

Giving vs. Inviting In
A Teaching by Pauline Dillard
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There are five ways that I have identified that people relate to Jesus. The first is the non-born again ways of looking at God and Jesus. This would include atheists who don't believe that God exists at all. Then there are agnostics who doubt the existence of God. Then there are believers. Believers *believe* there is a God, but don't know that He has anything to do with their daily lives. These are not the groups I am going to look at in this teaching. Instead I'm going to talk about the other two groups, both of which claim to be born again.

The first are born again believers who talk about *inviting* Jesus into their hearts, or lives. The other are born again believers who talk about *giving* their hearts or lives to Jesus. What's the difference? you might ask. Isn't it the same thing? Isn't it just a matter of semantics? My response is no, it is not just semantics. When we speak we are calling into existence that which we speak. So it becomes important to understand what you are saying, what the words really mean, and what you are relating when you speak about being born again.

First, let's talk about the word "Lord." When you say Jesus is Lord, how exactly do you mean that? The word "Lord" has two different meanings. First it indicates one having power and authority over others, a person of great power in some field. The other meaning is to affect an air of superiority, an authority: pontificate, swaggers, swank, swell, affect, pretend, put on; boss, order (about or around) overawe, overbear, tyrannize.

So now when I say Jesus is Lord, which one of these two definitions do you think of? I hope you answered the first one. And if you did the question now becomes, so what does it mean for Jesus to be Lord of your life? Is Jesus merely your savior, or is He truly the Lord of your life?

Jesus answered and said to them, "Truly, truly, I say to you, unless one is born again, he cannot see the kingdom of God.

John 3:3

But what does it say? "The word is near you. In your mouth and in your HEART"—that is, the word of faith which we are preaching, that 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, for with the heart man believes, resulting in righteousness, and with the mouth he confesses resulting in salvation.

Romans 10:8-10

In John 3:3 we are told that we must be born again to see the kingdom of heaven. In Romans 10:8-10 we are given a definition of what it means to be born again.

Now that you have a solid understanding of Lord, what is the difference between giving and inviting in? When I go to visit my friends in their home, they are Lords of their home. They invite me in and I am given limited access to the use of their home for the time I am there. They still own it, they still have control over it. However, if one day they called and said they were giving me their house, then Lordship would be transferred from them to me. I would now be Lord over their house. I may let them still live there,

and they may choose to still live there, but I would now have authority over what happens with the property.

So now we need to look at how Jesus feels when we just “invite” Him into our lives, or bodies. Our bodies are called the temple of God. They are designed to house Him. When we just invite Him in we are still retaining authority over our lives, we still have ownership and authority. He is simply a guest we can kick out any time we want to.

If we give our lives, and bodies, to Him we no longer have authority. He does!

Or do you not know that your body is a temple of the Holy Spirit who is in you, whom you have from God, and that you are not your own? For you have been bought with a price, therefore glorify God in your body

1 Corinthians 6:19-20

When we give our lives to Jesus we understand fully that our lives are no longer our own to do with what we please, but are under the authority of Jesus, the Lord of the temple, the One having power and authority. So if we have given our bodies to Him, he has all authority. If we’ve only invited Him in, he is merely a guest, without true authority.

Give Him your life!