

ABOUT THIS BOOK

It is doubtful whether four simple studies such as contained in this book could be more packed with valuable information.

The Lordship of Christ was the great truth so vividly on the lips of the early church, and so satisfying today to people—young and old—who need direction in a world which can be strongly confusing.

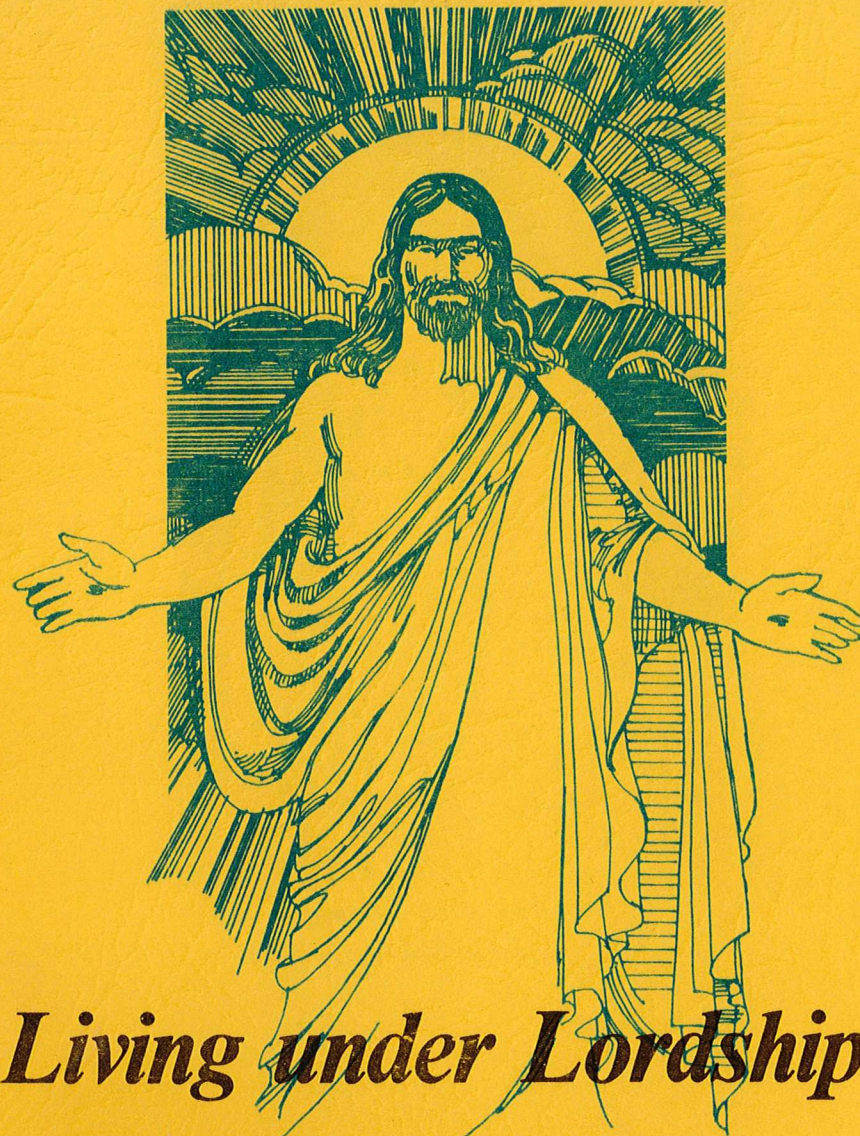
The reader is advised to have a Bible opened in order to follow these references. This is most important. Gradually the whole wonderful truth will unfold, and be most rewarding.

This study book has been used by many persons and groups with helpful results.

GEOFFREY BINGHAM, who has created these studies, has been Principal of two Bible Colleges and conductor of study conferences. He is currently Executive Director of New Creation Teaching Ministry.



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Living under Lordship

Four studies by Geoffrey Bingham

Volume 4
Camp & Bible Study Series

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*Four studies by
Geoffrey Bingham*

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LIVING UNDER LORDSHIP

by Geoffrey Bingham

Introduction to the Studies

Man's deepest problem is the matter of authority. Authorities are part of the creational order of God's universe. This is seen in Romans 13:1-7, I Peter 2:13-17, Ephesians 5:21 - 6:9, I Thessalonians 5:12-13, I Timothy 5:17, Hebrews 13:7, 17, and other passages. There are authorities celestial and authorities terrestrial, and many of them are deficient, but they are authorities. God's world is functional (Gen. 1:31, Eccles. 3:11, Prov. 16:4, I Tim. 4:4, 6:17), and purposeful (Ephes. 1:3-14, I Cor. 2:6-10, etc.). In both function and purpose authority figures largely. Love and authority are greatly linked, as also hatred and disobedience are linked.

The question, then, as to whether we can accept authority will greatly determine our manner of life, as also the way we mature. John 17:3, I John 5:20, and I John 3:14 show us that true life lies in relationships, and we know that relationships are linked always with love and authority. We need then to understand what life is as it is lived under the Lordship of God. If this is related, daily, to our corporate living in (a) Our personal relationship with God, (b) With our families, (c) With the people of God, and (d) The world around us, then our studies will be both practical and beneficial.

JESUS IS LORD. HE HAS BECOME LORD

1. Jesus has always been Lord.

As the Son (Heb. 1:2-3), and as the Word (John 1:1-3) he has been the mediator in creation (Col. 1:15-17, cf. I Cor. 8:5-6). Yet it is this Son/Word who becomes flesh. John 1:14, Rom. 8:3. He becomes truly man (Matt. 1:20-21). It is as man he must prove his Lordship.

2. Jesus, anointed, exercises Lordship.

He is confessed as Lord during his ministry: John 1:49, Matt. 16:16, etc. He acts as Lord. He exorcises demons, heals sicknesses, gives remission of sins. This is related to the prophecies. The Father calls him the Son (Matt. 3:17, 17:5) at the Baptism and the Transfiguration. John's Gospel is filled with Jesus' claims to Sonship, and the witness to him by the Father.

3. The promises are that his Lordship will liberate man.

Matt. 1:21, Luke 4:17-18, Luke 11:21ff, John 12:31, John 8:31-36 (cf. Acts 10:38, Rom. 8:1-3, Gal. 5:1, I John 3:8, Heb. 2:14-15) show that Jesus was intent on defeating the enemies of man. The prophecy of Luke 1:67-79 (espec. vs. 70-75) is in line with Isaiah 26:11-14, showing that Christ will free man from his enemies.

4. Man has many enemies.

The following are the enemies of man:-

- (i) *Satan* (Heb. 2:14-15, I John 3:8).
- (ii) *The evil principalities and powers* (Ephes. 6:12, cf. Col. 2:14-15).
- (iii) *The world system* (Gal. 1:4-5, I Cor. 1:20-25).
- (iv) *Sin* (Rom. 5:12ff, John 8:34, cf. Prov. 5:22-23).
- (v) *Death* (Heb. 2:14-15, Rom. 5:12ff, I Cor. 15:55-56).
- (vi) *The flesh* (Rom. 8:5ff, I John 2:15, Ephes. 2:1-3, Rom. 8:11).

(vii) *The law* (Rom. 7:1, Gal. 3:10).

(viii) *The wrath of God* (Rom. 1:18ff, I Thess. 1:10, Gal. 3:10).

(ix) *The conscience* (Heb. 9:14, Rom. 2:15-16, Heb. 10:2, 22).

(x) *The idols* (Gal. 4:8, Rom. 1:24-25).

5. Christ is stronger than all the enemies and defeats them in life and death.

In life he is stronger than demons, stronger than death, stronger than sin for he exorcises, raises from the dead, heals and forgives sins. Yet it is clear that this authority is given to him by the Father. It is delegated. The Cross will be the test as to whether he can overcome these enemies for all time and so release man. This he does:-

He defeats Satan (Heb. 2:14-15, cf. John 14:30-31), the evil powers (Col. 2:14-15), the world system (Gal. 6:14, 1:4-5), sin (I Pet. 2:24, II Cor. 5:21, Matt. 26:28, Gal. 1:4-5, etc.), death (I Cor. 15:55-56, II Tim. 1:10), the flesh (Rom. 8:11, Gal. 5:24), the law (Rom. 6:7, 3:24ff, 7:4, Gal. 2:19-21), the wrath of God (Gal. 3:10-13, I Thess. 1:10, Rom. 5:10), the conscience (Heb. 9:14, 10:22, I Tim. 1:5), the idols (I Cor. 8:5-6, I Thess. 1:9).

6. Jesus is Lord over all things.

He has liberated us from all enemies. We receive him as Lord (Rom. 10:9, Col. 2:6, cf. Acts 2:36, 10:36, II Cor. 4:4, I Cor. 12:1-2, etc.).

It is our life, now, to walk in the direction of that Lordship. We receive him as Lord and walk under his Lordship. Col. 2:6, Ephes. 1:22.

STUDY TWO

THE FATHER IS LORD

In this study we see that the Father-God is Lord of all creation, and that although man has rebelled the Father has sent His Son to redeem. Man is gripped by the love of the Father through the Son, and man comes to the Father, being shown His love. He now comes under the authority of God as Father. This submission affects every part of his life.

1. God as Father is King over all the earth.

This is God's right by creation. He authored it. It is His. He has the copyright! See Psalm 22:28, 'For dominion belongs to the Lord, and He rules over the nations.' Obadiah 21, I Chron. 29:11, Psalms 10:16, 24:7-10, Isa. 6:5, etc. He has created man and given him orders: Gen. 1:26-31, 2:17, etc.

2. Man's rebellion against God is drastic and devastating.

Gen. 3:1-10, Rom. 1:18-31. It is refusal of God as God and His Lordship over all things. It brings about death (Rom. 5:12ff), bondage to idols (Rom. 1:20ff, cf. Acts 17:24-28), and all evil (see Study One).

3. Man rebels against the Fatherhood: God and the Son.

Luke 3:38 (cf. Acts 17:28) shows man to be created as a son, but he forfeits that sonship by his rebellion (cf. John 1:12). *God creates another son in Israel.* This is, so to speak, a Covenant-Son. See Exodus 4:22, Hosea 11:1, Deut. 14:1, 32:5-6, 18, Isa. 63:16, 64:8, Malachi 2:10. This son does not wholly fulfil the will of the Father. See Issaiah 48:8 - 'a rebel from your birth'.

4. The True Son comes to show the True Fatherhood.

Even Israel could not fully know the Fatherhood until the Son came. John 1:14, 18, 5:17ff, 4:1-10, Matt. 11:27. Jesus taught Fatherhood in the Sermon on the Mount. That

is, God is Father, God is King. He is King-Father, caring in creation, providence and redemption. So God sends the Son to bring His people to Him (John 14:6, Matt. 11:27). This Fatherhood is opposed by the Jewish leaders, cf. John 8:18-19, 27-29, 36-47, 15:23.

The Son shows the Fatherhood in and by the Cross:- John 17:1-5 (cf. John 3:16, I John 3:16, 4:9-10), Heb. 2:9-10. II Corinthians 5:19 - 'God was in Christ reconciling the world unto Himself.' Cf. John 4:23-24.

5. We come to the Father by the Son and the Spirit because of the Cross.

The Son brings us:- John 14:6, 1:11-13. The Spirit shows us the Son and the Father (John 16:12-15). The Spirit brings the Son to the heart, causing us to cry out to Him (Gal. 4:4-6, Rom. 8:14-17).

6. We now live under the Lordship of the Father.

Jesus demanded such obedience to His Lordship:- Matt. 7:21-23, 12:46-50, cf. 25:34.

Paul points out the Lordship in Ephes. 3:14-15, 4:6, I Cor. 8:5-6, I Thess. 1:1.

All that the Son did, we are expected to do, and this, of course, in the Son. Cf. John 20:19-23. The Father gives the Spirit for this: Luke 24:49, Acts 1:4-8. See also Matt. 10:20.

STUDY THREE

THE SPIRIT IS LORD

As our following Scriptures show, the Holy Spirit is the Spirit of life, and as such the Agent of the Godhead in Creation as the Son is Mediator. The Father, Son and Spirit work together, so that creation, providence, redemption, sonship, and the ultimate renewal of the universe are all

works done together by the Godhead. The Spirit, although a discrete One, is always spoken of as being the Spirit of the Lord, the Father, the Son, Jesus, Christ, etc. That is the Spirit is the Aide to the other Persons of the Trinity. He aids man in coming from death to life, and so in coming to the Father and the Son. For this reason we must be subject to him.

1. The Spirit is the Lord of life, of creation.

Genesis 1:2, 2:7, 6:3, indicate the Spirit as the source of true life. Thus see Job 33:4, 27:3, Psalm 104:29-30. Ezekiel 37:1-14, cf. Rom. 8:2, II Cor. 3:6, cf. John 3:6, all show he is the Spirit of life. He is life-giving. Man is dependent upon the Spirit as upon the Father and the Son - for life.

2. The Spirit is the Spirit of God, working in history and prophecy.

The Spirit was in the time prior to the Flood, and posterior to it, especially in regard to the Patriarchs. Abraham was a prophet and so a man of the Spirit. (Cf. Genesis 20:7, and Gal. 4:28-31.) Joseph (Gen. 41:38) was a man of the Spirit. Likewise Moses, Joshua, and others of the Exodus period.

The Holy Spirit was in the prophets from Abel to Zechariah. These included Moses, some of the Judges, and the prophets from Samuel to Malachi. The prophets, then, were subject to the Spirit. Isaiah 63:10 and Haggai 2:5 indicate that it was the Spirit of God who led Israel, and was Lord over them rather than any human leader. They had to be men of the Spirit to lead. The Spirit also told of things to come. In this sense he was Lord of history (cf. I Peter 1:10-21, II Peter 1:20-21).

3. The Holy Spirit was the Lord of the Man, Jesus.

Born of the Spirit through Mary, baptised (anointed) by him, Jesus was led by him to be tempted, ministered by him, offered himself up in death by him, and was raised by him from the dead. He gave commandment by him to the apostles,

and ascended by him. See Luke 1:35, 3:22, 4:1, Matt. 12:28, Heb. 9:14, Rom. 1:4-5, 8:9-11, Ephes. 1:19ff. *Jesus did nothing apart from the Spirit.*

4. The Holy Spirit is the Lord of man, i.e. redeemed man.

II Corinthians 3:18 states this plainly. However, the church received its commandment through the Spirit (Acts 1:2). It was filled by the Spirit, and led from that point onwards. Philip was led by the Spirit (Acts 8:29): so was Peter (Acts 10:19). Paul and Barnabas were sent out by the Spirit (Acts 13:1-4), and doubtless ever led by him (cf. Acts 16:6-7).

The same Spirit brings new birth (John 3:6ff), i.e. regeneration (Titus 3:3-5), and cleansing (I Cor. 6:11). He brings life (II Cor. 3:6), obedience (Acts 5:32), and distributes to the church gifts (I Cor. 12:4ff), weapons (II Cor. 10:3, Ephes. 6:18), and power to preach the Gospel (I Cor. 2:4-5, I Thess. 1:5, I Peter 1:12). Only by him is prayer made (Ephes. 6:18) and worship given (Phil. 3:3). One serves by the Spirit (Rom. 7:6), and loves by the Spirit (Rom. 5:5, Gal. 5:22-23, Rom. 15:30).

5. Redeemed man must be under the Lordship of the Spirit.

We see from the above that there is nothing man can do without the Spirit. He must be subject to him (II Cor. 3:18). He must walk in the Spirit and be led by the Spirit. This is precisely how Jesus lived (Luke 4:1f). So see Romans 8:13-17, Gal. 5:16-26.

STUDY FOUR

LIVING UNDER THREEFOLD LORDSHIP

LIVING UNDER AUTHORITY.

From our former studies we saw that man lived under many lords, having exchanged the Lordship of God for these gods. Man has a passion to worship, and to love, and this he poured onto the idols. They brought death and tyranny. The Father, Son and Spirit delivered man from this domination, and *thus won the love of man*. Man serves truly (and only) out of love:- John 14:15, I John 4:19. I John 4:9-10, cf. I Peter 1:8, II Cor. 5:14. Man needs to keep himself in the love of God (Jude 20) so that he walks in love, and thus serves in love, gladly accepting authority both Divine and human.

1. Man was created to be lord of the creation.

We can see man's lordship from the following references:- Gen. 1:28ff, Psa. 8:3f (cf. Heb. 2:5f), Gen. 9:4, Eccles. 7:29, I Cor. 11:7. At the same time man is contingent upon God - Jer. 10:23.

2. Man loses his lordship by virtue of rebellion.

This is seen in that man soon comes under the idols, gods, and lords. He is their slave. His worship and love go to them. He loves the world.

3. Man regains lordship by the Cross, Resurrection and the Ascension.

- He is freed from the lords:- John 8:31-36, Rom. 8:1-3, Gal. 5:1, etc.
- He can defeat his enemies when he stands in faith.
- He is raised with Christ, and seated with him (Ephes. 2:4-6).
- He is sent in the authority of Christ:- John 20:19-23, Matt. 28:18-20.

- Seated with Christ *he has authority on the principle of Matthew 8:9ff.*
- He has the Spirit, the gifts, repentance, faith, forgiveness, new life, sonship, power - all ascension gifts (Acts 2:33, 5:31, 11:18, Gal. 4:4-6, Acts 1:8, cf. Ephes. 4:7-11, I Cor. 12:4ff), and has weapons with which to enforce the authority (Ephes. 6:10ff, II Cor. 10:3).
- Also Christ intervenes (Rom. 8:28-39), and the believer is an overcomer (cf. Rev. chs. 2 and 3, 21:7).

4. Man is under a triple Lordship - that of Father, Son, and Spirit.

1. He is a son of the Father, doing what the Son does.
Note that redeemed humanity is *in the Son*:- Gal. 3:26-29.
2. He is subject to the Lordship of Christ:- Col. 2:6f.
3. He is led by the Spirit:- Rom. 8:14f, Gal. 5:16ff.
4. In practice this means he is subject to the authorities God has appointed, celestial and terrestrial, in the family, in the people of God, in the world, in all creation. He is also expected to exercise the authority given and the responsibility which goes with it.

5. Have we been, and are we, subject to authority?

The questions within family, people of God, society, the world. Are we relationalised? This is by (a) Forgiving others as we have been forgiven, (b) Receiving forgiveness for our negative and wrong attitudes, and nursing of our hurts, (c) Loving others, indeed all, including our enemies. We are thus loosed from guilts which 'hook us' to others.

6. The goal and purpose of man's lordship.

The same as that of God's goal and purpose - to glorify Him (Ephes. 1:4-14, cf. Isa. 43:6-7). The current programme is set out in I Cor. 15:24-28 (cf. Rev. 11:15, Phil. 2:9-11). Under the Lord we seek to effect this goal by means

of the Spirit, the gifts, the power, and the weapons, all showing a united front and all being overcomers.

CONCLUSION TO STUDIES.

As we are subject to authority, as we obey with love and obedience, i.e. 'from the heart', so we mature, and become - like the Son - those who are rich in and from obedience. We delight to do His will. Our submission is voluntary; our obedience is the true life we live.

Disobedience brings stunted life, immaturity, restlessness, poor relationships. The secret is the liberation wrought by the Cross, which brings love, which brings obedience, which brings growth, which glorifies God.

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