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**THEOLOGY OF LORDSHIP IN AN AFRICAN CHRISTIAN
PERSPECTIVE: IMPLICATIONS FOR UNDERSTANDING THE
LORDSHIP OF CHRIST**

APPROVAL SHEET

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ABSTRACT

"Jesus is Lord" has been and is a confessional statement of the church. Different generations have perceived this statement differently, hence the variety of response to this Jesus.

In the five chapters of this research, this writer has tried to investigate the different views on lordship, focusing on the African perspective. It was discovered that one common understanding was in terms of ownership, in other words, Jesus is seen as the owner. This was seen in history, Jewish tradition and Early New Testament church. The theological implications of this discovery in relations to Jesus Christ as Lord were further investigated. One fact seen was that the statement of confession thus meant one surrendered to the owner in all spheres of life.

Furthermore, this research shows that from time, there have been several lords, in the different areas of living-political, religious, social etc. However, one thing noted was that Jesus lordship is supreme and sovereign! Thus, it is either that "Jesus is LORD of ALL or not LORD at ALL".

CONCLUSION

As a conclusion, this writer believes that a proper understanding is needed with regards to Jesus lordship. Drawing from scripture passages like Phil 2:5 – 11; Rom 10:9 and I Cor 16:22, a confession of “Jesus is lord” must be accompanied with some very clear understanding of the implication.

First, anyone who calls Jesus lord, must acknowledge a submission to Christ as both saviour and lord.

In this, one sees no separation between the saviourhood and the lordship of Christ. Grudem emphasis is instructive here; He says

.....MacArthur argued very convincingly from many New Testament passages that one cannot truly accept Christ as saviour without accepting him as Lord, or in other words, there can be no true saving faith without genuine repentance as well.....²

¹ Ambrose Morvingire Moyo. “The Quest for African Christian Theology and the Problem of the Relationship between faith and culture,” African Theological Journal Vol. 212, 2, 1983, p. 97.

² Wayne Grudem. Systematic Theology. Grand Rapids, Michigan: Zondervan Publishing House, 1994 p. 715

This assertion supports the implied stand that anyone who testifies having a salvation experience and proclaim Jesus as lord, must show their submission to Him both as lord and saviour.

Second, by submission to him as lord, one acknowledges exalting Jesus above all things. Judging by the background of the Philippians 2:5-11, it is to be noted that God through Paul dealt with the "fears and jealousies which had arisen in Philippians church, thus seeking to show them that they must rise above the littleness. For it was not possible for Christ followers to cling to their small ambitions and still profess to have Christ as their master"³

Third, a submission to the lordship of Christ means that one acknowledges his ownership of life.

Confessing that Jesus is my lord brings to bear the fact that he owns lives (Rom. 14:8), this reaches to matters of everyday living. It speaks of one who has authority and control over all other forces. A situation where one professes that Jesus is Lord, but refuses to relinquish over control over certain areas of life means that the lord does not have absolute authority.

Fourth, Submission to the Lordship of Christ carries the idea of commitment to a life of discipleship.

Jesus call has always been for people to follow him. Believers were first known as disciples in Antioch. (Acts 11:26). Discipleship in the New Testament is always known to carry a cost. For many Jesus is not the kind

³ George Arthur Buttrick. Interpreter's Bible, The book of Philippians. (New York: Abingdon Press 1955) p. 52

of saviour and lord they expected, so they reject the call to discipleship. However, it still remains the surest way to deep commitment to Jesus.

RECOMMENDATION

To correct the highlighted problem of lack of deep commitment to Christ, the following recommendations are made:

1. Clear Bible based teaching and preaching on Jesus as saviour and Lord be given. The church stresses so much on the saving work of Christ without equal balancing as Lord.
2. There is need to carryout discipleship lessons for members commensurate with their growth to help them understand how Jesus lordship bears on their everyday living.
3. A conscious effort should be made to investigate in depth other factors that can influence Christian commitment. As presently given in this research, it seems as if is the only factor that affects Christian commitment, but this may not be so.
4. Need for researchers to identify a suitable model in the African worldview for Jesus as Lord.