Spot On #18

👉**Restoring the Hebraic understanding of God's Word.**
👉**Reemphasizing obedience-based loving trust in our Lord Jesus.**
👉**Reaffirming the way of our Lord that glorifies our heavenly Father.**

Figuratively, the center of the bullseye is the point around which everything else re-

Revolving Around Jesus's Rule of You Means He's LORD of ALL You Are!

In this Spot On we make a pivotal distinction between the love-grounded, suffering/sacrificial way of life of the **"Lordship-committed,"** and the self-ruled, passive/complacent way of life of the **"religiously-mired".** We use this contrast because the Newer Testament writers differentiate between these two incompatible groups (using different terms). As you'll see, those who are **Lordship-committed** clearly recognize the Bible truth that their faith and love are demonstrated through their obedient actions. To sum up James 2:17-26 in paraphrase, *"If you want to know my relationship with my Lord, observe it in my actions!"* Unlike creeds concocted by theologians over the centuries which produced passively "believing" Christians, the Hebraic understanding of doctrine and instruction defines and describes your active response to obey what you've learned—the way of our Lord Jesus in your life.

The Language In Which You Read The Bible Can Inhibit Jesus's Lordship of You

In Spot On #17 we discussed several impediments to Christians being wholly committed to the Lordship of Jesus in their lives. Here's one more hindrance: **If you learn Scripture in a language in which the *subject* or *noun* is emphasized, you may find your loving obedience to Christ's Lordship in your life being restricted**. Both English and the Greek language of the Newer Testament emphasize the subject or noun within a sentence – the "who" or "what". In contrast, Hebrew and the Hebraic pattern of thought in the Bible make the *verb* prominent. This means that the action which someone is commanded to take is accentuated. From a biblically Hebraic perspective, to "hear" means to "obey". For example, the phrase "He who has ears to hear, let him hear" calls for an action of some sort in response.

If you're among those who realize that both testaments of the Bible command you to live a *way of life* that pleases our Lord, then you'll instill the *action emphasis* which both testaments convey in their pattern of thought. For example, we're focusing here on the **Lordship of Jesus**. The "Lord" in the title Lord Jesus means that through His indwelling Spirit in you, ***He rules you as someone He loves.*** And as your **Master and Lord,** He commands you by grace to do His Father's will. Through His indwelling Spirit He strengthens and empowers you to take action in obedient trust. This describes *the way of life* of the **Lordship-committed** whom the Newer Testament writers commend. That way of life of the Lordship-committed is filled with divine interaction and personal experience which bring our Father glory. Does this describe you?

📌 We've previously recommended the *Complete Jewish Bible* translation by David Stern because it's a great resource for understanding the Hebraic emphasis on our responsibility to take responsive action. It especially focuses on the ongoing sense of verbs when the original languages call for it. While English tends to make many of God's commands look like a one-time act, the Hebraic thought pattern in Newer Testament reveals His intent that we keep on doing what it says. A key example is Romans 10:10: "For with the heart one goes on trusting and thus continues toward righteousness, while with the mouth one keeps on making public acknowledgement and thus continues toward deliverance."

👉You'll find that if you're to love and serve Jesus as Lord of your life doing God's will (Matthew 7:21; 12:50; Hebrews 10:36; 1Peter 4:2; 1John 2:17) you need a Hebraic understanding of what actions the Bible commands for you to fulfill. As you grow in emphasizing in your own life each verb/action He calls for in His Word, you'll be transformed by the Spirit into living Lordship-committed out of love for Jesus and for those around you. In being Lordship-committed, don't be surprised that the **religiously-mired** can't appreciate how your life revolves around the fullness of Jesus as your Lord in all that you value and say and do.

If Jesus asked you these questions, how would you answer Him?

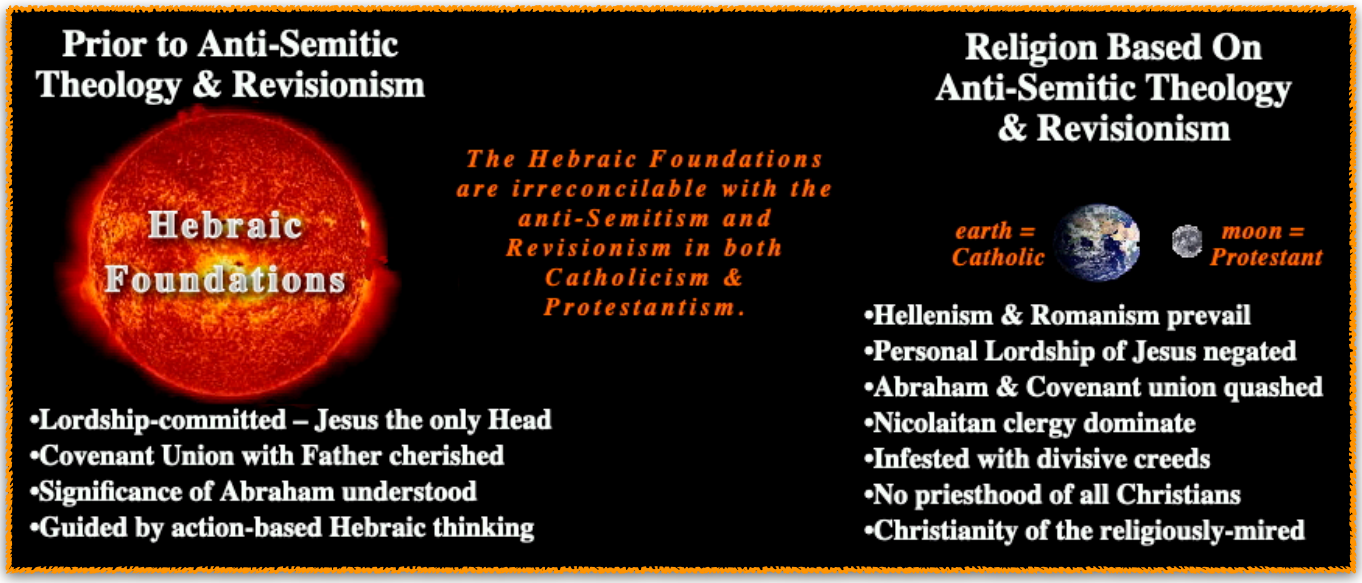
- **"If your life isn't ruled with Me as your Lord, then Who am I to you?"**
- **"If your life isn't ruled with Me as your Lord, who are you to Me?"**

It's important to remember that theologians as well as numerous religious leaders have differed with and contradicted each other for centuries over when the Lordship of Jesus begins for a Christian. Nor do they agree on what role Lordship should play in a person's way of life. We hope through this Spot On to simplify why controversy even exists. And more importantly, we hope you'll be determined by grace to live a way of life that's ruled by our Lord Jesus. Keep this distinction in mind:

"The Lordship-committed" are those whose love for Jesus causes them to willingly sacrifice themselves and suffer for Him if Father wills this in their lives (1Peter 5:9,10).

"The religiously-mired" are the passively complacent who view being a Christian as socially acceptable (2Timothy 3:5), or a means for sensual gratification (Jude 4) or personal gain (2Corinthians 2:17).

Being **"Lordship-committed"** helps you appreciate the *Hebraic thought pattern* of the Newer Testament writers. ***If*** **anti-Semitism** and **revisionism** hadn't dominated theology over the centuries, then the Hebraic thinking processes of Scripture would have been passed along within Christendom instead of the thought patterns of pagan Hellenism and Romanism. Almost every division within Christianity stems from **revisionism** – turning away from the Hebraic pattern of thought of the scriptural authors and adopting pagan practices and rituals. In the graphic below, the Hebraic foundations are the sun. If the anti-Semitism and revisionism of Catholicism is the earth, then Protestantism with its lack of commitment to Jesus as Lord and neglect of the Hebraic thought patterns of the Older Testament is the moon — both of these have more in common with each other than they think!



When we first put our trust in our Lord Jesus in 1977 we were novices in being **"Lordship-committed."** Then in 1978 we attended an interdenominational seminary. Mike in particular wanted to understand both the Roman Catholicism in which he was raised and the creeds and religious history of the various major denominations in Protestantism. Through research and discussions with a wide variety of faculty and students, he was made aware of how the Lordship of Jesus was of such little importance to so many Christians. Armed with that awareness, though, after seminary Mike was able to be used by Father to counsel religious leaders among diverse denominations, congregations and ministries.

Besides Roman Catholicism, in our past we've been serving within several Protestant denominations and sects. Both at seminary and later in Israel we came to realize that anti-Semitic theologians had formulated diverse creedal beliefs which people were required to passively accept. Absent was articulating a responsively active *way of life* under the rule of Jesus which would bring glory to our Father. Centuries of theological failure to spotlight the way of life under the rule of Jesus as Lord has resulted in the most common type of Christian – the **religiously-mired** whose lives revolve around a minimized understanding of Jesus (see Spot On #17).

A brief history of why Jesus has been hindered from being Lord

In the second century as more and more Gentiles were converted and the percentage of Jewish believers diminished, a number of eloquent Greek philosophers became Christians. Forceful in both speech and writing, these influential men not only denounced the Jewish people (Abraham's descendants), they also introduced into Christianity a wide array of pagan beliefs and practices. Among these were: **•Cosmic dualism producing Nicolaitan rule by clergy and eliminating the priesthood of all believers •church buildings commensurate with pagan temples •emphasis on creedal beliefs instead of biblical doctrine as a way of life •minimizing Jesus by confining His role to Savior and suppressing His Lordship**. Anti-Semitic theologians over the centuries who relied heavily on revisionism influenced ecclesiastical leaders to erase the Headship and the Lordship of Jesus in the personal life of the born again.

That's not all! *Anti-Semitic/anti-Hebraic foundations* theologians refused to grasp the significance of the trusting obedience of Abraham under the rulership of God. The eternal Covenant which God extended to the Patriarch was ignored by theologians in its vital importance to the born again becoming children of Abraham (Romans 4:16; Galatians 3:7; James 2:20-23). Abraham's trust in God was demonstrated in his obedient actions, as should be the obedience of those who by trust in Jesus as Lord are Abraham's children.

- Several centuries *after* the ascension of Christ, Roman Catholicism eliminated all vestiges of the Lordship of Jesus. Pope Gelasius I (492–496) stressed that he was the "vicar of Christ" on earth – claiming to stand in the place of Jesus Christ and possess all His authority. There were even those among the Catholic hierarchy who claimed that "the Pope is Christ incarnate." Images of a larger than life Mary crowned with queenly authority and holding a dependent infant Jesus contributed greatly to minimizing the Lordship of Jesus, as did depictions of Jesus perpetually hanging on a cross.

- Also, because most Protestant denominations refused to discard the Nicolaitan clergy system, in one way or another they exercise similar ecclesiastical dominance at the cost of the Lordship of Jesus in the personal lives of individual Christians. This dominance is sustained by calling clergy "the man of God"or "the holy man", reflecting his exalted status above all other men and women who follow Jesus. (Please realize this: *The Hebraic understanding of holiness isn't confined to an exalted occupation, but rather refers to a way of life for anyone who follows Jesus, being set apart by God to obediently do His will.*)

As you read Peter's description of being holy, consider what we've discussed about the Lordship of Jesus and your faith being evidenced by your obedient actions:

"Therefore, get your minds ready for work, keep yourselves under control, and fix your hopes fully on the gift you will receive when Jesus the Messiah is revealed. As people who obey God, do not let yourselves be shaped by the evil desires you used to have when you were still ignorant. On the contrary, following the Holy One Who called you, be holy yourselves also in your entire way of life; because it is written, "YOU ARE TO BE HOLY, FOR I AM HOLY" (1Peter 1:13-16,CJB).

Contrary to the biblical pattern, Cosmic Dualism introduced "holiness" as an exalted occupation through the Nicolaitan clergy system. Also through Dualism, "holiness" meant separating yourself from the "world" through a monastic life. But according to God's Word, being holy as our Lord Who called you is holy is doing your Father's will in every aspect of your life:

• "For I have come down from heaven not to do My will but to do the will of Him who sent Me" (John 6:38). Should our Lord Jesus expect anything different from His followers? NO!

• "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but only the one who does the will of My Father Who is in heaven" (Matthew 7:21).

"If anyone desires to do [My Father's] will,
he will know about the teaching, whether it is from God" (John 7:17).

In Spot On #17 we noted that most of the **religiously-mired** identify themselves by the congregation they attend, or by their denomination, or by whether they think they're born again or not, or by believing they became a Christian when they were baptized as an infant. It's vital that we who love Jesus and are **Lordship-committed** engrain into our hearts a focus on our relationship with Jesus and His holiness. That's what Paul did in describing himself and others who followed our Lord Jesus as ***"the Way"*** (Acts 24:14; see also 19:9, 23; 24:22).

Remember that our Lord Jesus's first followers were primarily Jews. With their Hebrew heritage they clearly understood that their actions were to be **Lordship-committed**. This is how they were to live until they received their salvation at the Judgment Throne when their names were read aloud from the Book of Life (Revelation 3:5; 20:15). As it was with those who walked the Way in the Lordship of Jesus, these four attributes must be the way of life of those today who by grace are Lordship-committed:

1. **Life revolved personally around the Headship of Lord Jesus in bringing glory to their heavenly Father through doing His will.** (John 15:5-8; Ephesians 1:15-23)

2. **Living repentantly by grace and helping others to live likewise in love produced communal righteousness within the relational connectedness of a home fellowship, ensuring that their Father would hear and answer their prayers.** (Psalms 34:14,15; Ephesians 4:15,16)

3. **They diligently sought the Holy Spirit's *rhema* so that by the Spirit they could specifically carry out their Father's will and glorify Jesus.** (John 16:13; Romans 8:14)

4. **The aroma of Jesus was manifested among our Lord's first followers beginning with His love, forgiveness and compassion even for those who persecuted them.** (Ephesians 4:32; Matthew 5:44)

Our next Spot On will present more insight into helping you live a way of life that revolves around Jesus as LORD OF ALL that you are.

Mike & Sue