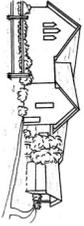


**NORTHWOODS  
PRESBYTERIAN  
CHURCH**



**4723 GRIFFITH AVENUE  
CHEYENNE, WY 82009**

**WORSHIP IN SPIRIT AND TRUTH. JOHN 4:24**

And then I will declare to them, 'I never  
knew you; depart from Me, you who  
practice lawlessness!' Matthew 7:23

# THE NORTHWOODS NEWS

## *Easy-Believism* By Rich Cesal

**Easy-believism has several definitions. This article will primarily address the easy-believism that is associated with Dr. John MacArthur's Lordship Salvation. The evangelical churches of today for the most part preach and teach easy-believism as defined by MacArthur. This is the model which according to a report given by Christopher Cagan and John Waldrip, after attending Billy Graham's San Diego crusade in 2003, determined that**

"Graham's sermons are an outgrowth of the theology and methods of Charles G. Finney, the 19th Century evangelist who changed the meaning of salvation from Biblical 'conversion' to the empty 'decisionism,' which stopped historical revivals and ultimately helped to empty the churches..."

The report went on to say, "The sad truth is that Graham's message converts an almost infinitesimally small percentage of people who did not already consider themselves Christians before they ever heard him preach. The third awful result of Graham's meetings is that almost no one is added to the churches. . . . Dr. Robert Ketcham of the GARBC (Regular Baptists) showed from hard-core statistics that only 13 previously unchurched people were added to the churches of San Francisco from a lengthy Billy Graham crusade."

So during altar calls all over the country on Sunday morning, we have people making commitments of easy-believism and not legitimate changes of heart and true repentance. The Bible teaches that it is God through the work of the Holy Spirit who changes a person's heart from hating God to loving God. With this regeneration comes the conviction of sin and the need for repentance. In addition, the true convert is committed to recognizing Jesus not only as the redeemer of lost souls but also in regards to MacArthur's Lordship Salvation. The Holy Spirit instills in the person to live a life under the Lord's direction as given in the Bible. It is so much more than simply stating belief in Jesus as savior. In James 2:19, James gives a sobering statement, "You believe that there is one God. You do well. Even the demons believe—and tremble!" If only believing in the God of the Bible and in Jesus was all that was necessary, all devils would also have salvation according to this verse.

Examples of easy-believism are the testimonies of so many in the Baptist and evangelical churches. Many testify to having made a commitment when they were very young at their baptism but then when they were much older they had what they call a revival of their commitment. Attending a Baptist church for nearly 20 years, I have witnessed this situation many times. The young child is pressured by his parents, the pastor and many in the church to go forward and be baptized. Or he may find himself in a very emotional situation in the hands of a camp counselor and give in to the moment to make a commitment to Christ.

These commitments, I have found, are basically vacuous. There was one woman in our congregation that had four sons. The youngest while in high school gave in to the pressure and submitted to baptism and her remark to me was, "I can now rest in peace all my children are saved."

There was a man who said, "I went forward when I was 10 and then when I was 34 I had a great revival and new intensity of spiritual matters came upon me. Are you telling me that if I died before I was 34, I would not have gone to heaven?" The answer is probably he would not have because it would seem obvious that his Baptism had no efficacious result. So much for believer's baptism.

These easy-believism situations demonstrate that without repentance and a catechism education, the person is not prepared to understand that in which he is participating. We must not only have faith, but we must also strive to be more Christ-like every day and this can only happen with proper teaching and a genuine conversion.

The Rev. Albert N. Martin, retired pastor of Trinity Baptist Church in Montville, NJ, says it this way, "It is a travesty that the faith of God's elect that unites the believer to Christ and imparts such wonderful blessings from Christ Himself is so often reduced to cheap "decisionism" that leaves the self-deceived, unconverted sinner still in Adam, wedded to his sins, and on his way to hell with a lie in his hands. A 'decision to accept Christ' is a far cry from that God-produced faith that actually unites a sinner to Christ in life-transforming power."

Dietrich Bonhoeffer called it "cheap grace". He said, "Cheap grace is the preaching of forgiveness without requiring repentance, baptism without church discipline, Communion without confession."

The book *Redemption Accomplished and Applied* by John Murray says this about the conversion process, "Union with Christ is the central truth of the whole doctrine of salvation. All to which the people of God have been predestined in the eternal election of God, all that has been secured and procured for them in the once-for-all accomplishment of redemption, all of which they become the actual partakers in the application of redemption, and all that by God's grace they will become in the state of consummated bliss is embraced within the compass of

union and communion with Christ."

Repentance. An issue completely disregarded in easy-believism. But the gospel says in Acts 3:19, "Repent therefore and be converted, that your sins may be blotted out." And also, Jesus Himself says in Luke 5:32, "I have not come to call *the* righteous, but sinners, to repentance." Faith without repentance cannot be.

There are many unintended consequences of the no-lordship required doctrine (the easy-believism doctrine). These consequences all involve the idea that the lordship of Christ leads to work righteousness. That is, your living the gospel means that you hold up your works as partly involved in your salvation. This is true. But the power behind this situation is the Holy Spirit. These works only come about by the intervention of the Holy Spirit by the grace of God as part of the regeneration process.

The Scriptures do not give a verse which states that beside believing in Jesus as Savior, you must develop a Christian lifestyle. However, there is plenty of evidence that the two parts, belief and repenting leading to a Christian lifestyle, are always together in a true conversion.

The living of the Christian lifestyle is indeed called sanctification. It is said that regeneration is instantaneous but sanctification is said to take a lifetime. That is because sanctification is the process of being made holy by the works of the Holy Spirit. Something we never fully achieve. So, the Lordship of Christ is a lifelong goal. Thus, they say that it is not required for salvation for salvation is a done deal before sanctification can become a way of life. This is true but it is equally true that starting on the path of living a Christian life is part of that done deal signified by repentance thanks to conviction by the Holy Spirit.

There is also the confusion of what exactly is justification. Justification is the declaration by God that a person is truly saved. This obviously happens when a person is truly regenerated. Justification means that a person is totally forgiven and receives that knowledge by faith (*sola fide*, by faith alone). Although justification legally is instantaneous, it may take a person some time to come to a full realization of his newly acquired position with God.

In my own case, looking back on my experience I find that my regeneration actually took place when in a new members class, the pastor said to turn to John 3:16 and where it says that "God so loved the world" change that to read "God so loved Rich Cesal". I did what he said but I did not realize my newly given faith until a few weeks later. When walking down the aisle at my work, I heard some profane language and I found myself actually recoiling from each profane and cuss word that reached my ears. I became aware that for several days at least I had not uttered one swear word or any profanity. An achievement I had prayed for many years and just as C.S. Lewis has said, "I made a vow when rising from my bed to not commit any sins that day but by the time I finished shaving I

was shipwrecked." I also failed repeatedly. But now, My speech had been totally cleaned up. What a gift! That's regeneration!

These doctrines of regeneration, justification, conversion, and sanctification are all distinct, but they can never be separated. A person experiences all of these or none of these. What comes to mind in this discussion is the very sobering Scripture spoken by our Lord in Mat 7:21-23, "Not everyone who says to Me, 'Lord, Lord,' shall enter the kingdom of heaven, but he who does the will of My Father in heaven. Many will say to Me in that day, 'Lord, Lord, have we not prophesied in Your name, cast out demons in Your name, and done many wonders in Your name?' And then I will declare to them, 'I never knew you; depart from Me, you who practice lawlessness!' " Is this not an indictment of the no-lordship advocators?

Donald Whitney says "in Matthew 15:8, Jesus quotes the rebuke of God given through the prophet Isaiah: 'This people honors me with their lips, but their heart is far from me; in vain do they worship me, teaching as doctrines the commandments of men.' So people can worship the true God — even with the God-given words and forms of worship — and yet worship in vain."

I believe that the controversy is perhaps rooted in the lack of acknowledgement of the reformed doctrines of unconditional election irresistible grace and the sovereignty of God. If these doctrines are rightly understood, the subscription of truly being counted in God's family is totally in the hands of God and regeneration and hence the belief in Jesus as redeemer is followed closely by the belief that He is to be Lord of your life. How could it be otherwise?

Many statements made in the no-lordship position are based on the verse, "For *whoever calls on the name of the LORD shall be saved.*" They point out that this verse says nothing about making Jesus Lord of your life. But the Westminster Statement of Faith item Chapter 1.IX says "The infallible rule of interpretation of Scripture is the Scripture itself: and therefore, when there is a question about the true and full sense of any Scripture (which is not manifold, but one), it must be searched and known by other places that speak more clearly." In other words, the whole of Scripture must be taken into account when interpreting the meaning of specific verses.

The New Testament is full of what it takes to be a Christian. All of this must be examined when developing a salvation doctrine. MacArthur states, "Furthermore, grace is not merely God's response to the sinner's initiative. Quite the opposite. Because He is gracious, God takes the initiative, drawing the sinner (John 6:44, 65), granting repentance (Acts 3:26; 5:31; 11:18), and awakening the heart to faith (Acts 13:48; 16:14). Every aspect of the believer's response-- conviction, repentance, and faith--is the result of God's gracious work in the heart. 'For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that

not of yourselves; it is the gift of God.' (Ephesians 2:8)."

The acts of regeneration and conversion are totally intertwined. Regeneration being God's part in coming to salvation and conversion being the sinner's part both of which are a reference to the same event but seen from different perspectives. I might add though that even the sinner's part in conversion is totally due to God's grace.

MacArthur also adds, "Where you land on the lordship question will also have far-reaching implications for your views on assurance, faith, repentance, eternal rewards, human depravity, the role of the moral law, and a host of other crucial doctrines. Almost no aspect of soteriology is left untainted by the errors of no-lordship doctrine."

Examining MacArthur's position we see that God initiates the event by, "And He said, 'Therefore I have said to you that no one can come to Me unless it has been granted to him by My Father.' " (John 6:65). This act is said to be instantaneous. One second the sinner is unforgiven and then the next second he has all the benefits of salvation. Thus, "Now when the Gentiles heard this, they were glad and glorified the word of the Lord. And as many as had been appointed to eternal life believed." (Acts 13:48). Summed up by, "For by grace you have been saved through faith, and that not of yourselves; it is the gift of God." (Ephesians 2:8).

God does not end it there. He gives us this promise, "He who did not spare His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things?" (Rom 8:32).

So the act of being saved consists of several parcels. All of which only come through the grace of God. And so, the Lordship of Christ follows from James 2:17-18, "Thus also faith by itself, if it does not have works, is dead. But someone will say, 'You have faith, and I have works.' Show me your faith without your works, and I will show you my faith by my works." It is impossible to have faith without that faith leading to good works. In other words Lordship Salvation.

Since all of these parcels of salvation are only the result of the grace of God on behalf of the sinner, although it sounds like we contribute to our salvation by living the life governed by the Lordship of Christ, that is not the case. Those churches that teach that one only needs to confess Christ and he is saved is ignoring much of what God has to say on the subject and they do a disservice to all that are instructed in this belief system.

Those that believe the only creed is Jesus have much to learn of what the Scriptures say. Those pastors who preach easy-believism will have to answer for their teachings. James 3:1 speaks to this point, "My brethren, let not many of you become teachers, knowing that we shall receive a stricter judgment." So those teaching error, beware. Ω

## The Church's One Foundation

This hymn is well known for calling the church to be a community. The basis of the text is from the bible when Christ tells Peter that the church will be built off of the rock that is himself. Written by Samuel J. Stone in 1866, "The Church's One Foundation," was one of the most famous of hymns written by Stone. Born in 1839 in Whitmore, Staffordshire, England, Stone was the son of Reverend William Stone. As Samuel became older, he eventually attended Charter School and Oxford College where he was ordained in 1862. Immediately after he was ordained he began serving orders at various different churches until 1870., when he joined his father in his ministries at St Paul's in Haggerston, England. Four short years later, Samuel J. Stone followed in his fathers footsteps and took over for his father as Vicar at St. Paul's. S. Stone served as Vicar in Haggerston until 1890, and from then until his death in 1900, he served at All-Hallow-on-the-Wall in London turning it into a safe haven for working girls and women in England. This hymn came at a very important time in the history of the church, a time where there was a great dispute of how the church should work.

John W. Colenso, Anglican Bishop of Natal, South Africa had written a book expressing his thoughts on the different ways that the current church was parting away from what was written in the scriptures. Samuel J. Stone was so set in his ways that he had actually wrote many of his hymns trying to dispute this belief by using the 12 articles of the Apostles' Creed. In his publication, *Lyra Fidelium; 12 hymns on the 12 articles of the Apostles' Creed* (1866) Stone used the article "The holy catholic church, the communion of saints," as his inspiration for this "The Church's One Foundation." In doing so, Stone had used this article to say that the catholic church (the lower case c is used to represent the church as a universal entity instead of the actual Catholic Church) was in fact the universal church of Christ. This is the church that Christ said would be built upon the rock of Peter. The text of the hymn shows the importance of the church being based wholly off of Christ and being baptized by the water. Stone used almost a direct reference to the Colenso controversy in stanza three of the hymn "Though there be those that hate her, and false sons within her pale, against or foe or traitor she shall ever prevail." This is representative of the controversy by almost calling Colenso a traitor to the ways of the Orthodox Christians.

The tune "Aurelia," meaning "gold," was originally written as a setting to "Jerusalem the Golden," has often been considered to be "Secular Twaddle." Written in 1864 and finally published in the *Hymns Ancient and Modern* in 1868, the tune has come to be known almost solely with "The Church's One Foundation." Ω *Evans Collins, Etymology of Hymns*

# Important Things

The Church's one foundation  
Is Jesus Christ her Lord,  
She is His new creation  
By water and the Word.

From heaven He came and sought her  
To be His holy bride;  
With His own blood He bought her  
And for her life He died.

She is from every nation,  
Yet one o'er all the earth;  
Her charter of salvation,  
One Lord, one faith, one birth;  
One holy Name she blesses,  
Partakes one holy food,  
And to one hope she presses,  
With every grace endued.

The Church shall never perish!  
Her dear Lord to defend,  
To guide, sustain, and cherish,  
Is with her to the end:

Though there be those who hate her,  
And false sons in her pale,  
Against both foe or traitor  
She ever shall prevail.

Though with a scornful wonder  
Men see her sore oppressed,  
By schisms rent asunder,  
By heresies distressed:

Yet saints their watch are keeping,  
Their cry goes up, "How long?"  
And soon the night of weeping  
Shall be the morn of song!

'Mid toil and tribulation,  
And tumult of her war,  
She waits the consummation  
Of peace forevermore;  
Till, with the vision glorious,  
Her longing eyes are blest,  
And the great Church victorious  
Shall be the Church at rest.

Yet she on earth hath union  
With God the Three in One,  
And mystic sweet communion  
With those whose rest is won,  
With all her sons and daughters  
Who, by the Master's hand  
Led through the deathly waters,  
Repose in Eden land.

O happy ones and holy!  
Lord, give us grace that we  
Like them, the meek and lowly,  
On high may dwell with Thee:

There, past the border mountains,  
Where in sweet vales the Bride  
With Thee by living fountains  
Forever shall abide!

**Women's Bible Study**— May 13 & 27 at the church, 7:00 PM. Jean Holroyd is presenting the book "Contagious Christian Living" by Dr. Beeke.

**Men's Bible Study**— May 11 & 25, 7:00 PM. Meet at the Norgauer home. We are studying the book *The Masculine Mandate*.

**Men's Breakfast**— At the church, Saturday Morning, May 16, 8:00 AM. What is God's providence for you on this day? I'm sure it is to be at the church to study God's Providence and to go over Chapter 3 of the book *The Mystery of Providence* by John Flavel.

## Nursery Schedule for May

3RD - LAURA TWITCHELL

10TH - KAIRA TUNNECLIFF

17TH- HEATHER NORGAUER

24TH- BECKY SHWEN

31ST - ESTHER DAVISON

Please trade with someone if you are unable to do nursery duty on the assigned day.

Jeff & Autumn Duncan 20th

Mark & Mari Nelson 28th



Happy Anniversary

Jeff Duncan	3rd	Milly & Emma	21st
Mari Nelson	3rd	Hornung	
Noah Norgauer	3rd	Samuel Sackett	21st
Jesse Twitchell	20th		



# Stop Asking Jesus into Your Heart

By  
J.D. Greear

If there were a world record for the “number of times asking Jesus into your heart,” I’m pretty sure I would hold it. I’ve probably “prayed the prayer” more than five thousand times. Every time was sincere, but I was never quite sure I had gotten it right. Had I really been sorry enough for my sin that time around? Some wept rivers of tears when they got saved, but I hadn’t done that. Was I really sorry? Was that prayer a moment of total surrender? Did I really “get” grace?

So I would pray the sinner’s prayer again. And again. And again. And maybe get baptized again. Every student camp, every spring revival. Rinse and repeat.

I used to think I was alone in this, that I was just a neurotic oddball. But when I began to talk about this, I would have such a slew of people tell me they had the same experience that I concluded the problem was endemic. Countless people in our churches today are genuinely saved, but they just can’t seem to gain any assurance about their salvation.

The opposite is the case, too. Because of some childhood prayer, tens of thousands of people are absolutely certain of a salvation they do not possess.

Both problems are exacerbated by the clichéd, truncated, and often sloppy ways we present the gospel in shorthand. Now, shorthand is fine insofar as everyone knows what the shorthand refers to. It is obvious, however, that in the case of “the sinner’s prayer,” most people don’t anymore. Surveys show that more than 50 percent of people in the U.S. have prayed a sinner’s prayer and think they’re going to heaven because of it even though there is no detectable difference in their lifestyles from those outside of the church.

On this issue—the most important issue on earth—we have to be absolutely clear. I believe it is time to put the shorthand aside. We need to preach salvation by repentance before God and faith in the finished work of Christ.

This does not mean that we stop pressing for a decision when we preach the gospel. The greatest Reformed evangelists in history—such as George Whitefield, C.H. Spurgeon, and John Bunyan—pressed urgently for immediate decisions and even urged hearers to pray a prayer along with them. Each time the gospel is preached, that invitation ought to be extended and a decision should be called for (Matt. 11:28; John 1:12; Rev. 22:17). In fact, if we do not urge the hearer to respond personally to God’s offer in Christ, we have not fully preached the gospel.

Furthermore, repentance and faith in Christ are in themselves a cry

to God for salvation. The sinner’s prayer is not wrong in itself—after all, salvation is essentially a cry for mercy to God: “God, be merciful to me, a sinner” (Luke 18:13). In Scripture, those who call on God’s name will be saved. I’m not even categorically opposed to the language of asking Jesus into your heart, because—if understood correctly—it is a biblical concept (Rom. 8:9-11; Gal. 2:20; Eph. 3:17).

For many, however, the sinner’s prayer has become a Protestant ritual they go through without considering what the prayer is supposed to embody. God doesn’t give salvation in response to mere words; faith is the instrument that lays hold of salvation. You can express faith in a prayer, but it is possible to repent and believe without a formal prayer, and it is possible to pray a sinner’s prayer without repenting and believing.

This finally clicked for me when, almost in desperation, I read Martin Luther’s commentary on Romans. Luther points out that salvation comes by resting on the facts God revealed about the death of Christ. Just as Abraham was counted righteous when he believed that God would keep His promise, we are saved by believing that He has done so in Christ.

The gospel is the declaration that Jesus is Lord and has made an end to our sins. We are saved by submitting to those two truths. Conversion is a posture we take toward the declarations that Scripture makes about Jesus. The point is not how we felt or what we said at the moment of conversion; the point is the posture we are in now.

Think of conversion like sitting down in a chair. If you are seated right now, there was a time at which you transferred the weight of your body from your legs to the chair. You may not remember making that decision, but the fact you are seated now proves that you did. Your decision was necessary, but when trying to discern where your physical trust is—legs or chair—present posture is better proof than past memory.

Does this mean that backsliding Christians are not saved? No, believers can still backslide. Technically, any time you sin you are backsliding. As a believer, you will struggle with indwelling sin for the rest of your life. You will fall often, and sometimes you will fall hard.

But each time you fall, you get up again, looking heavenward. A person in the midst of a backslide may be saved, but assurance is only the possession of those in a present posture of repentance and faith (Heb. 6:9-10).

Ultimately, the world is divided into two categories: many are “standing” in rebellion against the lordship of Jesus, standing in hopes of their own righteousness to merit favor with God; others are “seated” in submission, resting on His finished work. So when it comes to assurance, the only real question is: Where is the weight of your soul resting? Are you still standing in rebellion, or have you sat down in the finished work of Christ? Ω

# April 23rd Devotion from Today

The Today Booklet, available in our Narthex, had the following for April 23rd: **LIVING ON THE RIGHT SIDE OF EASTER**

*Since, then, you have been raised with Christ, set your hearts on things above, where Christ is, seated at the right hand of God . . .*

Several years ago someone made the comment that too many Christians are living on the wrong side of Easter. Too many Christians, he said, are living as if Christ was not raised from the dead. They go through life without joy or peace, without showing the fruit of the Spirit Paul talks about in Galatians 5:22-23.

In today's verses we find that it does not have to be that way because as Christians we have been raised with Christ. Says Paul, "Since you have been raised with Christ . . ." - not "if" or "when." The resurrection of the Lord Jesus is not just something that happened in the past; it affects every follower of Jesus also today. As one of our confessions puts it, by Jesus' power we "are already raised to a new life."

Because of Christ's resurrection power in our lives, we can learn to set our hearts "on things above." We can learn to loosen our grip on "earthly things." The Lord Jesus said, "Do not store up for yourselves treasures on earth, where moths and vermin destroy . . . but store up for yourselves treasures in heaven" (Matthew 6:19-20).

You and I have to learn to live on the right side of Easter by claiming the power of the risen Savior every day. Ask yourself, "which side of Easter am I on?"

## Session Report

### May 2015 Session Report

Thank you to all who attended the LifeChoice banquet in April. The event was a wonderful testimony to this Ministry and their desire to continue to save lives. Thank you Lydia, for your service to the Life Choice ministry. You were responsible for co-ordinating the 26 baskets full of baby goodies to be given to the Mom's, and the Pak & Play gifts that were gathered at the church and given to this ministry. You are a good servant for our Lord and the church. Thanks to those who helped her with these things.

On Sunday evening Pastor Norgauer is continuing his series through the book of Philippians. It is a very encouraging time going through this great book. Plan to attend.

Remember, we also continue to have the evening prayer meeting every Sunday at 4:30pm - just prior to evening worship. Come join us as we go before the throne of God's grace on behalf of our church.

[John MacArthur](#)

## The Lord of the Church

The truth that Christ is Lord of His church may sound somewhat benign to a casual listener in our generation, but the struggle for Christ's authority in the church has come to us through the ages on a sea of blood. Thankfully, literal bloodshed over the issue is no longer very common. But faithful Christians are still waging a fierce moral and intellectual battle for Christ's lordship over the church.

One of the major early catalysts in the Protestant Reformation was a book by Jan Hus, a Bohemian Christian who preceded Martin Luther by a full century. The book was *De Ecclesia (The Church)*, and one of Hus' most profound points was proclaimed in the title of his fourth chapter: "Christ the Only Head of the Church."

Hus wrote, "Neither is the pope the head nor are the cardinals the whole body of the [true] holy, universal, catholic church. For Christ alone is the head of that church." Pointing out that most church leaders in his era actually despised the lordship of Christ, Hus said, "To such a low pitch is the clergy come that they hate those who preach often and call Jesus Christ Lord."

Hus' candor cost him his life. He was declared a heretic and burnt at the stake in 1415.

More than a hundred years later, already at odds with the papal establishment, Martin Luther read *De Ecclesia*. After finishing the book, he wrote to a friend, "I have hitherto taught and held all the opinions of Jan Hus unawares; so did John Staupitz. In short, we are all Hussites without knowing it."

Emboldened by his reading of Hus, the reformer took up the fight for Christ's honor as true head of His church. Luther wrote, "I am persuaded that if at this time, St. Peter, in person, should preach all the articles of Holy Scripture, and only deny the pope's authority, power, and primacy, and say, that the pope is not the head of all Christendom, they would cause him to be hanged. Yea, if Christ himself were again on earth, and should preach, without all doubt the pope would crucify him again."

In many ways, the question, who is Lord of the church? was the overarching issue of the Protestant Reformation from the start. (That's what Luther was tacitly acknowledging when he said "we are all Hussites.")

Of course, Roman Catholic canon law still insists that the pope is her supreme earthly head and the ruling vicar of Christ in that capacity.

But the historic Protestant commitment to Christ's lordship over the

church has also subtly eroded, and that is a trend that deeply concerns me. It's an issue I have written much about over the years.

For example, some evangelical leaders aggressively teach that it is not even necessary to confess Jesus as Lord in order to be saved. That's what the so-called "lordship controversy" is about. It would be hard to imagine a more obvious attack against the lordship of Christ over His church, but "no-lordship theology" has thrived for years and seems to be gaining strength.

Evangelicals also gave birth to the "seeker-sensitive" movement wherein church services are tailored to please trend-savvy unbelievers. Novelties ranging from circus acts to slapstick are deliberately injected into corporate "worship" in order to keep worldly minds entertained. That is a practical denial of Christ's lordship over His church, relegating His Word and ordinances to secondary status while granting hedonistic fashions the right to determine even the order of worship.

Feminists want to redefine the idea of headship, eliminating the idea of authority from the concept altogether. That, too, is a frontal attack on Christ's lordship over His church.

Bible translators and paraphrasers who tamper with the true sense of God's Word; emergent church leaders who question the clarity of everything Christ has said; and above all, preachers who seem to talk about everything but Scripture — all of them do what they do in direct defiance of Christ's rightful authority over His church.

One thing would do more than anything else to answer every challenge to Christ's authority: the restoration of clear, powerful, expository preaching to its rightful place at the center of all the church's activities. If we truly believe Christ is Lord of the church, then the church needs to hear His voice. His Word must be proclaimed and its content taught accurately, systematically, and unrelentingly whenever the church comes together.

Jan Hus said the same thing. Declaring that the lordship of Christ over His church means emphatically "that the Christian ought to follow the commandments of Christ," Hus then cited Acts 10:42 ("[Christ] commanded us to preach to the people") and called on church leaders of his day to preach the Word of God at every opportunity — even though a papal bull was then in force, strictly limiting how and where the Scriptures could be proclaimed.

The church today is badly in need of reformation again. And Christ's lordship over His church is still the central truth we must recover, which requires the unleashing of His Word among His people again. We cannot merely float along with the latest evangelical trends and expect things to get better. Like Jan Hus and Martin Luther, we need to fight for the honor and authority of Christ as Lord of His church.    Ω

**Have a Need? Contact one of the officers.**

Office Telephone	307-637-4817
Web Site	northwoodspca.org
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Milan Norgauer, <i>Pastor</i>	635-1865 mnorgauer@gmail.com
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Rich Cesal, <i>Deacon/Treasurer</i>	637-6195 cheyoming6195@gmail.com
Dale Vosler, <i>Deacon</i>	632-0133 tuliphill2@gmail.com

If you have a request for the prayer chain contact Branda Church 221-9206 and if not available, Kelleigh Anderson 635-2578.

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***Now the God of hope fill  
you with all joy and peace  
in believing, that ye may  
abound in hope, through the  
power of the Holy Ghost.  
Hallelujah, Amen.***