



# SBAOC Weekly Update

## NEWS & PRAYER REQUESTS

*If you have any news, prayer requests, or events that you would like to have included in this update, please call us at 785-456-8513 or email the information to [spurgeonassociation@gmail.com](mailto:spurgeonassociation@gmail.com).*

## LORDSHIP, EXPERIENCE, AND INTERPRETATION

By Ernest Reisinger

There is a danger of forming any doctrine from our experience. Many say, "When I was young I accepted Christ as my personal Saviour and that experience had some influence on my life for a time, but I did not really live an active Christian life for years. Later I was taught that Christ must be my Lord and that the problem with my defeated life was because I had not submitted to Christ as my Lord when I trusted Him as my Saviour. So I did just that—submitted to Christ as my Lord. Since that experience I have been living the Christian life on a different plain."

We have heard this kind of a testimony in many forms. It has been described in many different ways. Whatever it is called, or however it is described, it affirms a second conversion or a step of consecration. Some may describe it as being filled with the Spirit. Some call it the "deeper life," "higher life" or "victorious life." The Bible knows nothing about these terms.

Whatever it is called, this teaching draws a deep, wide and distinct line between those who have been "consecrated" (having attained the so-called higher life) and other Christians. There is nothing new about this teaching. It is well known. The Roman Catholic writers often maintain that the church is divided into three classes: sinners, penitents and saints. The non-lordship teachers tell us there are three classes of people: the unconverted, converted and the partakers of the "higher life" of complete consecration. They also make distinctions between "natural men," "carnal Christians" and "spiritual Christians" (I will deal with this later). But whether this teaching be old or new, Roman Catholic or Protestant, it is utterly impossible to find it in the scriptures.

The Word of God speaks of two, and only two, great divisions of mankind. It distinguishes between those who are spiritually alive and those who are dead in sin—the believer and the unbeliever, the converted and the unconverted, the travellers in the narrow way and the travellers in the broad way, the wise and the foolish, the children of God and the children of the devil. Within each of these two great classes there are, doubtless, various measures of sin and of grace; but it is only the difference between the higher and lower end of an inclined plane. Between these two great classes there is an enormous gulf. They are as distinct as life and death,

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### PURPOSE STATEMENT:

We unite as an association of Southern Baptist churches in order to manifest the glory of God above all. We purpose to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. We covenant to strengthen and support one another, motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture, by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.

***"If there is no church... should you not commence one?" C. H. Spurgeon***

## COMMENTS ON OUR PURPOSE STATEMENT

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*Prayer should be the natural outflow of the soul: you should pray because you must pray, not because the set time for praying has arrived, but because your heart must cry unto your Lord.*

—Charles Spurgeon

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light and darkness, heaven and hell. But of a division into three classes the Word of God says nothing at all! I question the wisdom of making new-fangled divisions which the Bible has not made, and I thoroughly abhor any notion of a second conversion.

That there is a vast difference between one degree of grace and another, that spiritual life admits of growth, and that believers should be continually urged on every account to grow in grace, all this I fully concede. But the theory of a sudden, mysterious transition of a believer into a state of blessedness and entire consecration at one mighty bound, I cannot receive. It appears to me to be a man-made invention and I do not find a single plain text to prove it in Scripture.

Gradual growth in grace, growth in knowledge, growth in faith, growth in love, growth in holiness, growth in humility, growth in spiritual-mindedness—all this I see clearly taught and urged in Scripture, and clearly exemplified in the lives of many of God's saints. But sudden, instantaneous leaps from conversion to consecration I fail to see in the Bible. I doubt, indeed, whether we have any warrant for saying that a man can possibly be converted without being consecrated to God! More consecrated he doubtless can be, and will be as his grace increases. But if he was not consecrated to God in the very day that he was converted and born again, I do not know what conversion means,

Are not men in danger of undervaluing and underrating the immense blessedness of conversion? Are they not, when they urge believers on to the "higher life" as a second conversion, underrating the length, breadth, depth and height of that great first change which Scripture calls the new birth, the new creation, the spiritual resurrection?

I have sometimes thought, while reading the strong language used by many about "consecration," that those who use it must have a singularly low and inadequate view of "conversion," if indeed they know anything about conversion at all. In short, I have almost suspected that when they were consecrated, they were in reality converted for the first time! I decline to tell any converted man that he needs a second conversion, and that he may some day pass by one enormous step into a state of entire consecration. I cannot see any warrant for such teaching in Scripture. The tendency of this doctrine is thoroughly mischievous, depressing the humble-minded and meek, puffing up the shallow, the ignorant, and the self-conceited, to a most dangerous extent (I am indebted to Bishop J.C. Ryle for much of the material in the last five paragraphs).

Most, if not all, of the non-lordship teaching includes this two-stage theory of the Christian life.

There are several possible interpretations of these second step, crisis experiences. On the one hand it is possible that the person was never truly saved in the first place. On the other hand, it is possible that such a person did not have biblical assurance when he "accepted Christ as his personal Saviour" (language which is foreign to the New Testament and which means different things to different people).

The point I wish to make is this: we must interpret our experience by the Bible and not interpret the Bible by our experience. Likewise, we must never invent some doctrine from our experience. I keep waiting for some one to come up with the following description of this so-called second experience of grace: "I made Christ my personal Prophet," or, "I made Christ my personal King, and that is when I started living the real Christian life."

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## UPCOMING CONFERENCES & EVENTS

### **Saved By Faith Youth Camp—**

June 17-21, 2019. Webster  
Conference Center, Salina,  
Kansas. Speaker: Dr. Jim Orrick.

*God Is Sovereign.*

[www.sbfyckansas.com](http://www.sbfyckansas.com).

*Registration is closed for this  
event.*

### **Encouraged to Endure**

**Conference—July 25-27, 2019.**

Second Baptist Church, West  
Frankfort, IL. Speakers: Joseph  
Mahlaola, Larry McCall, & John  
Snyder. Worship Leader: Tom  
Clay.

### **Reformation Weekend**

**Conference—October 25-27.**

Trinity Baptist Church, Wamego,  
KS. The SBAOC annual business  
meeting will be held on  
Saturday, October 26.



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Misinterpretation of experience often results in confusing testimonies. I have heard many testimonies which evidently described real and genuine experiences. The interpretation of those experiences, however, were woefully unbiblical. Most of the second-work-of-grace testimonies come under this error of misinterpreting one's experience. Many times the testifier does not interpret his first experience biblically, and, consequently, fails to interpret the so-called second experience biblically as well.

Most Christians have many deep experiences subsequent to conversion but the wise ones neither give their experiences some name nor form a doctrine on the basis of them. Lack of wisdom at this point is very dangerous and has caused no small amount of harm and confusion.

It is true that the difference between non-lordship teachers and Lordship teachers is not semantics. It is equally true, however, that, in many instances, it is the interpretation of experiences that is faulty. This is especially true where the second experience conveys the idea of two level Christianity—the have's and the have nots. The truth of the matter is that there are as many levels of Christianity as there are Christians. The Bible recognizes these differences as degrees of sanctification.

One caution that I wish to urge is applicable to both non-lordship and Lordship teachers. Both should be very slow to question different experiences. Rather, with the Bible in hand, each should seek to correct the erroneous interpretation of what may well be a genuine experience. It is therefore very important in both speaking and writing to distinguish clearly between experience and the interpretation of the experience. In some cases both may be erroneous and unbiblical, but in many cases it is the interpretation that is unbiblical when the experience may be genuine.

The Lordship controversy is just one of many "two-step salvation" errors. There are not just two-steps. There are many, many steps. A better way to express it is "many degrees of sanctification." Submitting to Christ's Lordship is not a one-time experience. Rather, it is life-long experience. No Christian can claim to be fully yielded in this world, otherwise he or she would be sinless.

This two-step salvation, or second conversion, error has done great damage and caused many divisions in the Christian church. It has produced a generation of antinomian, self-deceived church members and has done great harm to true conversion and true religion.

Many Christians can point to times of fresh commitment, to fresh surrender, to stronger and joyous assurance. They can also point to some backsliding in heart, periods of coldness and indifference. Some have lost their assurance (not their salvation—if they ever had it). Many of us can relate times of crisis, some of which knock us backward and some of which move us forward. But there is never a time in the true Christian's life when Christ is not his Lord.

There is another area that both Lordship teachers and non-lordship teachers need to be very cautious in judging. Specifically, we must all remember that many true Christians have a far better experience with God than their understanding of divine truth about God.

Let me illustrate this by a personal story. I was preaching at a retreat in Harvey Cedars, New Jersey. My topic was Christ our Prophet, Christ our Priest and Christ our King. A young lady about eighteen years old came to speak to me at the end of the service. She told me that her father was a missionary and that he never told

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her that she must trust Christ as Prophet, Priest and King. She had come to Christ for forgiveness and salvation several years before but she did not consciously trust Him as Prophet or King. I asked her about her experience. "Did you desire to be taught the will of Christ?" She answered, "Yes." "Did you desire for Him to reign over you and protect you from your enemies and His?" Again, she answered that she had. After talking with her a few minutes it was apparent that she was a devout Christian. And this is what I told her: "I believe from what you tell me that you have every reason to believe that your experience with Christ is real and genuine and that tonight your understanding caught up with your experience."

We all know Christians who give every evidence of being born again, yet, they know nothing about the theological term "regeneration." Their experience is better than their understanding. John says in his little epistle, "He that has the Son has life." When we have Christ we have Him all of His offices—all of His person and all of His saving work—though one may not ever fully understand it.

It is important to make a distinction between: (1) a person who claims to be saved and lives like a saved person, yet, does not fully understand the implications of Christ's Lordship, and (2) those who reject the will of Christ, who have no desire or intention to follow Jesus, who quarrel with any submission to Christ and His authority as Teacher and King, who refuse to bow to His claims, and yet, who, all the while, claim to be saved and satisfied. This is antinomianism.

There should be no argument that in the first example the person has bowed to the Lordship of Christ, whether he understands it or not. But the second example is entirely different and this person has no reason to believe he is a Christian at all. Notice I said, "no reason to believe" (assurance). That is as far as we can go in judging the matter. We cannot look into the Lamb's Book of Life. We cannot have Christ in halves or in parts.

I am sorry that the phrase, "trust Christ as your personal Saviour," has crept into the Christian church in the last 100 years and has become common in present-day evangelism. It did not come from the New Testament, the apostles, the respected church fathers or the reformers. It is not found in the Westminster standards or in the Old Baptist Confessions. You will not find it among the great preachers of the past—men such as Bunyan, Spurgeon, Whitefield, Jonathan Edwards, etc.

It is obvious that this terminology and idea which it conveys have contributed to the Lordship controversy. I personally do not like it nor do I use it. It is true that, if we have Christ, then He is our personal Saviour, our personal Prophet, our personal Priest, our personal King. He is all of that together or none of it at all.

Many times those who testify of this second experience refer to their first experience as "before I made Christ Lord." There

is not a line in the Bible that will support such language or such a doctrinal concept.

I cringe at the thought of any "supposed convert" of the non-lordship teaching saying, "I am saved but Jesus is not my Lord;" or "I am saved but I have not submitted to Christ's Lordship" or, "I am saved but I have no desire to be taught of Christ." This kind of thinking is preposterous and totally foreign to Bible salvation. It is essentially different from the case of a new convert who does not realize all the implications of the Lordship of Christ in every area of his life. There is a clear teaching in the Bible of growing in grace and it is a lifetime process.

Yes, our gospel is a gospel of belief. It is also a gospel of obedience. Obedience is one of the tests that John makes clear in his first epistle that believers might KNOW that they have eternal life.

"Now by this we know that we know Him, if we keep His commandments. He who says, "I know Him," and does not keep His commandments ;is a liar, and the truth is not in Him. But whoever keeps His word, truly the love of God is perfected in him. By this we know that we are in Him" (1 John 2:3-5).

Paul, also knows of the relationship between true believing and evangelical obedience.

"And to give you who are troubled rest with us when the Lord Jesus is revealed from heaven with His mighty angels, in flaming fire taking vengeance on those who do not know God, and on those who DO NOT OBEY THE GOSPEL of our Lord Jesus Christ. These shall be punished with everlasting destruction from the presence of the Lord and from the glory of His power" (2 Thess. 1:7-9).

We see it taught in Hebrews 5:8,9: "Though He was a Son, yet He learned obedience by the things which He suffered. And having been perfected, He became the author of eternal salvation to all who obey Him." Yes, it is also a gospel of obedience.

The hymn writer had it straight when he wrote, 'Trust and Obey for there is no other way to be happy in Jesus but to trust and obey.'

Jesus' statement is very concise and succinct: "If you love Me keep My commandments" (John 14:15). . .

This is not works-salvation but works as a result of true believing, as a result of regeneration. "Therefore if anyone is in Christ, he is a new creation; old things have passed away; behold, all things have become new" (2 Cor. 5:17).

This passage does not say that only some are new creatures, or that it would be nice if they were new creatures. Neither does it say that this new creation is optional or reserved only for those who make Christ Lord of their lives. To be in Christ is to be a new creature. It is to have Christ as Saviour and Lord.

*The Founders Journal*, Winter 1992, [www.founders.org](http://www.founders.org)

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## PRAYER MEETINGS FOR SPIRITUAL AWAKENING AND REVIVAL

- Fellowship Baptist Church in Onaga, Kansas—5:00 pm on Sundays
- Trinity Baptist Church in Wamego, Kansas—8:00 pm on Saturdays

*The Spurgeon Baptist Association of Churches is an association of Southern Baptist Churches that are united to manifest the glory of God above all. We set out to do this by seeking spiritual awakening and revival by intense prayer and earnest obedience to Scripture. As an association of churches we are bound in mutual covenant to strengthen and support one another - motivated and guided by the authority and sufficiency of Scripture - by facilitating faithful preaching of the Word of God, proclaiming the gospel of the risen Lord Jesus Christ to all, making and gathering disciples, planting churches and coordinating unified missions efforts.*

*We are a non-geographic association seeking to include any like-minded body of believers so that together we might better fulfill the great commission of our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ. Our intent is to lean on His instruction and not our imaginations so that He is honored in all that we do. We welcome churches who adhere to the confessions of faith accepted by Southern Baptists throughout their history, including, but not limited to, the Second London Confession (1689) and the Baptist Faith and Message.*



Baptist Association of Churches