

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Romans 14:7-12

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INTRODUCTION:

Jesus Christ is present in every believer by means of His indwelling Spirit.

Rom. 8:9 “But ye are not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, if so be that the Spirit of God dwell in you. Now if any have not the Spirit of Christ, he is none of his.”

Although he is indwelling every Christian he is not pre-eminent in every Christian. To be pre-eminent is to be “first in rank and influence.” It is to occupy first place, to come at the head of; or before anyone or anything else.

Jesus Christ is the firstborn of every creature (Col. 1:15).

He is also first over creation (Col. 1:16). He is before all things (Col. 1:17).

He is the head of the church (Col. 1:18). He is to have pre-eminence in all things:

- First place in our families
- First place in our marriages
- First place in our professions
- First place in our ministries
- First place in our education
- First place in our time
- First place in love
- First place in conversations
- First place in pleasures
- First place in eating
- First place in play
- First place in athletics
- First place in what we watch
- First place in art
- First place in music
- First place in worship
- First in all things!

As I have thought about the issue of personal revival, having the glory of God in our churches, and seeing the manifestation of God's blessing, I always come back to the Lordship of Christ. The central message of the Bible is that “Jesus Christ is Lord.” The fact that he is Lord demands that we submit ourselves to him. All of history is moving to the moment when the entire creation of God is going to declare that *Jesus Christ is Lord to the glory of the Father*. That one fact ought to convince us that the step we must take is to surrender to the Lordship of Christ now.

John 3:30 “He must increase, but I must decrease.”

In the passage at hand, Paul is trying to give guidelines for determining the basis for conduct in areas where good people disagree. The final solution to all matters of faith and conduct is submission to Jesus Christ as Lord. "In essentials, unity; in non-essentials, liberty; in all things, charity." It does not matter your background or social standing, your riches or poverty, Jesus Christ deserves to be Lord of your life.

ILL: Queen Victoria -

When Queen Victoria had just ascended her throne she went, as is the custom of Royalty, to hear The Messiah rendered. She had been instructed as to her conduct by those who knew, and was told that she must not rise when the others stood at the singing of the Hallelujah Chorus. When that magnificent chorus was being sung and the singers were shouting "Hallelujah! Hallelujah! Hallelujah! For the Lord God omnipotent reigneth," she sat with great difficulty. It seemed as if she would rise in spite of the custom of kings and queens, but finally when they came to that part of the chorus where with a shout they proclaim Him King of kings suddenly the young queen rose and stood with bowed head, as if she would take her own crown from off her head and cast it at His feet.

THEREFORE, WE MUST SUBMIT TO THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

WHY?

I. BECAUSE OF THE CLAIM OF DIVINE LORDSHIP V. 9

The claim to Lordship on the part of Jesus Christ is based on his redemptive work. The death and the resurrection are inseparable with the Lordship of Christ. In fact we completely misunderstand the nature of the redemptive work of Christ if we fail to realize that Christ died and was resurrected that he might be Lord of the dead as well as of the living. This means that the Lord has claim over our lives for three essential reasons.

First, he purchased us v. 9

Note the expression, "To this end Christ died..." He died so that he might purchase the price of our redemption. "To pay the price to secure the release of a convicted criminal. He did not just shed blood, he died, shedding his blood in my place."

Acts 20:28 "Take heed therefore unto yourselves, and to all the flock, over the which the Holy Ghost hath made you overseers, to feed the church of God, which he hath purchased with his own blood."

1 Peter 1:18-19 "Forasmuch as ye know that ye were not redeemed with corruptible things, as silver and gold, from your vain conversation received by tradition from your fathers; But with the precious blood of Christ, as of a lamb without blemish and without spot:"

John 15:13 "Greater love hath no man than this that he lay down his life for his friends."

When we understand the nature of our redemption we realize that there is no part of us that the Lord has not purchased and bought outright.

Stephen Olford said, "He alone owns our eyes to view his world, He alone owns our hands to do his work. He alone owns our feet to walk his way. He alone owns our minds to think his thoughts. He alone owns our hearts to love him fervently."

Second, he pardoned us v. 9

Note the expression, "to this end Christ died and rose..." He died and rose again so that we might be pardoned for our sins. A pardon is an authoritative act reversing a sentence given under a guilty verdict. His resurrection is for the purpose of our justification.

Romans 4:25 "Who was delivered for our offences, and was raised again for our justification."

He alone has the right, the power to forgive sins. In his earthly ministry on several occasions he forgave sins.

Mark 2:10 "But that ye may know that the Son of man hath power on earth to forgive sins, (he saith to the sick of the palsy,)"

ILL: Pardon -

I read the story recently of how Louis XII of France treated his enemies after he ascended to the throne. Before coming to power, he had been cast into prison and kept in chains. Later when he did become king, he was urged to seek revenge but he refused. Instead, he prepared a scroll on which he listed all who had perpetrated crimes against him. Behind every man's name he placed a cross in red ink. When the guilty heard about this, they feared for their lives and fled. Then the king explained, "The cross which I drew beside each name was not a sign of punishment, but a pledge of forgiveness extended for the sake of the crucified Savior, who upon His cross forgave His enemies and prayed for them."

Third, as Lord he alone has the right to possess us (v. 9).

Note the expression, "that he might be Lord." He is Lord of our lives, not when we contemplate what will occur in eternity, but while we are here on the earth. There is nothing quite as dangerous as an empty or vacant house. It is a trouble spot for robbers, thieves, and drug addicts to take over and set up house. The same is true for any area of our lives that is not under the control of the Lord Jesus Christ. God created us to be inhabited by his Spirit.

ILL: Under New Management -

You have probably seen such signs many times. When a company takes over another company, there is often a sign placed outside the premises announcing, "Under New Management." No sign so accurately summarizes what takes place in Christian conversion. When Christ takes over a life, that life is literally "under new management." How hard it is to learn this lesson, and to acknowledge the new authority in our lives! How hard it is for those who have obeyed the flesh, to obey the Lord Jesus Christ! But that is required in being a Christian.

II. BECAUSE OF THE CONDITIONS OF DIVINE LORDSHIP V. 8

In verse 7 and verse 8 we are confronted with the fact that Christ is Lord whether we live or whether we die. There is a relationship and a responsibility that cannot be ignored. The idea of Lordship is the fact that Jesus on the basis of who he is and what he has done has power and authority in our lives.

First, in life we are responsible to the Lordship of Christ (v. 8).

One of the greatest problems in the church is irresponsible living. This is the result of our misunderstanding the doctrine of the grace of God. The grace life is one that is lived under the control of the Lord Jesus Christ.

Galatians 2:20 "I am crucified with Christ: nevertheless I live; yet not I, but Christ liveth in me: and the life which I now live in the flesh I live by the faith of the Son of God, who loved me, and gave himself for me."

Titus 2:12 "Teaching us that, denying ungodliness and worldly lusts, we should live soberly, righteously, and godly, in this present world;"

Second, in death we are accountable to the Lordship of Christ (v. 8).

"Death is not the cessation of life, it is only the change of life." When a person dies, he passes from this scene into the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:8 "We are confident, I say, and willing rather to be absent from the body, and to be present with the Lord."

In verse 12 we are told that we are going to give account of ourselves to God. In fact every person, both saved and lost alike are going to acknowledge the fact that Christ is Lord.

Philippians 2:9-11 "Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: That at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; And that every tongue should confess that Jesus Christ is Lord, to the glory of God the Father."

We see then, that whether alive or dead we are subject to the Lordship of Christ.

ILL: Payday someday –

An Atheist farmer often ridiculed people who believed in God. He wrote the following letter to the editor of a local newspaper: "I plowed on Sunday, planted on Sunday, cultivated on Sunday, and hauled in my crops on Sunday; but I never went to church on Sunday. Yet I harvested more bushels per acre than anyone else, even those who are God-fearing and never miss a service. The editor printed the man's letter and then added this remark: "God doesn't always settle His accounts in October." That editor was right!

III. BECAUSE OF THE CONFESSION OF DIVINE LORDSHIP V. 10-12

Paul turns his attention to the confession that every Christian is to make. We should confess the Lordship of Christ, not only for the benefit of our relationship with God, but also in view of the weaker brother. He is referring to the fact that there is mutual recognition and personal toleration in relationships. When you are submitted to the Lordship of Christ it will manifest itself in every decision and in every relationship that you have in life.

First, there will be total submission v. 10

Every area of our life must be committed to the Lordship of Christ. No man can serve two masters and Jesus Christ can be no part time king. Adrian Rogers said, "He must be Lord of all if he is to be Lord at all." Completely and exclusively you must totally submit yourself to the Lordship of Christ, evaluating where you are not submitted to Christ.

Second, there will be absolute ownership v. 10-12

We have already talked about the fact that the Lord possesses us. If a man owns a slave he owns all that the slave possesses. When we think of our treasures, time, and talents we think that parts of those things belong to God. That is not accurate, it all belongs to Him. Jesus is not just owner of 10% of your money, he own it all. The tithe is a tangible expression of Christ's Lordship in your life. It is a symbol of our resources, time, intellect, relationships, and talents. When we recognize his right to what we have, we are yielding to His Lordship.

Third, there will be unquestioned obedience v. 10-12

If we are to call Him Lord then we must be willing to do what Christ says.

Luke 6:46 "And why call ye me, Lord, Lord, and do not the things which I say?"

Because of our flesh and our fears we find it difficult to be obedient. We expect it as parents from our children and we ought to give that same unquestioned obedience to our Heavenly Father. If we are to see Christ's glory in our church then we must all submit to his Lordship.

CONCLUSION:

You can measure your obedience to Christ by your willingness to say yes to Him in every area of your life. When we do not understand or we do not have all the information necessary then we must yield to Christ's claim of Lordship.

ILL: Christ as Lord –

Dr. Graham Scroggie was speaking at a conference in England on one occasion when he was approached by a young woman who had been greatly stirred by his message on the Lordship of Christ. Walking up to him at the close of the service, she said, "I want Jesus Christ to be Lord of my life, but I am afraid God will send me overseas as a missionary, and I do not want to go." Dr. Scroggie opened his Bible to Acts 10:14 and explained how absurd Peter's answer was to the Lord. God had revealed to Peter a vision in which there

were all manner of four-footed animals, wild beasts, creeping things, and birds of the air. A voice came to Peter saying, "Rise, Peter, kill, and eat." But Peter answered, "Not so, Lord!" The preacher went on to explain, "A slave never dictates to a master." Therefore, to say, "Not so, Lord!" was disrespectful. Dr. Scroggie advised the woman to cross out the words 'not so' and leave the word 'Lord' or to cross out the word 'Lord' and leave the words 'not so'. He handed her his pencil and walked away. For some time she struggled and finally with tears in her eyes she crossed out the words 'not so' and repeated affirmatively, 'Lord.'

When are we going to quit saying 'not so' and start saying 'Yes, Lord?'

ILL: Bring Forth the Royal Diadem

Friends at the bedside of a respected and aged missionary noticed her lips moving feebly. Bending low, they caught the faintly uttered word, "Bring!" They asked her, "Bring what... your medicine? Then with smiles wreathing her face, the missionary said with her last breath, "Bring for the royal diadem and crown Him Lord of all!"