

## THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Lincoln Park Baptist Church, West Newton, Massachusetts

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Union Church, San Juan, Puerto Rico

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Text – 1 Corinthians 12:1-31

### Introduction:

On several occasions from this pulpit I have spoken of the fact that the center of the message of Jesus can be located in the term kingdom of God. Jesus proclaimed the impending coming of the kingdom of God. *“The kingdom of God has drawn near. Repent and believe on the gospel.”* Even more, he proclaimed that already in his miracles, deeds of mercy and message, God’s reign was already breaking in. Consequently, he called the people to repentance and decision: to get ready for God’s invasion.

With the death of Jesus, something happened which is of tremendous significance for our understanding of the New Testament message... Whereas before Calvary, Jesus was proclaiming God’s kingdom and its nearness, after his death the disciples proclaimed Jesus. As someone has said, the proclaimer became the proclaimed. Jesus now becomes Lord. He became Lord when God raised him from the dead.

I. God’s kingdom – the end-of-time kingdom, has now come even nearer.

- A. Texts which affirm the Lordship of Christ -- Matt. 28:18 -- Jesus, now risen, says to the disciples: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me. Go, therefore, and make disciples of all nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Spirit, teaching them to observe all that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”*

Notice the statements: *“All authority in heaven and on earth has been given to me ... Lo, I am with you always, to the close of the age.”* Christ has authority in heaven and on earth. He has dominion. This dominion is manifest in you, the believers.

Phil. 2:19 – *“God has highly exalted Christ and bestowed on him the name which is above every name, that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth, and under the earth, and every tongue confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father.”*

Notice how encompassing Christ’s dominion intends to be: *“Every tongue is to confess that Jesus Christ is Lord.”*

- B. What does the Lordship of Christ mean in terms of the church and the world?

(1) It means eternal life. (Rom. 6:23) – *“For the wage of sin is death, but the free gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

(2) It means the gift of the Spirit – *“No one speaking by the Spirit of God ever says ‘Jesus be cursed’ and no one can say ‘Jesus is Lord’ except by the Holy Spirit.”*

To call Jesus Lord, is to be in the Spirit. The church is the place where the lordship of Christ is accepted and proclaimed. *“The lordship of Christ brings me into subjection and then, through my act of submission, there shines the glory of him whose purpose is to bring all the world into subjection and who in me has taken possession of one single fragment of this world which is his by right.”*

II. All the members of the church share in the lordship of Christ. To share in the Spirit is to be in the lordship of Christ. To be baptized is to be in the Spirit. To accept Christ as Lord is to accept a share in the gift of salvation.

A. Each has a share in the Spirit in different ways: *“Now there are varieties of gifts, but the same Spirit; and there are varieties of service, but the same Lord; and there are varieties of working, but it is the same God who inspires them all in every one.*

Varieties of Gifts	=	the same Spirit
Varieties of Service	=	the same Lord
Varieties of Working	=	the same God

B. What is meant by these gifts? *“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good. To one is given through the Spirit the utterance of wisdom, and to another the utterance of knowledge according to the same Spirit; to another faith by the same Spirit, to another gifts of healing by the one Spirit, to another the working of miracles, to another prophecy, to another ability to distinguish between spirits, to another various kinds of tongues. All these are inspired by one and the same Spirit, who apportions to each one individually as he wills.”*

Notice these points:

(1) Each member of the congregation has a gift, so it seems. All share in the Spirit. Each has a function to perform within the church. To receive a gift and to use it is to be in the Lordship of Christ.

(2) The gifts are for the common good, not for show nor personal glory. *“To each is given the manifestation of the Spirit for the common good.”*

(3) There are varieties of gifts:

- not everybody is the same
- individual differences are recognized by the Holy Spirit

(4) The church functions as a body. *“For just as the body is one and has many*

*members, and all the members of the body, though many, are one body. So it is with Christ. For by one Spirit we were all baptized into one body – Jews and Greeks, slaves or free – and all were made to drink of one Spirit.”*

one body	=	many members
many members	=	one body

We exist for each other. We come here to be mutually encouraged and consoled, to proclaim that Christ is Lord in our lives – in worship.

The purpose of the gifts is to build up the body of Christ. Paul says: *“Since you are eager for manifestations of the Spirit, strive to excel in the building up of the church.”* Building up the body of Christ includes

- proclaiming his name to others;
- bringing the world into subjection to him.

### Conclusion:

What does the Lordship of Christ mean for us today? What do the gifts of the Spirit mean?

- (1) All believers share in the new life – are partakers of the Spirit – have spiritual gifts. This is the origin of the doctrine of the priesthood of all believers.
- (2) All our lives are oriented toward the community of faith, the gathered company, where in worship and exhortation the event of salvation is proclaimed and thanked for. No individualism.
- (3) All areas of life must be brought under the Lordship of Christ;
 

-- our sexual life	-- our professional life
-- our home life	-- our political life

All of life is under Christ. To say that Christ is Lord, is to accept him as Lord over all my life. We have to cast out all the demons of our life. No separation between secular and sacred.

- (4) We share this life in humility
  - Be willing to give and to receive counsel. Found even in the most humble person; ex. Santos Ayala.
  - When I meet my brother, I meet one to whom Christ has given a gift. In him I meet the exalted Christ.

- (5) We are called to share Christ with others.

God reigns. Yes, he reigns through the Lordship of Christ in our lives.