



Chapter 2

Jesus as Lord

One of the men on The Navigators staff is a Jamaican. Some years ago, he worked for a banana company near his home town of Kingston (in Jamaica). He was doing so well in the company that one day one of the executives invited him into his office to discuss his future.

After assessing the young man's potential, the executive said, "You have a great future with our company, with excellent prospects for rapid promotion. But we are looking for committed men. If you are going to be a success, I want you to know that you have to give your life in exchange for bananas."

The young man thought about it for a few moments and decided that he could not sign away his life for bananas.

Lordship involves giving Jesus Christ the number one place above all the possible "bananas" in your life.

This Chapter deals with four aspects involved in making Christ the Lord of our lives.

- ***The fact that Jesus is Lord whether we want Him to be or not.***
- ***Reasons we don't want to acknowledge Him as Lord.***
- ***What it means to acknowledge Him as Lord.***
- ***Why Jesus wants to be our Lord.***

Let's look at these one at a time.

JESUS IS LORD WHETHER WE WANT HIM TO BE OR NOT

Jesus Christ is the Creator of all things and "by the word of His power," He holds everything together. "For by him were all things created, that are in heaven, and that are in earth, visible and invisible, whether they be thrones, or dominions, or principalities, or powers; all things were created by Him, and for Him, and He is before all things, and by Him all things consist; and He is the Head of the Body, the Church; who is the beginning, the first-born from the dead; that in all things He might have the preeminence" (Col. 1:16-18).

Have you ever considered how little of your life you control? Did you decide when you would be born? Or who your parents would be? Or in what country you would be born? Did you decide the color of your skin? Your eyes? Your hair? Did you decide your intelligence or your gifts and talents? How about you height—did you determine that? Or your appearance, whether you would be good looking or rather plain? The answer to all these questions is no. In every one of these areas and in many more, you have no say in the matter. Your vote counts for absolutely nothing!

Then at what point do you exercise control? The Bible suggests that you control a small but important part of your life, namely your will. Lordship has to do with your will. It involves surrendering it to Jesus Christ. It means that Jesus is Lord of all of you, not just part of you. In making this decision of the will, remember that he has control over most things that concern you, whether you like it or not.

WHY WE DO NOT ACKNOWLEDGE CHRIST AS LORD

Though every person has his own reasons not to acknowledge Jesus as Lord, some reasons come up with remarkable frequency.

• ***He may ask us to do something that we do not want to do.***

Of course, He will. If this were not so, there would be no issue involved. When you make Jesus Christ Lord of your life, you can count on Him asking you to do things you would rather not do.

Abraham did not want to offer up Isaac as a sacrifice. Moses did not want to go before Pharaoh. Joseph did not want to spend all those years in prison. Jesus Christ did not want to go to the cross.

Nobody likes the cross. Nobody likes to die. Nobody likes to deny himself. But this is what lordship is all about. A disciple is a *disciplined* one. He is one who says no to what he wants in deference to what his Lord wants. The disciple does not pamper himself by satisfying his wants and desires in a self-gratifying fashion.

When Jesus Christ is Lord of your life, every area is under His jurisdiction—your thoughts, your actions, your plans, your vocation, your leisure time, and your life goal. All of these are under His Lordship.

• ***We think we know what is best for us.***

Nothing could be farther from the truth. A child left alone would kill himself. He might eat the wrong things, or run out in to the street, or grab hold of a sharp knife, or play with something equally dangerous. The parent must keep constant watch over his child. That is, the parent must be lord of the child's life. In fact, the law requires that this be so; and when the parent refuses to exercise such lordship, the courts hold him accountable.

When we reach physical maturity, however, we think that things suddenly change. This is where

we make our mistake. A child left to himself will probably hurt himself. As mature adults, left to ourselves, we *do* hurt ourselves. Statistics reveal that more people die each year in automobile accidents than by cancer and heart disease combined.

A group of scientists have warned that the United States has enough atomic warheads to destroy every human being on the face of this earth—the equivalent of one railroad boxcar load of dynamite for every man, woman, and child in the world. And this is to say nothing about the atomic warheads that other nations of the world have.

Have you ever thought about the fact that we hire policemen to watch over us to make sure that we don't do anything wrong. Yet, we have the audacity to say that we know what is best for our lives.

• ***We are not sure that God has our best interests at heart.***

If God wanted to make it hard on us, can you imagine what He could do? If He wanted to make us miserable and plague us with difficulties, He could make life absolutely intolerable. One might argue that God does not want to get involved in our lives, but it is ridiculous to say that He wants to hurt us.

However, you cannot argue that Jesus Christ does not want to get involved in your life. The very issue of Lordship revolves around the fact that He does want to get involved in your life. Listen to what He says through the prophet Jeremiah. "For I know the plans I have for you says the Lord. They are plans for good and not for evil, to give you a future and hope" (Jer. 29:11, The Living Bible).

WHAT IT MEANS TO ACKNOWLEDGE HIM AS LORD

The implications of recognizing Jesus Christ as Lord are readily seen in the prayer He taught His disciples. "After this manner therefore pray ye: 'Our Father which art in heaven, hallowed be Thy name. Thy kingdom come. Thy will be

done in earth, as it is in heaven. Give us this day our daily bread. And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. And lead us not into temptation, but deliver us from evil. For thine is the kingdom, and the power, and the glory, forever. Amen” (Matt. 6:9-13).

Notice that the prayer begins, **Our Father**. Jesus did not instruct us to say “My Father,” but “Our Father.” The disciple must be able to identify with people where they are, to sit where they sit. The disciple himself is not one who has arrived. On the contrary, he is a learner, a pilgrim, one who is on a quest to make his life all that God would have it be. Therefore, he must understand the needs and frailties of people.

Hallowed be Thy name. Jesus did not pray that His name would be hallowed, but that the Father’s name would be hallowed. Acknowledging His Lordship means surrendering your name.

Are you interested in making a name for yourself? Are you desirous of being recognized by people? Are your life goals self-serving, to make a great scientific discovery, do well in business, be married to an important person—anything that would bring you recognition? To have Jesus as your Lord means to desire that His name, not yours, be hallowed.

Thy kingdom come. God’s desire is to rule here on earth just as He rules in heaven.

He is in the process of building His kingdom. Are you untiringly laboring to build the kingdom of Christ, or are you busy building your own little kingdom? In your church, is it *your* Sunday School class, *your* Board of Deacons or Elders, *your* building project, *your* missionary program? Do these things get your attention, or can you in all integrity say it is Christ’s kingdom that you are seeking to build?

A way to seek God’s kingdom is through evangelism by “bringing men from darkness to light and from the power of Satan to God.” Are you actively involved in evangelism? How many

non-Christians do you know who would consider you a close friend?

Thy will be done. Again notice the Lord Jesus did not say, “My will be done,” but “Thy will be done.” This is the same thought that Jesus communicated when He said, “I can of Mine own self do nothing. As I hear, I judge, and My judgement is just; because I seek not Mine own will, but the will of the Father which hath sent me.” (John 5:30).

You cannot pray, “Thy will be done,” unless you are actively involved in finding the will of God for your life and doing it. Begin by doing what you know through the Scriptures to be the will of God. If you do this, the Holy Spirit will be faithful to make clear those areas that are uncertain.

Give us this day our daily bread. We can truly pray this prayer only if our attitude is, “All I have comes from and belongs to Jesus.” Otherwise, why ask Him for something that “naturally comes to us anyhow”? Paul put it this way, “What? Know ye not that your body is the temple of the Holy Ghost which is in you, which ye have of God, and ye are not your own? For ye are bought with a price; therefore glorify God in your body, and in your spirit, which are God’s” (1 Cor. 6:19,20).

Because Jesus bought you at the price of His blood, you are not your own. You belong to Him. Lordship means recognizing this fact and surrendering all that you are and have and hope to be to Him.

Think over the things that you own which you consider to be precious. It might be your favorite crystal or china, or it may be your sports equipment. Maybe it is your stereo or your automobile. Whatever it is, ask yourself who owns it? If it truly belongs to the Lord Jesus Christ, then of course you will not mind making it available to Jesus to be used as He sees fit.

And forgive us our debts, as we forgive our debtors. Jesus is telling us to pray, “Lord, I want You to forgive me in just the same way

that I forgive other people.” Could you say that? Could you settle for God forgiving you in proportion to how you forgive others?

Lordship leads to a mutual commitment, involving not only receiving, but giving. Grace is God’s willingness to commit Himself totally to us. Lordship is our willingness to commit ourselves totally to God. Everybody wants God to commit Himself totally to him, but few are willing to commit themselves totally to Him.

And lead us not into temptation. Here Jesus is praying that the Father will not lead us into situations where we can be tempted. There are many situations in life that are not wrong in themselves, but they provide opportunities for Satan to overpower us.

Jesus did not say, “Lead us not into sin.” He said, “Lead us not into *temptation*.” To pray this prayer means that I am willing to surrender questionable things. I am not only willing to surrender those things that are sin, but I am also willing to surrender all those areas of my life that tend to lead me into temptation.

You yourself know what these areas are. To make Jesus Christ Lord of your life means that you are willing to lay them aside.

Deliver us from [the] evil [one]. This is the same prayer that the Lord Jesus offered for His disciples on the night of His betrayal (see John 17:15).

Lordship involves the recognition that there is no way we can fight our own battles. Christ, and he alone, must keep us. No one in his own strength can do battle with the enemy and win. Even Jesus Christ defeated Satan only at the price of the cross.

James, the brother of our Lord Jesus, puts it this way, “Submit yourselves therefore to God. Resist the devil, and he will flee from you” (James 4:7). The devil will flee from us if we do two things: First, *submit* ourselves to the Lord, and second, *resist* him in the Lord’s strength.

WHY DOES JESUS WANT TO BE LORD OF OUR LIVES?

Why does Christ bother to get involved in our lives? Why does He not just leave us in our misery? This is one of the great mysteries of the Bible. But the Scriptures are very clear that He loves us and *does* want to be Lord of our lives. When I look at my own sinfulness, my own propensity for evil, I must confess that this is a staggering thought.

I know a salesman from Oklahoma City who uses a small aircraft for business trips because he travels to many out-of-the-way spots across the country. He was flying once over some rugged terrain when he saw an automobile trying to pass a large truck. It was obvious that the driver of the car was extremely impatient to get around the truck; his car crossed back and forth from one lane to the other.

My friend decided to throttle back and watch. Each time the auto sought to pass the truck, it would either reach a double line, a hill, or a bend, or meet another car coming in the opposite direction. From my friend’s perspective, he could see several miles down the highway, and he thought, “If I could enter into communication with the man in the automobile, I could tell him when it was safe to pass and when it was unsafe.”

As we are on the move in this great adventure called life, we cannot see around the bend into tomorrow or over the hill into next week. Consequently, we are not sure when it is safe to pass. Because Jesus Christ is Lord of all, seeing the end from beginning, He does know.

His willingness to be our Lord reveals His desire to get involved in our lives so he can tell us when it is safe to move ahead and when it is best not to move. Would we not be extremely foolish to turn down such a gracious offer?