



LORDSHIP SALVATION

By George Lujack

Lordship salvation is a term used to describe a doctrinal belief that one must submit to Messiah (Christ) as Lord, and not only as Savior. Lordship salvation is the doctrinal belief that receiving Messiah (Christ) involves repentance, a turning from lawlessness and sin to practicing righteousness through commandment keeping. Lordship salvation is basically the opposite of antinomianism, or easy believism, which teaches that one must merely acknowledge Yeshua (Jesus) for salvation, but not obey Him. Opponents of lordship salvation contend that commandment keeping consists of works and those who keep the commandments of God are attempting to earn their salvation. Lordship salvation teaches that we must obey His commandments; easy believism teaches that we do not need to. This article will define and defend the tenets of lordship salvation.

KEEPING THE COMMANDMENTS OF GOD IS NOT 'WORKS'

Generally speaking, keeping the commandments of God is not works, it a lifestyle change from unrighteous living in sin to righteous living through commandment keeping. The works of the law (Romans 9:32, Galatians 2:16, 3:2-10) are a reference to commandment keeping, but law keeping is not to be confused with good works.

One may have to work at being righteous, but this is a lifestyle change, not works befitting repentance (Acts 26:20). Is it really 'work' for a righteous man to stay home for the evening with his family, as opposed to an unrighteous man to going out, getting drunk, cheating on his wife in adultery, then returning home? Those who proclaim that keeping God's commandments are doing unnecessary works are deceiving themselves.

Good works befitting repentance differ from required commandment keeping. Good works befitting repentance would include charitable giving, doing good deeds, feeding the poor, ministering to prisoners through mail or personal visits, volunteering, etc.

Another often stated objection to lordship salvation is that no one can keep God's commandments perfectly. The truth is that Scripture proclaims that we can keep His commandments, but even if not perfectly we are to try to by practicing righteousness.

1 JOHN 2:3-6 (NKJV):

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. He who says he abides in Him ought himself also to walk just as He walked.

1 JOHN 3:10 (NKJV):

In this the children of God and the children of the devil are manifest: WHOEVER DOES NOT PRACTICE RIGHTEOUSNESS IS NOT OF GOD, nor is he who does not love his brother.

DO WE NEED TO KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS TO EARN OUR SALVATION

Many try to deceive by stating that those who keep the commandments of God are trying to earn their salvation, so therefore it is wrong to keep them. This sure is one warped view of how to justify breaking God's commandments!

ISAIAH 5:20 (NKJV):

Woe to those who call evil good, and good evil.

MATTHEW 15:6; MARK 7:9 (NKJV):

“Thus you have made the commandment of God of no effect by your tradition.”

Many in these end times are rejecting the commandments of God through false doctrines. Anyone who calls God's good commandments evil, and by extension calls those who keep His commandments evil, woe to them! Those who justify wickedness and condemn righteousness are like an abomination to God (Proverbs 17:15).

SALVATION IS A FREE GIFT OF GOD THAT CANNOT BE EARNED

EPHESIANS 2:8-9 (NKJV):

For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God, not of works, lest anyone should boast.

Generally speaking, those who keep the commandments of God out of obedience to God, are not trying to earn their salvation. True believers understand that salvation is a free gift that cannot be earned. Commandment keeping is not about earning salvation, it is about living righteously according to how God wants us to live.

WHAT MUST WE DO TO BE SAVED?

MATTHEW 19:16-17 (NKJV):

Now behold, one came and said to Him, “Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?”

So He said to him, “Why do you call Me good? No one is good but One, that is, God. BUT IF YOU WANT TO ENTER INTO LIFE, KEEP THE COMMANDMENTS.”

1 CORINTHIANS 7:19 (NKJV):

Keeping the commandments of God is what matters.

Keeping God's commandments, as opposed to willfully breaking them, is necessary for salvation. Keeping His commandments cannot earn us our salvation and there is no conflict in Scripture here. Keeping God's commandments is necessary, but salvation came through the atonement work of Messiah (Christ), not by commandment keeping. Now that salvation for mankind has been paid for, by Yeshua (Jesus), commandment keeping is a required component to enter into eternal life. What is the alternative? Yeshua (Jesus) didn't give us salvation so that we would never repent and live in sin perpetually.

LUKE 13:3,5 (NKJV):

“I tell you, no; BUT UNLESS YOU REPENT you will all likewise perish.”

2 PETER 3:9 (NKJV):

The Lord is not slack concerning His promise, as some count slackness, but is longsuffering toward us, not willing that any should perish BUT THAT ALL SHOULD COME TO REPENTANCE. 2

Unrepentant sinners CANNOT enter God's kingdom and will be turned away from it. Do not be deceived! We must repent and keep His commandments.

1 CORINTHIANS 6:9-10 (NKJV):

Do you not know that the unrighteous will not inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God)? Do not be deceived. Neither fornicators, nor idolaters, nor adulterers, nor effeminate, nor homosexuals, nor thieves, nor covetous (greedy of gain), nor drunkards, nor revilers, nor swindlers will inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God).

GALATIANS 5:19-21 (NKJV):

Now the works of the flesh are evident, which are: adultery, fornication, uncleanness, lewdness, idolatry, drug sorcery, hatred, quarrels, jealousies, fits of rage, selfish ambitions, dissensions, heresies, envy, murders, drunkenness, revelries, and the like; of which I tell you beforehand, just as I also told you in time past, that those who practice such things will not inherit the reign of Elohim (kingdom of God).

EPHESIANS 5:5-6 (NKJV):

For this you know, that no fornicator, unclean person, nor covetous man, who is an idolater, has any inheritance in the kingdom of Messiah (Christ) and God. Let no one deceive you with empty words, for because of these things the wrath of God comes upon the sons of disobedience.

REVELATION 21:7-8 (NKJV):

He who overcomes shall inherit all things, and I will be his God and he shall be My son. The cowardly, untrustworthy, abominable, murderers, sexually immoral, drug sorcerers, idolaters, and all liars shall have their part in the lake which burns with fire and brimstone, which is the second death.

JUST CALL ON THE LORD AND YOU WILL BE SAVED DECEPTION

ACTS 16:31 (NKJV):

“Believe on the Lord Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ), and you will be saved, you and your household.”

ROMANS 10:9 (NKJV):

If you confess with your mouth the Lord Yeshua (Jesus) and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved.

According to antinomianism (easy believism) merely acknowledging Him and calling upon the Lord is all that is necessary for salvation. Taking a few verses out of context to sustain a doctrine is completely deceptive and misleading. If one believes on the Lord, then he or she must obey His commandments.

ROMANS 10:10 (NKJV):

For with the heart one BELIEVES UNTO RIGHTEOUSNESS, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.

Romans 10:10 follows 10:9 and proclaims we must *believe unto righteousness*, and that means we must obey God's commands to practice righteousness.

MANY UNREPENTANT SINNERS WILL BE KEPT OUTSIDE OF HIS KINGDOM

MATTHEW 7:21-23 (NKJV):

“Not everyone who says to Me, ‘Lord, Lord,’ shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, ‘Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?’ And then I will declare to them, ‘I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!’

REVELATION 22:14-15 (NKJV):

BLESSED ARE THOSE WHO DO HIS COMMANDMENTS, that they may have the right to the tree of life, and may enter through the gates into the city. But outside are dogs and sorcerers and sexually immoral and murderers and idolaters, and whoever loves and practices a lie.

Lawless believers, many who do things in His name, will be turned away from His kingdom, because they did not repent of their sins and continued practicing lawlessness. Salvation cannot be earned, but it can be lost through unrepentant, lawless sin.

DISPENSATIONALISM: DISPENSING GOD’S ETERNAL COMMANDMENTS

In some dispensationalist circles, many wish to ‘dispense’ with God’s eternal commandments, as if they were commands for a certain age. The tenets of dispensationalism are correct in many of its teachings of a historical progression, as revealed through Scripture, consisting of a series of periods of God’s revelation and plan of salvation. But Scripture is clear that God’s laws and His words will never pass away (Matthew 5:18, 24:35; Mark 13:31; Luke 16:17, 21:33).

PSALM 119:115 (NKJV):

Depart from me, you evildoers, for I will keep the commandments of my God!

JOHN 14:21 (NKJV):

“He who has My commandments and keeps them, it is he who loves Me. And he who loves Me will be loved by My Father, and I will love him and manifest Myself to him.”

Throughout many doctrines, man tries to do away with God’s eternal commandments.

YESHUA MESSIAH (JESUS CHRIST) IS LORD AND SAVIOR

MATTHEW 28:18 (NKJV):

And Yeshua (Jesus) came and spoke to them, saying, “All authority has been given to Me in heaven and on earth.”

2 PETER 3:17-18 (NKJV):

You therefore, beloved, since you know this beforehand, beware lest you also fall from your own steadfastness, being led away with the error of the wicked; but grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord AND Savior Yeshua Messiah (Jesus Christ). To Him be the glory both now and forever.

Do not be led away from the tenets of lordship salvation with the error of easy believism. Yeshua Messiah is Lord *and* Savior, not just the Savior.