



THE CHRIST, TEACHER, PROPHET, FRIEND, LORD, SHEPHERD, BRIDEGROOM JEFF HOOVER - JULY 5, 2015 - EVANGEL CHRISTIAN FELLOWSHIP

Spiritual Maturity...Knowing who you are,
what you're here for, and how life in the kingdom of God works!

"What comes into our minds when we think about God is the most important thing about us."
(*Your thoughts about God are the most important thoughts you will have!*)
~ A.W. Tozer

Matt 16:13–16 NIV

¹³ When Jesus came to the region of Caesarea Philippi, he asked his disciples, "**Who do people say the Son of Man is?**"

¹⁴ They replied, "Some say John the Baptist; others say Elijah; and still others, Jeremiah or one of the prophets."

¹⁵ "**But what about you?**" he asked. "**Who do you say I am?**"

¹⁶ Simon Peter answered, "You are the Christ, the Son of the living God."

You Are Lord...Right?

- **Review: "Who do you say I am?"**

- **Week 1: The Christ**...Jesus is the anointed one of God, sent to mankind to accomplish a specific task. Boy, did he get the job done!
- **Week 2: Teacher**...Jesus is not just a teacher, he was the teacher! One scholar said it this way, "He was a teacher and a brilliant one, but unorthodox."
- **Week 4: Prophet**...Jesus not only prophesied, but His prophecies and their exact fulfillments were further proof that He was the Son of God.
- **Week 4: Friend**...Jesus is the kind of friend who invites us to respond to His love and desire for fellowship. He longs to love us as only He can, and He wants us to know Him in all of His fullness. He wants us to be intimate with Him.
- **Today: Lord**...Jesus wants to be Lord of our lives. Actually, the only way we can be saved is to believe he is who he says he is and receive the free gift of salvation. If we do that, he IS the Lord of our lives. We may just not live like it at times.

- **What does it mean to say he is "Lord"?**

- **He is fully invested**
 - The **sacrifice** that happened at the cross sets Jesus apart from every other religion
 - If I **gave everything** I have to the poor and even **sacrificed my body**, I could boast about it; but if I didn't **love** others, I would have **gained** nothing. (1 Cor 13:3 NLT-SE)
 - ¹² This is my commandment: Love each other in the same way I have loved you. ¹³ **There is no greater love than to lay down one's life for one's friends.** (John 15:12–13 NLT-SE)

- **He is completely in charge**

- “What we have here is a picture of purposive, personal management with vital hands-on control. **God is completely in charge of his world.** His hand may be hidden, but his rule is absolute.” ~ J.I. Packer
- **God is infinite**
 - God knows **no boundaries**. He is without measure. This attribute by definition impacts all of the others. Since God is infinite, everything else about Him must also be infinite.
- **God is sovereign**
 - This is “the attribute by which He **rules** His entire creation.” It is the application of His other attributes of being all-knowing and all-powerful. It makes Him absolutely free to do what He knows to be best. God is in control of everything that happens. Man still has a free will, and is responsible for his choices in life.
 - The LORD has made the heavens his throne; from there he **rules over everything**. (Psa 103:19 NLT-SE)
- **God is omniscient**
 - “God possesses perfect knowledge and therefore has no need to learn. God has never learned and cannot learn.” Omniscience means **all-knowing**. God knows everything, and His knowledge is infinite. It is impossible to hide anything from God.

- **He has unlimited resources**

- **Who is God?** “God is the creator and sustainer of everyone and everything. He is eternal, infinite, unchangeable in his power and perfection, in his goodness and glory, in his wisdom and justice and truth. Nothing happens except through him and by his will.” ~ **New City Catechism**
- **Providence** is that continued exercise of the divine energy whereby the Creator (1) preserves all his creatures, (2) is operative in all that comes to pass in the world, and (3) directs all things to their appointed end. ~ **Louis Berkhof**
- “The **doctrine of providence** is not a theological construct that some theological egg-heads have chosen to press down on the pages of scripture. But rather, when you read your bible you discover that it is one of the **melodic lines** of scripture. And once you hear this melody, once you get this melody in you’re mind, you’ll hear it again and again and again. You’ll find yourself saying, “Oh, you know what that is? It’s that same melody line. That’s God’s providential care! That’s God’s providence in my life!” ~ **Alistair Begg**...The Providence of God
- God’s **providential care** extends:
 - (1) Over the entire **universe** at large...
 - ³⁴ “After this time had passed, I, Nebuchadnezzar, looked up to heaven. **My sanity returned**, and I praised and worshiped the Most High and honored the one who lives forever. His rule is everlasting, and his kingdom is eternal. ³⁵ All the people of the earth are nothing compared to him. He does as he pleases among the angels of heaven and among the people of the earth. No one can stop him or say to him, ‘What do you mean by doing these things?’ (Dan 4:34–35 NLT-SE)
 - (2) Over the entire **physical world**...
 - The LORD does **whatever pleases him** throughout all heaven and earth, and on the seas and in their depths. (Psa 135:6 NLT-SE)
 - (3) Over the **affairs of the nations**...
 - For royal power belongs to the LORD. He **rules all the nations**. (Psa 22:28 NLT-SE)
 - ²⁴ The God **who made the world and everything in it**, being Lord of heaven and earth, does not live in temples made by man, ²⁵ nor is he served by human hands, as though he needed anything, since he himself gives to all mankind life and breath and everything. ²⁶ And he made from one man every nation of mankind to live on all the face of the earth, having determined allotted periods and the boundaries of their dwelling place, ²⁷ that they should seek God, and perhaps feel their way toward him and find him. (Acts 17:24–27 ESV)
 - (4) Over the **time** of our birth, the **place** of our birth, the **nature** of our birth, and our **lot in life**...

- O LORD, you have examined my heart and **know everything about me**... You made all the delicate, inner parts of my body and knit me together in my mother's womb. (Psa 139:1, 13 NLT-SE)
- (5) Over all of our **success** and **failures**...
 - ⁵ Don't raise your fists in defiance at the heavens or speak with such arrogance." ⁶ For no one on earth— from east or west, or even from the wilderness— should raise a defiant fist. ⁷ **It is God alone who judges; he decides who will rise and who will fall.** (Psa 75:5–7 NLT-SE)
- (6) Over things that are seemingly **accidental** or **insignificant**...
 - We may throw the dice, but the LORD **determines how they fall.** (Prov 16:33 NLT-SE)
- (7) To the **protection of the righteous**...
 - ¹ I look up to the mountains— does my help come from there? ² **My help comes from the LORD**, who made heaven and earth! (Psa 121:1–2 NLT-SE)
 - ¹⁸ At the moment I have all I need—and more! I am generously supplied with the gifts you sent me with Epaphroditus. They are a sweet-smelling sacrifice that is acceptable and pleasing to God. ¹⁹ And this same **God who takes care of me** will supply all your needs from his glorious riches, which have been given to us in Christ Jesus. (Phil 4:18–19 NLT-SE)
- (8) Covers the **supply of all of the needs** of God's people...
 - ⁷ Isaac turned to Abraham and said, "Father?" "Yes, my son?" Abraham replied. "We have the fire and the wood," the boy said, "but where is the sheep for the burnt offering?" ⁸ **"God will provide a sheep for the burnt offering,** my son," Abraham answered. And they both walked on together. (Gen 22:7–8 NLT-SE)
- (9) To **providing answers to our prayers**, sometimes coming soon, sometime never, apparently, sometimes coming after we've died...
 - ⁷ "Keep on **asking**, and you will receive what you ask for. Keep on **seeking**, and you will find. Keep on **knocking**, and the door will be opened to you. ⁸ For everyone who asks, receives. Everyone who seeks, finds. And to everyone who knocks, the door will be opened. (Matt 7:7–8 NLT-SE)
- (10) To the **exposure** and **punishment** of the wicked.
 - ⁴ The LORD is in his holy Temple; the LORD still rules from heaven. He watches everyone closely, examining every person on earth. ⁵ **The LORD examines both the righteous and the wicked.** He hates those who love violence. ⁶ He will rain down blazing coals and burning sulfur on the wicked, punishing them with scorching winds. (Psa 11:4–6 NLT-SE)

● He has chosen to accomplish his will through us

- Question: Is God in control or in charge?

- There's nothing wrong with saying he is in control, but Westerners tend to see control as manipulative and generally negative. It sounds better to say that God is "in charge." He's calling the shots, whether we realize it or not. He's not in charge out of necessity, but choice. He did not give us choice out of frustration, but because of his amazing love for us and his desire to reveal himself to the world through us.
- **"Not everything that comes at us is God's will.** One of our biggest areas of confusion in the church concerns the sovereignty of God. We know that God is all-powerful, we know that he is in charge of everything, but we make a mistake in thinking he is in control of everything. There's a difference from being in charge and in control. If you think he is in control of everything, then you have to believe that Hitler was his will; that he was just going to work it for his purposes. **Why would God raise something up to be his will that he was calling you to pray against?** God has created a system in which man gets to live and in partnership, demonstrate and manifest the dominion of God throughout the earth." ~ **Bill Johnson**...God in Control or in Charge

- What are we getting into when we say "Jesus is Lord of our lives?"

- We realize he has a plan (his will) and we desire to see his plan fulfilled in and through our lives.
 - We can make our plans, but the LORD determines our steps. (Prov 16:9 NLT-SE)

- Within your heart you can make plans for your future, but **the Lord chooses the steps you take to get there.** (Prov 16:9 PAS)

- ⁹ Remember the things I have done in the past. For I alone am God! I am God, and there is none like me. ¹⁰ Only I can tell you the future before it even happens. **Everything I plan will come to pass**, for I do whatever I wish. (Is 46:9–10 NLT-SE)
- ⁹ God has now revealed to us **his mysterious plan** regarding Christ, **a plan to fulfill his own good pleasure.** ¹⁰ And **this is the plan:** At the right time **he will bring everything together** under the authority of Christ—everything in heaven and on earth. ¹¹ Furthermore, because we are united with Christ, we have received an inheritance from God, for he chose us in advance, and **he makes everything work out according to his plan.** ¹² God's purpose was that we Jews who were the first to trust in Christ would bring praise and glory to God. ¹³ And now you Gentiles have also heard the truth, the Good News that God saves you. And when you believed in Christ, he identified you as his own by giving you the Holy Spirit, whom he promised long ago. (Eph 1:9–13 NLT-SE)

● **We completely submit to Jesus' leadership in our lives**

- ⁴⁶ “So **why do you keep calling me ‘Lord, Lord!’ when you don’t do what I say?** ⁴⁷ I will show you what it’s like when someone comes to me, listens to my teaching, and then follows it. ⁴⁸ It is like a person building a house who digs deep and lays the foundation on solid rock. When the floodwaters rise and break against that house, it stands firm because it is well built. (Luke 6:46–48 NLT-SE)
- **Choices**... You will choose according to the **strongest inclination** you have at the moment. That’s the way human choice operates. And God knows that. And God has the wisdom and the power to work through our desires to bring about his plan. Even if and when our desires are altogether evil. God can and does work through our evil desires to bring about his good purposes. You meant it for evil, but God meant it for good. Just remember who is sovereign and who isn’t and this will never be a problem.

● **We reject anything or anyone who would seek to subvert God's leadership in our lives**

- ¹⁰ “But you are my witnesses, O Israel!” says the LORD. “You are my servant. **You have been chosen to know me, believe in me, and understand that I alone am God. There is no other God**— there never has been, and there never will be. ¹¹ I, yes I, am the LORD, and there is no other Savior. (Is 43:10–11 NLT-SE)
- “Recently, I’ve been **thanking God for temptation.** I’ve seen it as an opportunity to show him I love him more. I’ve even looked at sin and the temptations that are out there and said, “I thank you for them, because I want you to use those things to show Satan, show the world, that you are greater than those temptations. It’s an opportunity for me to bring glory to your name, that I would resist those things and say that they are ugly compared to the matchless beauty of Jesus Christ!” ~ **Francis Chan** ~ The Sovereignty of God

- **Who do you say he is...Lord?**

● **How do we reconcile the sovereignty of God and the free will of man?**

- “Here’s the first introduction of the concept of freedom. “Of all of the trees in the garden, you may freely eat, except this one over here. You may not eat of that. If you do, you die.” What God gave human beings in creation was the ability to make choices, but that ability was not unlimited. It was limited. And the thing is this, God is free, and his creatures are free, but God is more free than his creatures.” ~ **R.C. Sproul**...If God is Sovereign, How Can Man Be Free?
- What you hear in the church is often, “God’s sovereignty is limited by man’s freedom.” That’s not bad theology, that blasphemy. If you say God’s sovereignty is limited by man’s freedom, who’s sovereign? You are! ~ **R.C. Sproul**...If God is Sovereign, How Can Man Be Free?

Today, you can open the door for his Lordship in your life!

You will never be in control of your life circumstances, but you can relax and trust in My control. Instead of striving for a predictable, safe lifestyle, seek to know Me in greater depth and breadth. I long to make your life a glorious adventure, but you must stop clinging to old ways. I am always doing something new within My beloved ones. Be on the lookout for all that I have prepared for you.

Jesus Calling, by Sarah Young, July 5