

## Introduction for June 13, 2010

Paul's prayer for the saints in Rome, recorded in Romans 15:5-6, is the goal of living as the church in the world, "Now may the God who gives perseverance and encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Jesus Christ, so that with one accord you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ" (NASB). Paul's foundation for exhorting the church at Rome to live under Christ's Lordship without the distractions of despising or passing judgment on each other is laid in the gospel. The profound demonstration and declaration of Christ's Lordship in the cross and resurrection is the cornerstone upon which the church is built. Jesus is Lord and is to be glorified in our lives. How can we glorify God as a church if we are constantly sitting in judgment on our brothers and sisters over non-essentials? How can we glorify God if we are daily consumed with self? How can we glorify God if we are so worried about death that we fail to live, and, are so worried about living that we fail to prepare to die?

The Lordship of Christ is the banner under which we march and war against sin. His Lordship is the very joy of our hearts as we live in a world mad with self-indulgence. His Lordship instructs our worship and informs the pattern of our lifestyles. His Lordship strengthens our resolve to live for His glory and die daily to self. His Lordship is the refuge of our souls as we make our way to the heavenly city. His Lordship is the confidence of our lives for we know that He has ordered our steps, directs our paths, overrules our failures, rules over and in our circumstances and implements His plan for our lives. His Lordship is our great comfort in days of sorrow and trouble. His Lordship is the security of our lives in the midst of uncertainty and the eroding of freedoms and principles that have formed this great nation. His Lordship keeps and sustains us under the pressure of raising families, balancing schedules, work or loss of work, days of sickness and the process of aging. His Lordship encourages our steady, and at times not so steady, pursuit of godliness and holiness in the process of sanctification. His Lordship brings great joy and hope as we think on His goodness and greatness and rest in His sovereignty. His Lordship is not a matter for debate but a mandate for living. His Lordship is non-negotiable. His Lordship is delightful to the saints and is dreadful to the enemies of the cross. His Lordship is invincible and indestructible. As Lord He rules over all, for He

reigns supreme over all things. Life and death are in His hands. All of life is under His good dominion and death is subject to His will and purpose. Oh taste and see that the Lord is good! Listen to the words of Isaiah that Paul imports to his text in Romans 14, "Turn to Me and be saved all the ends of the earth; for I am God and there is no other, I have sworn by Myself, the Word has gone forth from My mouth in righteousness and will not turn back, that to Me every knee will bow, every tongue will swear allegiance. They will say of Me, only in the Lord are righteousness and strength. Men will come to Him, and all who are angry at Him will be put to shame. In the Lord all the offspring of Israel will be justified and will glory" Isaiah 45:22-25.