

What is a Lord

DAY:

Monday

TITLE:

More Than a Title

KEY VERSE:

Romans 10:9 -- "If you openly declare that Jesus is Lord and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved."

REFLECTION:

On Wednesday I asked our youth a simple question: what is a Lord? It sounds old-fashioned, almost like something out of a medieval castle or a BBC period drama. But when Paul wrote these words to the Romans, that declaration carried enormous weight. To say "Jesus is Lord" in the Roman Empire was to stand in front of everything Caesar represented -- power, provision, protection -- and say, "No. I have a higher authority." It was not a polite religious phrase. It was a complete transfer of allegiance. I want to ask you today: when you say Jesus is Lord, do you mean it the way those early believers meant it? Not as a greeting. Not as a bumper sticker. But as a declaration that reshapes every decision you make, every morning you wake up.

PRAYER:

Lord, forgive me for treating your name like a title rather than a throne. I want to mean it when I say you are my Lord. Help me live like I believe it today.

DAILY ACTION:

Write the words "Jesus is Lord" somewhere you will see them throughout your day -- a sticky note, your phone wallpaper, or the top of a journal page -- and pause each time you see it to ask yourself whether your choices that day are reflecting that declaration.

DAY:

Tuesday

TITLE:

The Narrow Road Is Not Empty -- It Is Focused

KEY VERSE:

Matthew 7:13-14 -- "You can enter God's kingdom only through the narrow gate. The highway to hell is broad, and its gate is wide for the many who choose that way. But the gateway to life is very narrow and the road is difficult, and only a few ever find it."

REFLECTION:

On Wednesday I said the narrow road is not narrow because God is restrictive or harsh. It is narrow because there is only room for one set of directions. When you are submitted to a Lord, you do not get to drift left and right based on how you feel that morning, who offended you last week, or what your culture is telling you to believe. I think about how many times I have wanted to take the wheel back -- when the pain in my body was relentless, when doors were not opening after college, when I felt like I was doing everything right and

nothing was working. The narrow road demands that you stay in the lane your Lord has set, not because it is easy, but because it leads somewhere worth going. Life. Real life.

PRAYER:

Jesus, when the road feels hard and I am tempted to wander, remind me that you are the one holding the map. I trust the direction you have me walking in today.

DAILY ACTION:

Identify one area of your life right now where you have been drifting -- making decisions based on feelings or pressure rather than what God's Word says -- and write down one concrete step you can take today to realign with his direction.

DAY:

Wednesday

TITLE:

Lord Lord -- And Yet He Did Not Know Them

KEY VERSE:

Matthew 7:21 -- "Not everyone who calls out to me, 'Lord! Lord!' will enter the Kingdom of Heaven. Only those who actually do the will of my Father in heaven will enter."

REFLECTION:

This verse has always sobered me. The people Jesus is describing here are not casual church attenders. They prophesied. They cast out demons. They performed miracles -- all in his name. And yet he says to them, depart from me, I never knew you. I do not want to be that person. I do not want to say all the right things, show up in the right places, perform the right religious actions, and still be operating as the lord of my own life underneath it all. The difference between a cultural Christian and a covenant Christian is not how loud you sing on a Sunday or how many Bible verses you have memorized. It is whether you have genuinely handed over the wheel. Not just when it is convenient. Not just when you are in trouble. Every single day.

PRAYER:

Father, search my heart today. Show me anywhere I am performing Christianity on the outside while still holding the controls on the inside. I want you to truly know me, and I want to truly know you.

DAILY ACTION:

Spend five quiet minutes asking God one honest question: "Lord, is there an area of my life where I am saying your name but living by my own rules?" Write down whatever comes to mind and bring it to him in honesty.

DAY:

Thursday

TITLE:

Even the Demons Believe -- So What Makes You Different?

KEY VERSE:

James 2:19 -- "You say you have faith, for you believe that there is one God. Good for you! Even the demons believe this, and they tremble in terror."

REFLECTION:

On Wednesday I pointed out something that makes a lot of people uncomfortable. Knowing who Jesus is -- believing he is the Son of God, believing he died and rose again -- does not automatically mean you have made him your Lord. James makes it plain. The demons know exactly who God is. They believe it so fully that they tremble. But belief without obedience, without surrender, without submission to his Lordship, is not saving faith. It is just information. I have met people who can quote scripture, who grew up in church, who know the theology backwards and forwards, and yet they are running their own life completely independent of God. The question is not simply do you believe in Jesus. The question is have you handed your life over to him and are you actually walking it out day by day.

PRAYER:

God, I do not want a faith that is only in my head. I want a faith that moves my feet. Help me to obey what I already know to be true today.

DAILY ACTION:

Pick one specific instruction from scripture that you have known for a while but have been slow to actually do -- whether it relates to forgiveness, generosity, honesty, or your time -- and take one small step of obedience toward it today.

DAY:

Friday

TITLE:

Carry Your Own Load, Then Keep Moving

KEY VERSE:

Galatians 6:5 -- "For we are each responsible for our own conduct."

REFLECTION:

On Wednesday I shared something I had to learn the hard way in ministry. I was carrying the weight of every young person who walked away from God, as if their choices were my failure. Then the Holy Spirit rebuked me and said: why are you picking up the burden I already died for? You laid it at my feet and then went and strapped it back on your own back. Here is the freedom I want you to walk into this week: you cannot make anyone choose Jesus as their Lord. Not your children, not your spouse, not your friends. You can love them, you can speak truth to them, you can pray for them, and then you have to trust God with them. Your job is to keep your own walk clean and keep moving forward. Do not let someone else's choice to walk away become a weight that pulls you off the road you are supposed to be on.

PRAYER:

Lord, I release the people I have been carrying today. I trust you with them. Help me focus on my own walk with you and keep my eyes forward.

DAILY ACTION:

Write the name of one person you have been spiritually worrying over, say a short honest prayer for them, and then intentionally do one thing today that invests in your own relationship with God rather than carrying

their burden for them.