

Sermon for 5/7/2000--Confirmation Sunday--Lord of Life---"Come, Meet the Lord of Life"

Text: Deuteronomy 30: 14-20

Title: "The Lord of my heart"

Intro: ILLUS.: THE NEED FOR RELATIONSHIP

Theme: When it is all said and done, Jesus can be Lord of all--a Lord of 'full life'--a Lord of life and death--and a Lord of the past--but whether Jesus has become the Lord of my heart determines whether all those blessings become mine.

Knowing God's definition of a relationship with Him

- It begins with the *heart* not the head
 - God desires a commitment (loyalty) above practical and doctrinal correctness (Hosea 6:6)
 - Devotion means that I have stopped looking for something else to be answer
 - Devotion means intimacy **ILL.: LEMONADE--QUANTITY AS WELL AS QUALITY TIME**
- It involves *mouth*
 - Because by faith God puts it there along with the gift of His Holy Spirit (Matt 10:
 - Who do you fear the most (Matt 10: 28)
 - Think of the things you are most committed to and how you will talk all day long about them—why not Jesus?
- It is about *action*
 - Walk needs to match talk---even someone not a Christian would say that is logical, consistent, non-hypocritical
 - Not a sliding scale but based upon set absolute (commands, statues, judgments)
- It must be summed up in "***Jesus as your Lord and Savior***"
 - I am the Way, the Truth, and the Life; no one comes to Father , except through me. John 14:6
 - If you confess with your mouth Jesus as Lord, and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you shall be saved." Romans 10: 9

Knowing the choices God sets before us and what they involve

- *It is a black and white/life and death issue* (I have set before you life and death, the blessing and the curse."19)
 - **ILLUS.: IS THAT YOUR FINAL ANSWER**
- What if I don't have a relationship with Jesus
 - *Drifting in affection for Jesus never is a defining moment* of decision *but will happens* over time by *carelessness*
 1. **ILL.: SHEEP--NEVER RUN AWAY BUT WANDER AWAY IN SEARCH OF GREENER GRASS**
 2. Presenting ourselves to things that deaden our senses and lead us to sin (**Romans 6:12-13**)
 3. Choosing bad company (friends, spouses, associations) which leads us from Jesus' life (**1 Cor. 15: 33**)
 4. Laziness in growing up in the faith (**Heb. 5: 11f**)
 - *Lacking obedience comes from not listening* and not caring
 - Ill.: Recent Noikia cellular phone ad—everything you need—don't need to go to anyone else**
 - *Letting other things be god in my life* (money, power, life-style, education, sports, spouse, self)
 - *Possessed by my possessions* (schedules, indebtedness, destructive life-styles, my friendships)
 - **ALL LEADING TO DEATH AND DESTRUCTION** (You shall surely perish—18)
- Fostering an ongoing and living relationship with Jesus
 - *By guarding your heart* (love the Lord, your God—20)
"Above all else, guard your heart, for it is the wellspring of life." PRO 4:23
 - *By intentionally choosing the narrow way* (Walk in his ways—16)
"Enter by the narrow gate; for the gate is wide, and the way is broad that leads to destruction, and many are those who enter by it. For the gate is small, and the way is narrow that leads to life, and few are those who find it." Mat7:13-14
 - *By tying your obedience to God's promise not his threat* (That you may live...multiply...possess—18)
 1. We no longer have to be motivated by the curse because sin and curse of the law removed.
 2. More likely to respond to blessings rather than react to curses over the long haul in life (18)
 - *By listening to the Good Shepherds voice alone* (obey...cling—20)
 1. Moses instructs the people to "obey his voice" and "cling to Him"(like a little child)
 2. "My sheep hear my voice, and I know them, and they follow Me; and I give eternal life to them."J0:27,28
 - 3. **ILLUS.: DON'T SETTLE FOR FORGERIES**

THE NEED FOR RELATIONSHIP

Emperor Frederick, who ruled the Roman Empire in the thirteenth century. He wanted to know what man's original language was: Hebrew, Greek, or Latin? He decided to isolate a few infants from the sound of the human voice. He reasoned that they would eventually speak the natural tongue of man. Wet nurses who were sworn to absolute silence were obtained, and though it was difficult for them, they abided by the rule. The infants never heard a word -- not a sound from a human voice. Within several months they were all dead. --Joe E. Trull

INTIMACY

The University of Northern Iowa once offered a general art course that included a most unusual exercise. The teacher brought to class a shopping bag filled with lemons and gave a lemon to each class member. The assignment was for the student to keep his lemon with him day and night--smelling, handling, examining it. Next class period, without warning, students were told to put their lemons back in the bag. Then each was asked to find his lemon. Surprisingly, most did so without difficulty.

DON'T SETTLE FOR FORGERIES

During the Middle Ages there was a popular story which circulated about Martin of Tours, the saint for whom Martin Luther was named. It was said that Satan once appeared to St Martin in the guise of the Savior himself. St. Martin was ready to fall to his feet and worship this resplendent being of glory and light. Then, suddenly, he looked up into the palms of his hands and asked, "Where are the nail prints?" Whereupon the apparition vanished.

Deuteronomy 30: 14-20

14 No, the word is very near you; it is in your mouth and in your heart so you may obey it.
15 See, I set before you today life and prosperity, death and destruction. 16 For I command you today to love the Lord your God, to walk in his ways, and to keep his commands, decrees and laws; then you will live and increase, and the Lord your God will bless you in the land you are entering to possess. 17 But if your heart turns away and you are not obedient, and if you are drawn away to bow down to other gods and worship them,
18 I declare to you this day that you will certainly be destroyed. You will not live long in the land you are crossing the Jordan to enter and possess. 19 This day I call heaven and earth as witnesses against you that I have set before you life and death, blessings and curses. Now choose life, so that you and your children may live 20 and that you may love the Lord your God, listen to his voice, and hold fast to him. For the Lord is your life, and he will give you many years in the land he swore to give to your fathers, Abraham, Isaac and Jacob.