

THE LORD OF THE DEAD AND THE LIVING  
Romans 14:9

Intro: Observing the Lord's Supper should always be a special time for each one of us, a time that we look forward to. And yet it is a most solemn time.

It is a service in which we are proclaiming the Lord's death by what we do. Nothing is more basic to the Gospel than the death of Christ.

As many have mentioned, it is a time for self-examination. But this must be done in the light of what we find in the Word of God, and under the direction of the Holy Spirit. It is a time when sin is confessed and things are made right with the Lord in our daily lives.

But it should also be a time of instruction--instruction concerning the death of Christ, and His resurrection. The more we observe the Lord's Supper, the better we should understand the work of Christ on the Cross.

When a young Christian thinks of considering the death of Christ with such regularity, his or her response usually is that we will soon run out of things to talk about. But the most mature Christian knows that this subject can never be exhausted. We might come back to the same Scriptures more than once, but even then we see the truth of those Scriptures with greater light.

The passage that I want to consider with you tonight is Romans 14:9. And yet, as a verse it does not stand alone, but is a part of the context in which it is found.

Let us make sure that we understand what the verse means.

Notice first of all,

I. OUR LORD'S NAMES in the verse.

There are two of them: "Christ" and "Lord."

A. "Christ."

This is mentioned first. It means Messiah, only Messiah comes from the Hebrew; Christ, from the Greek.

Both mean the anointed One. It speaks of the fact that just as OT priests were anointed, and as OT kings were anointed, to engage in a particular work, so our Lord was anointed for a particular mission in the world.

This anointing required His incarnation. And it was

as the Lord Christ in the flesh that He was given the name, Jesus.

As Christ, the Messiah, our Lord was to be Israel's King, but always associate this title, "Christ," with His mission. He was sent into the world on a mission, with a work to perform, and primarily this mission had to do with the salvation of sinners.

B. "Lord."

Jesus Christ has always been Lord. This expresses His Deity. There never was a time when He became Lord. So "Lord" stand apart, in a sense, from "Jesus" and from "Christ."

For a long time I have felt that the Greek text, in speaking of the Lord Jesus Christ would almost require the punctuation, Lord, Jesus Christ. He is the Lord Who is identified on earth as Jesus Christ. See Rom. 13:14.

II. THE WORK OF CHRIST as stated in this verse.

It is stated as an historical fact that "Christ" did three significant things on His mission into this world: He died, He rose, He revived.

A. He died.

He really died as an actual, historical event. And there are different statements in Scripture as to the reason for His death, and yet they are all related to each other. But the fact is that He died. Anyone who is not convinced of this cannot be a Christian. Cf. Rom. 10:9. He had to die in order to be raised from the dead.

B. He rose.

His resurrection was physical, bodily, a true resurrection, even more wonderful than the resurrection of Lazarus. And that is brought out by the third word.

C. He revived.

Although some MSS do not have this, it is in the Received Text from which we have the King James, and you can see why.

This means that He entered into life again. It may even be used to show that His resurrection was unique in the

sense that He would never die again. This is why His resurrection was greater than any other.

And He not only entered into life here on earth, but He entered into life in the glory--returning in a different form from that in which He had come. And this is important when we come to see the truth of the verse.

Now let us take all of this and relate it to the purpose of His death and resurrection as it is stated here.

### III. THE PURPOSE, or REWARD, OF HIS DEATH.

This is stated very clearly: "that he might be Lord both of the dead and living."

Some interpret this as meaning, that He might be sovereign over unbelievers and believers--the unbelievers being those who are dead. But He has always been this. There is no question at all in Scripture as to the sovereignty of our Lord over all men.

His death and resurrection were not necessary for that.

Does the context help us? Yes, it does! See verses 7 and 8.

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It is clear that Paul was talking about those who physically die. Thus, the verse means that Christ died, rose, and revived, in order that He might be Lord over His people while they live here on earth, and even after they die, i.e., when they are in heaven.

So the Lordship of Christ over His people is not something that can be separated from His saving work; it is a part of it. If Jesus Christ is our Saviour, He is also our Lord. But neither can it be limited to this life. He continues to be the Lord of those saints who are in heaven. When we die, Jesus Christ will still be our Saviour and He will still be our Lord!

So to be Lord over the dead and the living is to be Lord over those in heaven and those who are still living on the earth.

But what, in this context, does the Lordship of Christ mean?

"Lord" means that we belong to Him. He has purchased us. We are His servants, His bondservants. He has freed us from sin's penalty and from sin's power and He will free us eventually from sin itself. That is what He has done for us.

But what does it mean that we are His servants?

What is the issue here in Romans 14?

It had to do with eating food and observing days. But what about eating food and observing days--why was it an issue?

It all had to do with what it meant to please the Lord. Those who were weak ate only herbs, and so there was a dispute within the Roman church as to who was really pleasing the Lord. The strong became critical of the weak. They forgot the desires that were motivating the weaker believers to do what they were doing: They wanted to please the Lord! Why did they want to please the Lord? Because when Christ died He died to make Himself Lord over all who trust in Him. They did not just decide to do this; this was in their hearts as a result of Christ's death and resurrection. And God is able and will most certainly be perfecting this desire throughout life, and then bring it to its complete realization in heaven.

You see, the one thing that identifies a true Christian is that he is a person who wants to please the Lord. God has put that desire in his heart. The unbeliever has neither the desire nor the ability to please the Lord. But when the Lord died to make Himself the Lord of His people, this is what He did!

Concl: Thus, as we come to the Lord's table, we do not come to make Jesus Christ our Lord. We come to recognize that He is our Lord. We are here to remember that that is a part of our salvation. We are to examine our hearts to root out the disobedience, the failure, any rebellion. We are here to thank Him that not only is our Lord throughout the rest of our time here on earth, but He will be our Lord throughout eternity. And it will be in heaven that we will be able to please Him perfectly.

Thus, as we observe the Lord's Supper, we do not only proclaim that Jesus Christ is our Saviour, that He died for us, but we proclaim that He is our Lord, and that our one purpose here on earth is to do His will, to please Him, and to glorify His holy Name.

And our God is able to make that more and more of a reality the longer we are His! See Rom. 14:4.

This should quiet our criticism of each other. Some may not perceive the truth as we do, but let us rejoice in the evidence in a weaker brother's heart that he shows that he is saved because he wants to please the Lord!