

THE LORDSHIP OF CHRIST

Romans 14:9

By Andy Manning

I. INTRODUCTION

1. Grab your Bible and turn with me to Romans 14.
2. The title of this sermon is "The Lordship of Christ."
3. In this part of the country, just about everybody identifies as a Christian. About 70% in Lafayette Parish identify as Christian. But after living here my whole life, I have discovered that many of these "Christians" misunderstand Jesus in two important ways.
4. First, many confuse faith with mental assent. The Bible often says that if you want to be saved from your sins and go to heaven, you must "believe" in Jesus. But what does that word mean? The Biblical idea of "belief" or "faith" means to trust in, rely on, depend on. But many people think it simply means to mentally assent, or agree that Jesus died and rose again for our sins; that He is the Savior. As a result, while they "believe" in Jesus, they aren't actually trusting in Him for salvation. How do I know? It's simple. There's a diagnostic question that I use with people all the time, and you can use it too to determine if your religious or "Christian" friends are actually saved. The question goes like this: Why should God let you into heaven? If they say anything about their own performance, such as, "Because I'm a good person," or, "Because I try hard to live by the Bible," then that reveals their trust is misplaced. While they believe in Jesus, they are trusting in (relying on; depending on) their own performance to save them. As a result, many "Christians" all around us are unsaved and headed to hell. Biblical faith is more than just mental assent, or agreeing that Jesus died for our sins and rose again. Even the devil believes that. Biblical faith is trusting in Jesus and not yourself. It is trusting in Christ's performance for you rather than your performance for Christ. It is trusting in Christ's work on the cross and not your works for Christ.
5. The second way that many people in this area misunderstand Jesus is that they see Jesus as Savior but not as Lord. This is where we are going to focus today. And make no mistake: This misunderstanding is just as dangerous as the first one, because both of these can keep you out of heaven.

II. TEXT

1. **Romans 14:9** Christ died and returned to life for this: that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living.

III. THREE QUESTIONS

1. What does the word “Lord” mean?

- i. The text says that Christ died to be “Lord”. What does that word mean?
- ii. “Lord” in Greek is *kurios* (pronounced KOO-ree-awss).
- iii. It is a very common word in the New Testament (NT), used 713 times.
- iv. And it is often used of Jesus. In the NT there are many titles for Jesus. For example, in this verse (Rm 14:9) He is called “Christ,” which is the Greek word for Messiah. His favorite title for Himself was Son of Man. But Jesus is also called the Son of David, Immanuel, the Son of God, the Word (Logos), the Lamb of God, the King of Israel, the Savior, etc. But the most frequent title for Jesus in the NT is “Lord.”
- v. Paul used this title frequently in Romans. For example,
 1. Rm 1:7 Grace to you and peace from God our Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
 2. Rm 5:1 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.
 3. Rm 6:23 For the wages of sin is death, but the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord.
 4. Rm 10:9 If you confess with your mouth, “Jesus is Lord,” and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.
- vi. So, what does the word “Lord” mean? It means master, boss, CEO. It refers to controlling authority.
- vii. A.W. Pink wrote, “The Greek word for 'Lord' means one having personal right to rule, such as is exercised in the guiding and governing of a family; more properly it signifies a master or governor over servants, who are bound to obey him.”
- viii. In that day, the word was often used to refer to a slave owner.
- ix. Eph 6:5 Slaves, obey your human masters [*kurios*] with fear and trembling, in the sincerity of your heart, as you would Christ.

- x. To be slave-master meant you had complete and total authority over your slaves. You complete control over their lives. You had the right to tell them what to do, how to do it, and when to do it.
- xi. That's what the word "Lord" means. It means master. One who has controlling authority. One who is in charge.

2. What does it mean that Christ died to be Lord?

- i. Romans 14:9 Christ died and returned to life for this: that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living.
- ii. Let's start with this: Why did Christ die? The NT gives many reasons. I'll give you a few:
 1. To take our punishment. Is 53:6 We all went astray like sheep; we all have turned to our own way; and the LORD has punished him for the iniquity of us all.
 2. To demonstrate God's righteousness. Rm 3:25 (HCSB) God presented Him as a propitiation through faith in His blood, to demonstrate His righteousness, because in His restraint God passed over the sins previously committed.
 3. To demonstrate God's love for us. Rm 5:8 But God proves his own love for us in that while we were still sinners, Christ died for us.
 4. For our justification. Rm 5:9 How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath.
 5. To save us from God's wrath. Rm 5:9 How much more then, since we have now been justified by his blood, will we be saved through him from wrath.
 6. To reconcile us to God. Rm 5:10 For if, while we were enemies, we were reconciled to God through the death of his Son, then how much more, having been reconciled, will we be saved by his life.
 7. To rescue us from this present evil age. Gal 1:4 who gave himself for our sins to rescue us from this present evil age, according to the will of our God and Father.
 8. For the forgiveness of our sins. Eph 1:7 In him we have redemption through his blood, the forgiveness of our trespasses, according to the riches of his grace.

9. To redeem us from the curse of the law. Gal 3:13 Christ redeemed us from the curse of the law by becoming a curse for us, because it is written, Cursed is everyone who is hung on a tree.
 10. To free us from the fear of death. Heb 2:14-15 14 Now since the children have flesh and blood in common, Jesus also shared in these, so that through his death he might destroy the one holding the power of death—that is, the devil— 15 and free those who were held in slavery all their lives by the fear of death.
- iii. If you want to go deeper with this subject, I highly recommend a book called *Fifty Reasons Why Jesus Came to Die*, by the Calvinist theologian John Piper.
 - iv. If you were to ask most people why Jesus died, they would say, “To save us from our sins.” And that is certainly true. But that’s not all. Rm 14:9 tells us something else. Christ died and rose again to be Lord of the dead and the living.
 - v. Remember what Lord means – master, boss, CEO, the one in control, and in charge, the one with controlling authority.
 - vi. So what does it mean that Jesus died and rose again that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living?
 - vii. It means that Christ died and rose again to take control of your life. To be your master.
 - viii. To take over. To take the wheel. To take charge. To become your master, boss, CEO. He died and rose to become the ultimate and final authority of your life.
 - ix. This is where so many people misunderstand Jesus. They see Him as Savior but not as Lord. Or worse, they accept Him as Savior but reject Him as Lord. Savior Jesus is cool. He doesn’t want to mess with your life. He doesn’t want to disrupt what you’ve got going on. He doesn’t want to interfere with your plans. He doesn’t want to inconvenience you. He just wants to help. He just wants to help you go to heaven, and maybe help you here and there in life – to reach your goals and deal with difficulties. Everybody loves Savior Jesus. He’s so nice and friendly. Who doesn’t love a guy like that? They’re not interested in Lord Jesus. They want eternal life, but they don’t want to give Jesus control.

- x. But Jesus isn't just a Savior; He is a Lord. He is the Lord. Peter described Him as the "Lord of all" (Acts 10:36). Paul called Him the "Lord over all" (Rm 12:10, KJV). In 1 Cor 8:6 Paul said He is the only Lord.
- xi. In Jn 13:13 Jesus said, "You call me Teacher and Lord—and you are speaking rightly, since that is what I am."
- xii. Jesus didn't just die to take away your sins; He died to take control of your life. He didn't just die to get you to heaven; He died to rule over you on earth. He didn't just die to save you from the punishment of sin; He died to save you from a life of sin. He didn't just die to save you from the consequences of sin, but from the control of sin.
- xiii. You might ask, "What gives Jesus the right to my Lord and to control my life, and tell me what to believe, and how to live?"
Let's talk about Jesus' qualifications for Lordship:
 - 1. He is God. Don't forget who we're talking about. Jesus is God. Jn 1:1 "In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God."
 - 2. He made you. Col 1:16 "For everything was created by him, in heaven and on earth, the visible and the invisible, whether thrones or dominions or rulers or authorities— all things have been created through him and for him."
 - 3. He sustains you; He keeps you alive. Col 1:17 "He is before all things, and by him all things hold together."
 - 4. God put Him in charge. Mt 28:18 Jesus came near and said to them, "All authority has been given to me in heaven and on earth."
 - 5. He owns you. The last two qualifications are right in this text (Rm 14:9). He died that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living. When He died for you and rescued you from sin, He bought you; You became His. You belong to Him. You are His possession. 1 Cor 6:19-20 "You are not your own, 20 for you were bought at a price. So glorify God with your body."
 - 6. He is on the throne. Go back to our text (Rm14:9). "He died and returned to life for this: that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living." When Christ arose, He ascended to

heaven sat down at the right hand of God – the place of authority. Eph 1:20-22 20 “He exercised this power in Christ by raising him from the dead and seating him at his right hand in the heavens—21 far above every ruler and authority, power and dominion, and every title given, not only in this age but also in the one to come. 22 And he subjected everything under his feet and appointed him as head over everything for the church.”

- xiv. What gives Jesus the right to control your life? Easy. Condition – He’s God. Creation – He made you. Preservation – He’s the one keeping you alive. Delegation – the Father put Him in charge. Possession – He bought you. And exaltation – He is sitting on the throne as King of kings and Lord of lords.
- xv. Jesus didn’t just die to be your Savior. He died to be your Lord and to take control of your life. Let me demonstrate this with a few more verses.
 - 1. 2 Cor 5:15 And he died for all so that those who live should no longer live for themselves, but for the one who died for them and was raised.
 - 2. Titus 2:14 He gave himself for us to redeem us from all lawlessness and to cleanse for himself a people for his own possession, eager to do good works.
 - 3. 1 Pt 2:24 He himself bore our sins in his body on the tree; so that, having died to sins, we might live for righteousness. By his wounds, you have been healed.
- xvi. Jesus died to be your Master. This is why in the Bible Christians are referred to as Christians, yes; brothers and sisters, yes; saints, yes; disciples, yes; the elect, yes; but also slaves of Christ Jesus. Paul opened this very like this: Rm 1:1 “Paul, a slave of Christ Jesus.”
- xvii. So many Christians misunderstand the Christian life. It’s not about you. That’s how Rick Warren opened his book *The Purpose Driven Life*. It’s not about you; it’s all about Jesus. Paul Tillich said, “Every day in a thousand ways we seek to make ourselves the center of the universe.” But we’re not. Jesus is. Jesus doesn’t exist for you; you exist for Jesus. Does Jesus love you? Yes. Does He have your best interest at heart? Yes. Did He die on the cross to rescue you from sin? Yes. But that’s not all. He didn’t just die on the cross for

you, but for Himself. He died to be your Lord; so you would live for Him.

xviii. John Stott (*Basic Christianity*, 142) "To make Christ Lord is to bring every department of our public and private lives under his control."

xix. Let me address one more question:

3. Why is it important for you to accept Christ as Lord today?

- i. Christ died to be your Lord – to take control of your life. But He will not force Himself on you. You must surrender to His Lordship. You must accept Him as Lord. In case you are resistant to the idea, allow me to give you two reasons why it is important for you to Christ as Lord, and to do so today.
- ii. First, for salvation.
 1. You cannot be saved unless you accept Christ as Lord.
 2. A huge controversy arose in the last two decades of the twentieth century. It was called the "Lordship Salvation Controversy." Several theologians at Dallas Theological Seminary were teaching that to get saved you just needed to believe. Repentance could come later, or never at all. You may accept Christ as Lord later, or never. All that is required for salvation is belief.
 3. This contradicted what Protestants have always believed. The Westminster Confession (1600s AD) said that repentance "is of such necessity to all sinners that none may expect pardon without it (Chapter 15)." John Calvin taught that "no one can embrace the grace of the gospel without... applying his whole effort to the practice repentance." The New Hampshire Confession of 1833 taught that repentance and faith are "inseparable." The first confession of the Southern Baptist Convention, the Baptist Faith and Message of 1925 says that "repentance and faith are sacred duties, and also inseparable graces."
 4. So, John MacArthur wrote a book called *The Gospel According to Jesus* and called out "free grace" theology – salvation without repentance. MacArthur wrote, "Repentance has always been the foundation of the New Testament call to salvation... No message that eliminates

repentance can properly be called the gospel, for sinners cannot come to Jesus apart from a radical change of heart, mind, and will (p. 182).” Later in the book he wrote, “He is Lord, and those who refuse Him as Lord cannot use Him as Savior. Everyone who receives Him must surrender to His authority, for to say we receive Christ when in fact we reject His right to reign over us is utter absurdity (p. 233).”

5. Where did people get the idea that repentance (turning from sin) and accepting Christ’s Lordship are necessary for salvation? They got it from the Bible.
 6. Jesus’ first sermon, and His first command, was to repent. Mt 4:17 “Repent, because the kingdom of heaven is near.”
 7. In Lk 13:3 Jesus said, “No, I tell you; but unless you repent, you will all perish as well.”
 8. In Lk 9:23 Jesus said, “If anyone wants to follow after me, let him deny himself, take up his cross daily, and follow me.”
 9. In the first sermon in the book of Acts Peter said, “Repent and be baptized, each of you, in the name of Jesus Christ for the forgiveness of your sins, and you will receive the gift of the Holy Spirit (Acts 2:38).”
 10. In Rm 10:9 Paul wrote, “If you confess with your mouth, ‘Jesus is Lord,’ and believe in your heart that God raised him from the dead, you will be saved.”
 11. To be saved, you must accept Christ as Lord. You must hand over the steering wheel of your life to Him.
 12. If you believe in Jesus as Savior but reject His Lordship in your life, then you are not saved. And if you died today, then you would go straight to hell. You must not only believe, but bend the knee to His Lordship.
- iii. Second, for fullness of blessing.
1. Perhaps you are a Christian but you have been backsliding. You have been letting Christ have complete authority over your life. Why should you surrender to His Lordship today? Because Jesus came to give you abundant life, a full and meaningful life, but you cannot experience it if you are living in rebellion.

2. All the earthly blessings of the Christian life are reserved for those who are fully surrendered to Christ's Lordship. Peace, joy, the filling of the Spirit, strength, comfort, assurance of salvation, contentment, effective ministry, answered prayer, material blessings that God may want to give you – they are all conditional. You forfeit them all when you choose sin rather than surrender.
3. Mt 11:28-29 28 "Come to me, all of you who are weary and burdened, and I will give you rest. 29 Take my yoke upon you and learn from me, because I am lowly and humble in heart, and you will find rest for your souls. 30 For my yoke is easy and my burden is light."
4. In this famous passage Jesus says that if you follow Him He will give you rest. In Him you will find rest for your soul. Think peace with God, inner peace, joy, hope, contentment, a clear conscience. But notice that there is a condition: "Take my yoke upon you." A yoke referred to a Rabbi's teachings. To take a Rabbi's yoke upon yourself was to dedicate yourself to learning and obeying a Rabbi's teachings. If you want the fullness of blessing, you must embrace Christ as Lord.
5. In other words, you should surrender to Christ's Lordship because that's what's best for you. That's the best life. The best life is the surrendered life. The obedient life. The life fully yielded to Jesus.
6. Otherwise, you trade those blessings for God's discipline. God is not a passive father. He is highly interested in you, and highly involved in your life. And when you drift away from His Lordship, He stops blessing you, and He starts spanking you. Heb 12:6 says, "For the Lord disciplines the one he loves and punishes every son he receives."
7. What does God's discipline look like? Recently in my quiet time I read Psalm 39, and it got my attention. Ps 39:11 says, "You discipline a person with punishment for iniquity, consuming like a moth what is precious to him." Think about what is most precious to you. Do you want to lose it?

God is so serious about training you to surrender to Him that He is willing to take it away to teach you.

IV. CONCLUSION

1. So, here's how I want to close today.
 - i. First, let me address those of you who are confident of your salvation.
 1. Is there any area of your life where you are reserving the right to make the final decision?
 2. Are you compromising in any area of your life?
 3. Make the decision to repent today.
 - ii. Second, let me address those of you who have never accepted Christ as Lord. Perhaps you thought you were a Christian because you believe in Jesus, but this morning you learned that you also need to accept Him as Lord. Would you do that this morning? Would you receive all of Christ today?
 - iii. Third, let me address those of you who might be deceived. You might think you are a Christian, but you aren't. Perhaps it is because you confused faith with mental assent. You haven't truly been trusting in Jesus, you've been trusting in yourself. Today, would you trust in Jesus as Lord and Savior and stop trusting in yourself.
 - iv. Or perhaps you are deceived for another reason. If you have truly accepted Christ as Savior and Lord at some point, then your life would have changed. The Bible calls salvation being born again. It's a transformation. A new start. You become a different person. You should be able to see the fruit of salvation in your life. Not perfection, but fruit. A desire to please God. A desire to know God more. A desire to serve God. A love for God. A serious effort to please God. Perhaps you call yourself a Christian, but you don't see that fruit in your life. If that's so, then it is possible that you have never been saved. A famous preacher once said that the biggest problem in the church today are unconverted church members. There are people in every church who are not truly saved. When I got saved, God changed me. I've never been the same. I can't shake it. I'm not perfect. I've had rough patches. But God radically changed me. Has He changed you? Would you open

up your heart today and trust Him, and invite Him to be your Lord and Savior?

v.