification and sanctification
  - e. commitment to Jesus as Savior and following Him as Master or Lord
  - f. salvation and discipleship
  - g. coming TO Christ and following AFTER Christ
2. Those who advocate the “**Lordship Salvation**” position hold that they are protecting the true gospel from the unbiblical notion of antinomianism. They hold the following beliefs:
- a. A person cannot receive the benefits of salvation by just intellectually confessing Jesus as Savior.
  - b. There must be repentance from sinful deeds if a person is to be truly justified.
  - c. Saving faith results in the acknowledgment of Jesus as Lord and is identified by a posture of active obedience and conformity to the moral teaching of Jesus.
  - d. Justification is by faith apart from works but the required marker of justification is a changed life. If the life is not changed, the faith is not a justifying faith.
  - e. The fear of radical grace is that it will undermine the fear of a holy God. It is believed that “Where grace abounds sin will all the more abound.”
  - f. Some of the terms used to talk about opponents of Lordship Salvation:
    - Antinomian** — opposed to any moral law
    - Easy-believism** — no moral demands are made on those who are saved
    - Cheap grace** — grace that demands nothing from those who receive it.
  - g. Christ preaches several parables where he makes it plain that there is a high cost for discipleship (Matt.10:38; 16:24; Luke 14:25-27) and true commitment demands complete surrender of everything (Matt.19:16, 21; Mark 10:23; Luke 14:33).
  - h. Several of the calls to salvation in Acts use the word repentance (Acts 2:38; 11:18), which is always defined as “turning from sin” as does John the Baptist and Christ in the early part of his ministry (Mark 1:4; Matt.3:2; 11:20). These passages are seen as proof that one must fully repent (from all sin) and make a total commitment to Christ before one can be saved.
  - i. It is the will of God that all men be preserved or that all men will continue in a godly life until the end (I Tim.4:16; Heb.10:36). If anyone does not persevere, he must doubt whether his faith was true and therefore if his salvation is secure. Several “tests” have been proposed to determine if a professing believer is truly saved (using texts such as I John).
  - j. In Jn.8:31 we read, “Jesus therefore was saying to those Jews **who had believed Him**, ‘If you abide in My word then you are truly disciples of Mine;’” later in verse 44 He says, “**you are of your father the devil**” suggesting that they really did not believe unto salvation. See also Jn.2:23-24.
  - k. Much of the support for Lordship salvation comes from the teaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels. Note the following demands or conditions that are linked to forgiveness and eternal life in Matthew. It is hard to see how this teaching can be consistent with the Gospel of Grace in the epistles. Could it be that Jesus’ teaching is set in a unique and different context than that of Paul?
    - 1. As some Jewish religious leaders came to John the Baptist for baptism they were turned away with these words “**bring forth fruit** in keeping with your repentance” (Matt.2:8)

2. Jesus began his ministry with words like “unless your **righteousness surpasses that of the scribes and Pharisees**, you shall not enter the kingdom of heaven.” (Matt.5:20).
3. The Sermon on the Mount is full of warnings about failing to fulfill the spirit of the Law. “whoever shall say ‘you fool’ shall be **guilty enough to go into the hell of fire**.” (Matt.5:22-23).
4. Matt.5:29-30 “And if your right eye makes you stumble, tear it out, and throw it from you; for **it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be thrown into hell**. And if your right hand makes you stumble, cut it off, and throw it from you for it is better for you that one of the parts of your body perish, than for your whole body to be into hell.” (also Matt.18:8-9)
5. Matt.6:14-15 “For if you forgive men for their transgressions, your heavenly Father will also forgive you. But **if you do not forgive men, then your Father will not forgive your transgressions**.”
6. Matt.7:19 “Every tree that does not **bear good fruit** is cut down and thrown into the fire.”
7. Matt.7:21-23 “Not every one who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ will enter the kingdom of heaven; but he who **does** the will of My Father who is in heaven. Many will say to Me on that day, ‘Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in Your name, and in Your name cast out demons, and in Your name perform many miracles?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who **practice** lawlessness.’”
8. Matt.10:33 “But whoever shall **deny Me** before men, I will also deny him before My Father who is in heaven.”
9. Matt.12:36-37 “And I say to you, that every careless word that men shall speak, they shall render account for it in the day of judgment. For **by your words you shall be justified, and by your words you shall be condemned**.”
10. Matt.12:50 “for whoever shall **do** the will of My Father who is in heaven, he is My brother and sister and mother.”
11. Matt.13:49-50 “So it will be at the end of the age; the angels shall come forth, and take out the wicked from among the **righteous**, and will cast them into the furnace of fire; there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
12. In Matt.18:21-35 Jesus tells us a story about an ungrateful servant who is forgiven much but refuses to forgive a small debt. In the story, the master repents of his forgiving the ungrateful steward and forces him to pay. Jesus then concludes with, “**So shall My heavenly Father also do to you, if each of you does not forgive his brother from your heart**.”
13. In Matt.19:16-26 Jesus confronts the Rich Young Ruler who asks what he must do to obtain eternal life. Jesus responds with, “If you wish to be complete, go and **sell your possessions and give to the poor, and you shall have treasure in heaven**; and come, follow Me.”
14. In Matt.24:42-51 Jesus tells the story of the slave who wrongly assumes that his master will not come to checkup on him so he behaves badly. Jesus concludes the story with, “the master of that slave will come on a day when he does not expect him and at an hour which he does not know. And shall **cut him in pieces and assign him a place with the hypocrites; weeping shall be there and the gnashing of teeth**.”

15. In Matt.25:14-30 Jesus gives us the parable of the talents and says of the servant to did not wisely invest his talents, “And **cast out the worthless slave** into the outer darkness; in that place there shall be weeping and gnashing of teeth.”
16. Jesus’ teaching on the final judgment of the nations concludes with these words, “Then He will answer them, saying, ‘truly I say to you, to the extent that you did not **do** it to one of the least of these, you did not do it to Me.’ And there will **go away into eternal punishment, but the righteous into eternal life.**” (Matt.25:45-46)
  1. Some of those who have written in support of this position are:
    - John F. MacArthur Jr. *The Gospel According to Jesus; The Gospel According to the Apostles - Peter, James, John*
    - Arthur W. Pink *Studies on Saving Faith*
    - John R. Stott *Basic Christianity*
  3. Those who advocate a “**Free Grace**” position claim that they are protecting the gospel of grace from the unbiblical heresy of salvation by works. They hold the following beliefs:
    - a. The wedding of faith and faithfulness is **contrary to the gospel of grace.**
    - b. While it is normally expected that justification by faith will result in sanctification (faithfulness) in practice, it is **not always the case at least in an outward sense.**
    - c. Often, people come to surrender control of their lives to the power of Christ sometime **after** they have experienced His gracious acceptance through faith.
    - d. Once we begin to require conformity to holiness as a part of saving faith we have the difficult task of determining **which sins is a believer permitted to struggle with** or continue in and still be received as a Christian. Is it permissible for a true Christian to have unresolved anger, jealousy, covetousness, gluttony, materialism, etc. Why would such sins be tolerated more than substance abuse, fornication, lying, etc.?
    - e. Some of the terms used in talking about supporters of “Lordship Salvation”:
      - “**A New Romanism**” — a move toward a Roman Catholic views of justification.
      - “**Preaching another gospel**” — contrary to the gospel of Paul.
      - “**Legalism**” — reliance on obedience to the law to be assured of God’s favor.
    - f. Advocates of Radical Grace point out that the Gospel of the Kingdom that Jesus proclaimed was distinct in some ways from the Gospel of the Cross and Resurrection (that was preached after the cross and resurrection). Not apttoteach.org theology files #805, #107, #108 for more details.
      - **Acts 11:17** “If God therefore gave to them the same gift as He gave to us also after believing in the Lord Jesus Christ, who was I that I could stand in God's way?” (to baptize)
      - **Jn.1:12** “But as many as received Him, to them He gave the right to become children of God, even to those who believe in His name:”
      - **Jn.3:14-16** “that whoever believes may in Him have eternal life.”
      - **Jn.7:37-40** “every one who beholds the Son, and believes in Him, may have eternal life;”
      - **Acts 10:43** “that through His name every one who believes in Him has received forgiveness of sins.”
      - **Acts 13:38-39** “through Him every one who believes is freed”
      - **Acts 15:9** “cleansing their hearts by faith.”

- **Rom.3:21-4:8** “But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as righteousness.”
  - **Rom.9:33** “and he who believes in Him shall not be disappointed.”
  - **Rom.10:10** “for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation.”
  - **I Cor.1:21** “to save those who believe”
  - **Gal.2:16** “a man is not justified by the works of the Law but through faith in Christ Jesus”
  - **Gal.3:2** “Did you receive the Spirit by the works of the Law, or by hearing with faith?”
  - **Gal.3:26** “For you are all sons of God through faith in Christ Jesus.”
  - **Eph.1:13** “having also believed, you were sealed in Him”
  - **Eph.2:8-10** “For by grace you have been saved through faith; and that not of yourselves, it is the gift of God”
  - **I Tim.1:16** “for those who would believe in Him for eternal life.”
  - **I Pet.1:8-9** “and though you have not seen Him, you love Him, and though you do not see Him now, but believe in Him, you greatly rejoice with joy inexpressible and full of glory, obtaining **as the outcome of your faith the salvation of your souls.**”
4. **I Jn.5:1** “Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God”
- **I Jn.5:13** “These things I have written to you who believe in the name of the Son of God, in order that you may know that you have eternal life.”g. **Distinctions between justification, sanctification and glorification are not properly established in Lordship theology.** In the Scripture, salvation is almost exclusively seen as eternal life in heaven and rarely, if ever seen as present sanctification. This creates a problem in interpreting passages such as Phil.2:12 “work out your salvation with fear.”
- h. There is a **failure to distinguish salvation from discipleship.** Although Christ makes distinctions between the free offer of salvation to all men (Luke 14:15-24) and the high cost of discipleship (Luke 14:25-27) resulting in reward, this distinction is ignored in Lordship theology.
- i. **The imputed moral merit of Christ** by grace through faith is marginalized.
- **Rom.1:16-17** “<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel, for it is the power of God for salvation to everyone who believes, to the Jew first and also to the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it {the} **righteousness of God** is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written, “*But the righteous {man} shall live by faith.*””  
The quote from Habakkuk 2:4 suggests that the imputation of moral merit is in view.
  - **Rom.4:3-8** “<sup>3</sup> For what does the Scripture say? “*And Abraham believed God, and it was reckoned to him as **righteousness.***” <sup>4</sup> Now to the one who works, his wage is not reckoned as a favor, but as what is due. <sup>5</sup> But to the one who does not work, but believes in Him who justifies the ungodly, his faith is reckoned as **righteousness,** <sup>6</sup> just as David also speaks of the blessing upon the man to whom God reckons **righteousness** apart from works: <sup>7</sup> “*Blessed are those whose lawless deeds have been forgiven, And whose sins have been covered.*” <sup>8</sup> “*Blessed is the man whose sin the Lord will not take into account.*””
  - **Rom.10:1-5** “<sup>1</sup> Brethren, my heart’s desire and my prayer to God for them is for {their} salvation. <sup>2</sup> For I bear them witness that they have a zeal for God, but not

in accordance with knowledge. <sup>3</sup> For not knowing about **God's righteousness**, and seeking to establish their own, they did not subject themselves to the **righteousness of God**. <sup>4</sup> For Christ is the end of the law for **righteousness** to everyone who believes. <sup>5</sup> For Moses writes that the man who practices the **righteousness** which is based on law shall live by that **righteousness**."

- **I Cor.1:30** "<sup>30</sup> But by His doing you are in Christ Jesus, who became to us wisdom from God, and **righteousness** and sanctification, and redemption, <sup>31</sup> that, just as it is written, "*Let him who boasts, boast in the Lord.*""
  - **II Cor.5:21** "He made Him who knew no sin {to be} sin on our behalf, that we might become the **righteousness of God** in Him."
  - **Gal.3:6** "<sup>6</sup> Even so Abraham *believed God, and it was reckoned to him as righteousness*. <sup>7</sup> Therefore, be sure that it is those who are of faith who are sons of Abraham. <sup>8</sup> And the Scripture, foreseeing that God would justify the Gentiles by faith, preached the gospel beforehand to Abraham, {saying}, "*All the nations shall be blessed in you.*" <sup>9</sup> So then those who are of faith are blessed with Abraham, the believer. <sup>10</sup> For as many as are of the works of the Law are under a curse; for it is written, "*Cursed is everyone who does not abide by all things written in the book of the law, to perform them.*" <sup>11</sup> Now that no one is justified by the Law before God is evident; for, "*The **righteous** man shall live by faith.*""
  - **Gal.3:21-22** "<sup>21</sup> Is the Law then contrary to the promises of God? May it never be! For if a law had been given which was able to impart life, then **righteousness** would indeed have been based on law. <sup>22</sup> But the Scripture has shut up all men under sin, that the promise by faith in Jesus Christ might be given to those who believe."
  - **Phil.3:9** "and may be found in Him, not having a **righteousness** of my own derived from {the} Law, but that which is through faith in Christ, the **righteousness** which {comes} from God on the basis of faith,"
- j. Rather than **defining repentance** as it is used in Greek (*metenoesan* - "to change one's mind"), an entire theology is forced upon the word giving it the meaning "turning from sin." The Greek translation of the Old Testament used *metenoesan* for God (Ex.34:2; Jer.26:13) who was obviously not turning from sin. John the Baptist and Christ did urge the Jews to repent from sin (John 1:23; Matt.4:17) to usher in the Kingdom and Covenant Christ was to fulfill, but this repentance from sin was not for justification. It rather identified individuals with the imminent Kingdom of God. For salvation, repentance should be understood as a change of mind about who Christ is such as when Peter explains to the Jews who Christ was (Acts 2:36-37), then asks them to change their mind about rejecting him and receive salvation (Acts 2:38).
- k. Although Lordship proponents teach eternal security (that salvation cannot be lost once it is received), they teach that **assurance of salvation can only come when a believer is persevering in good works**. Every time a believer struggles in sin or doubt, he is forced to doubt whether or not he is saved. The peace that God promises as well as the fact that one can know for certain that he is saved (I John 5:13) is denied by Lordship teaching. Believers need to base their assurance on the objective truth about what the Word says regarding someone that has placed their faith in Christ's provision (Acts 10:43), rather than in the subjective truth of how one feels or what actions they commit.

- l. The New Testament makes it very clear that **there is a present possibility that a believer may not continue in good works** and may face severe discipline (Heb.10:26-27) even unto death (I Cor.5:5; Jam.5:20-21). If it is true that all will persevere, these passages make little sense. What are we to make of the repeated calls for obedience by the Apostles that are addressed to the churches in the epistles? If indeed, Christians do not continue in sin, why did they have to encourage them to shape up and stop?
- m. There are several **examples of confirmed believers that did not display commitment or perseverance**. See notes on Repentance #707
- n. When we look at the passages that lay down the requirements for being a disciple (a true Christian by Lordship views) we find a number of requirements that no one fully meets. The consistent Lordship View must insist that these demands be met fully before a person can be saved. (Matt.16:24-27, Mk.8:34-38, Lk.9:23-26)
  - 1. “Deny himself” – make no provision for self.
  - 2. “Take up his cross” – share the suffering of Christ.
  - 3. “Follow Me” – not double minded.
  - 4. “Loses his life” – make no provision for this present temporal life.
  - 5. “Whoever is ashamed of Me” – bold unapologetic witness.
  - 6. “Hate your family” (Matt.10:37, Lk.14:26) – put Christ above ones natural family.
  - 7. “Forsake all” (Lk.14:33) – hold on to nothing in this world.
  - 8. “Give up all possessions” Lk.14:25-27) – be like Jesus.
  - 9. “Abide in His Word (Jn.8:30-31) – continued unfailing obedience to the Scripture.
  - 10. “Be perfectly righteous” – exceed the discipline of the Pharisees.
  - 11. “Him who overcomes” (Rev.2:7) - brings moral life under successful management.
- o. Some of those who have written in support of this position are:
  - Zane Hodges *The Gospel Under Siege; Absolutely Free*
  - Charles Ryrie *So Great Salvation*

**B. Degrees of “knowledge” with respect to salvation have been recognized for centuries.**

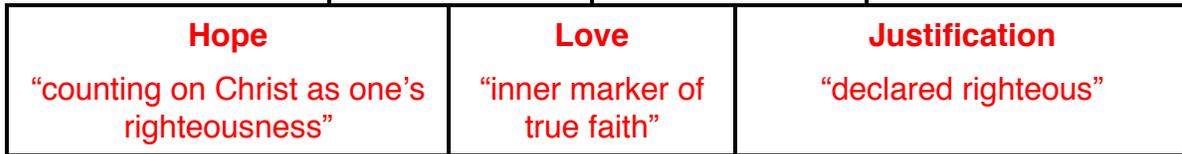
There are degrees or levels of Christian knowledge (St. Augustine) and commitment. The point of dispute is with respect to a distinction between Level #3 and #4. Does true saving faith require a level #4 or #5 commitment (The Lordship Salvation view), or is level #3 all that is required (Free Grace view)?

Level #1  
**Intellectual awareness**  
 “knowing about Christ”

Level #2  
**Intellectual assent**  
 “superficial confession of faith in Christ”  
 James 2:19 “the demons believe and shudder.”

Free Grace people are sometimes accused of believing that this is all that is necessary for salvation.

This is what Free Grace people believe is necessary for salvation.



This is what some Lordship Salvation people believe is necessary for salvation.



Other Lordship Salvation people believe this is necessary for salvation.



- True faith is more than intellectual awareness or assent.
- True faith does not take the form of faithfulness.
- True faith always produces inner fruit (hope and love).
- True faith normally produces outer fruit (faithfulness).

**C. The basic issues that need to be protected.**

1. Salvation is by grace through faith apart from human merit.
  - a. It is possible to have true saving faith and yet go to one’s grave with unresolved moral conflicts in life.
  - b. It is possible to have true saving faith and look (outwardly at times) like a non-Christian. This was the case in first century Corinth.
2. True faith is a deep commitment of one’s life. It is not a superficial confession of words. It is possible to make a superficial confession of faith and yet not be a Christian.
3. True saving faith always bears fruit at least inwardly (new birth) and often outwardly (changed conduct).
4. Repentance from sin is always needed as a part of our approach to God in worship. This implies that there will always be unresolved sins in a person’s life. The Pharisee was criticized because he felt he no longer had sins to confess.
5. Four different understandings of the relationship between faith and faithfulness:

| <i>The Jewish position</i>       | <i>The Roman Catholic position</i>            | <i>The Lordship Salvation position</i>   | <i>The Free Grace position</i>          |
|----------------------------------|---|--|---|
| Faithfulness is all that matters | Faithfulness is an <b>expression</b> of faith | Faithfulness is a <b>marker</b> of faith | Faithfulness is a <b>fruit</b> of faith |
| Faithfulness = Faith             | Faith = Faithfulness                          | Faith/Faithfulness                       | Faith > Faithfulness                    |

**D. Concluding propositions**

1. If one is to call on Christ to save from the penalty of sin, one is confessing and submitting to Christ as Master or Lord of at least one very important area of life — the soul’s need for a substitutionary sacrifice and an imputed righteousness before a holy God.
2. Saving faith is not just a shallow intellectual confession of impersonal facts; it is a deep and genuine commitment to center one’s hope in Christ.
3. It is possible for a person to make a false (superficial) profession of faith and actually believe that he or she is a Christian when in fact they are not.
4. The preeminent term by which salvation is received (in the Biblical record) is “faith” or “belief.” Our “faithfulness”, “obedience” or “works” are not the issue in the gospel of grace.
5. “Repentance” that leads to salvation is to be understood as turning from one’s self-sufficiency to a commitment that Jesus is the Redeemer Christ. The notion of having to successfully turn from every known sin in order to be saved is not a part of the gospel message.
6. Justification (declared righteous by faith) and sanctification (progressively demonstrating righteous behavior) should not be mixed even though the later flows out of the former.
7. Repentance that leads to eternal life is distinct from “good works” but is the basis of and for the purpose of “good works.”

**Acts 26:19-20** “<sup>19</sup> Consequently, King Agrippa, I did not prove disobedient to the heavenly vision, <sup>20</sup> but {kept} declaring both to those of Damascus first, and {also} at Jerusalem and {then} throughout all the region of Judea, and {even} to the Gentiles, that they should repent and turn to God, **performing deeds appropriate to repentance.**”

**I Thess.1:9** “For they themselves report about us what kind of a reception we had with you, and how you turned to God from idols to serve a living and true God,”

8. It is possible for a genuine Christian to be “carnal” or live as though he or she was not a Christian. But this state is unnatural and normally is temporary.
9. To insist on a complete submission to God’s will in every area of life (before one can call themselves a Christian) is contrary to Biblical testimony and human experience.
10. If it is true that “we are not saved by our good works”, it must also be true that we are not saved by our good intentions. What saves us is not our works or our intentions but the work of Christ and our transfer of trust in anything and everything else to trust in him.
11. The best illustration of saving faith and faithfulness might be marriage. When a man and a woman go to the alter and make a marriage covenant vow it is expected that they then live as husband and wife. It would be technically possible for them to be truly married and yet not live as though they were married but this would be most unusual. On the other hand it is quite possible that they would not live out their marriage vows perfectly. There would be times when

they would act selfishly and perhaps even unfaithfully but they would still be married. So it is in our relationship with Christ. At Baptism we enter into a covenant relationship with Christ. It is expected that we will also follow him as disciples but we will not do so perfectly. There may be times when we are quite rebellious to the point of acting as though we were not following Him at all. We might still however be true believers.

**D. A comparison chart of differing views of Lordship Salvation.**

|   | Roman Catholic                                     | Arminian Protestant                      | Reformed Protestant  | Lutheran & Dispensational               | Liberal (antinomian)          |
|---|--|--|--|---|-------------------------------|
| <b>Salvation</b>                          | Christ's work <b>through</b> us                    | Christ's work <b>for us &amp; in</b> us  | Christ's work <b>for</b> us  | Christ's work <b>for</b> us             | By grace                      |
| <b>Righteousness that Justifies</b>       | <b>active</b> righteousness by new birth lived out | <b>active</b> righteousness by new birth | <b>passive</b> righteousness by faith <b>leading to active</b> righteousness | <b>passive</b> righteousness by faith   | <b>passive</b> righteousness  |
| <b>Faith</b>                              | is faithfulness                                    | requires faithfulness to be true         | requires faithfulness to be true   | should lead to faithfulness but may not | need not lead to faithfulness |
| <b>Lordship as a controlling force</b>    | Required for salvation                             | Required for salvation                   | Required as a sign of true faith   | Not required for salvation              | Not required for salvation    |
| <b>Justification &amp; Sanctification</b> | Merge  | One must lead to the other               | One must lead to the other   | Distinct                                | Distinct                      |

- The Roman Catholic position could be characterized as (Faith + works = salvation). Works are the form of faith.
- Augustine spoke of three levels of knowing God.
  1. Intellectual awareness.
  2. "Faith" = thinking + assent (This is not saving faith.)
  3. "Faith" = assent + hope + love (This is saving faith.) Gal.5:6
- The Calvinistic and Arminian positions could be characterized as (Faith = salvation + works). Works are the sign or marker of faith.
- The radical grace position would be characterized as (Faith = salvation which sets the stage for works but is authentic and effective without works). Works are the fruit of faith.

**E. I Cor.2:12-3:7 (Observations)**

1. It is possible to have real faith and yet not be faithful. (Paul speaks of 3 spiritual conditions)
  - a. **The Natural man** (2:14) is the person without Christ.
  - b. **The carnal or "fleshly" man** is the person acting like a natural man even though he is a true believer.
    1. Baby believers (3:1)
    2. Backslidden believers (3:3)
  - c. **The spiritual man** (2:15) is the person acting like a mature Christian.

2. It is possible to have spiritual *charism* (ability to minister in the gifts of the Spirit) and yet be carnal.
3. Paul believes that there is help for the carnal Christian.

### **Questions that you should be able to answer.**

#### **1. Specific facts you should know.**

- a. What is the essence of the debate over “Lordship salvation”?
- b. What are the strongest arguments in support of “Lordship salvation”?
- c. What are the strongest arguments challenging “Lordship salvation”?

#### **2. Issues that you should be able to discuss.**

- a. How do various “Christian” groups differ with respect to this issue?
- b. What conclusions can we draw in seeking a Biblical response to this issue?

#### **3. Questions you should wrestle with.**

- a. How important is this issue?
- b. How should you relate to those who differ with you on this issue?