

## THE RIGHT KIND OF FAITH (LORDSHIP – DISCERNING THE ISSUE)

For many years there has been a theological battle over the issue of the NATURE of saving faith. In particular the issue I am addressing relates to receiving Christ as LORD. There are those that say one does not have to receive Christ as Lord – only as Savior. I call this the “Lordless Gospel”. In truth it is a false gospel!

### **JUDGMENT PRINCIPLES:**

1. It is important not to prematurely or automatically put someone in a theological box, or a particular category or camp with all the presuppositions one may have in reference to that particular school of thought, before fully hearing them out.
2. Even among those in general agreement there is often much disagreement over many fine nuances involved in the discussion regarding *Lordship Salvation* versus a *Lordless Gospel*.
3. **Note:** The definition of terms is key. For example, Charles Ryrie in seeking to refute the “Lordship” position of John MacArthur wrote a book called ***So Great Salvation***. However in the book he said, “*And because He is Lord God, there is an element in bowing before Him [Jesus] and acknowledging Him as a most superior Person when one trusts Him for salvation.*” (p. 121). When I read that I said, “What are we really arguing about?” In my view, Ryrie just acknowledged that in saving faith one recognizes the LORDSHIP of Jesus Christ. Some views that are labeled “*Lordship Salvation*” are heresy because they are defined in terms of a works salvation, but a biblical view makes it purely a matter of saving faith and the issue is the NATURE of a true saving faith. Labels are relative depending upon the definition being used. We must be careful of LABELS AND LIBELS!
4. Some of the phraseology and terminology commonly used is confusing and ambiguous. In critiquing an individual’s particular views some have the weakness of taking a writer’s words out of context or taking an ambiguous phrase and negatively applying it to the writer without considering the sense and context intended by the writer. Both unclear terminology and unfair critiquing often result in much confusion.

## **THE RIGHT FOCUS:**

1. It is important that we not be followers of men, as we find those in Corinth were doing. Rather we are to follow Christ recognizing men as mere servants (1 Cor. 1:2; 3:4-8).
2. Someone has said, "Everyone is entitled to their own stupid opinion." Therefore, we should not put stock in the mere opinions of people, but rather should search the Scriptures for "what saith the Lord." It's not what other books say about the Bible (although they may be helpful and insightful), but what the Bible says that is authoritative and really counts (Rom. 3:4; Acts 17:11).
3. We must recognize that we do not grow in spiritual truth merely through intellectual brilliance or intellectual intensity but rather it is REVEALED to the godly via the Holy Spirit, who earnestly pursue the God of all spiritual truth in the Word of truth (cf. Jn. 17:7; James 1:5; Ps. 19:7; 119:98-100; Prov. 2:1-9; Matt. 11:25).
4. It is always good to assume an air of humility realizing that we as human beings are limited in our understanding and that God alone is the final authority in all matters of faith and practice (Isa. 55:8-9).
5. There is mystery involved in salvation and some aspects of saving faith are difficult, if not impossible to absolutely, completely, and finally comprehend, understand, or define (cf. Jn. 3:3-8).
6. With this background, my desire is to share the results of my research with an attitude of humility coupled with conviction as I present what I believe the Bible has to teach about the NATURE OF SAVING FAITH (cf. Acts 17:11).

Hebrews 11 is often called, "The Hall of Faith Chapter". It is a very important chapter as it addresses the essential importance of faith and the nature of it. It clearly says that without faith it is IMPOSSIBLE to please God. Pleasing God starts with a true saving faith.

### **Hebrews 11:6 (NKJV)**

**6** But without faith it is impossible to please Him, for he who comes to God must believe that He is, and that He is a rewarder of those who diligently seek Him.