

THE CHRISTIAN LIFE – UNITY IN THE BODY OF CHRIST

--PART 2 – ROMANS 14:1-12--

INTRODUCTION:

Paul since chapter 12 has been talking about the Christian life and how we live it out in the world in which we live. In chapter 14 he is teaching us about living the Christian life out in the body of Christ, the church and specifically unity in the church and the conflict and disunity that can exist between strong believers and weak believers because a strong believer understands his liberty in Christ while a weak believer does not yet fully understand the full implications of the Gospel on his life. Paul speaks to both groups about accepting each other and then gives four reasons we are to accept each other. We will briefly look at the first reason again and then look at the other three this morning.

II. FOUR REASONS TO ACCEPT EACH OTHER (Romans 14:2-12)

- a. Paul begins by commanding the _____ believers to accept the weak in verse one.
- b. Then he uses verses 2-12 to give us _____ reasons that whether strong or weak in the faith we are to accept each other so that we might preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.

IIa. God Accepts Each Believer (Romans 14:2-3)

- a. Last week we looked at the first reason that we are to accept each other, and it is because God has _____ each of us.
- b. Difference in _____ between the strong and weak might cause disunity.
- c. Paul says do not have _____, do not _____ because God has accepted them both, they are His children by faith in the Lord Jesus Christ.

IIb. God Upholds Each Believer (Romans 14:4)

- a. Paul gives us that second reason that we as believers are to accept each other and it is because God _____ or sustains each believer.

- b. Paul uses this truth of all we are and all we have is from God to then ask both the weak and the strong the question posed for us in verse 4, Paul writes, “*Who are you to _____ the servant of another?*” (Romans 14:4a, NASB95)
- c. Paul goes on to point out to us that only the _____ of the servant can judge whether this servant stand or falls.
- d. Paul had asked a similar type of question earlier in this book, in Romans 8:33-34, “*Who will bring a _____ against God’s elect? God is the one who justifies; who is the one who _____? Christ Jesus is He who died, yes, rather who was raised, who is at the right hand of God, who also intercedes for us.*” (Romans 8:33–34, NASB95) (Romans 8:1; 38-39; John 10:27-28; Jude 24-25)

IIc. God is Sovereign Lord of Each Believer (Romans 14:5-9)

- a. The third reason that every believer, whether weak or strong in the faith, is to accept every other believer is because Jesus Christ is the sovereign _____ to each believer.
- b. Paul in these next verses goes back to using an example to illustrate his point that neither the weak nor the strong Christian is _____ or _____ spiritual or faithful because of his convictions about certain practices.
- c. Paul writes that each person must be _____ in his own mind.
- d. In those matters that God’s Word does not speak about specifically, neither commanding it nor forbidding it, Paul admonishes us to go with our _____.
- e. The greater responsibility of this command falls on the _____ Christian, they have a better understanding of the Word and are more mature in the faith and in their understanding. (1 Corinthians 8:9-13; Acts 23:1)
- f. This is his point in the next verses in Romans, he writes in verses 7-8, “*For not one of us _____ for himself, and not one _____ for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.*” (Romans 14:7–8, NASB95) (Romans 6:17-18, 22)

- g. Jesus Christ is Lord of all and when He returns this recognition of His _____ will be universally confessed by all. (Philippians 2:9-11; 1 Timothy 6:15)

IId. God is Judge of Each Believer (Romans 14:10-12)

- a. The fourth reason that Paul gives us for why we must accept every believer into fellowship is because the Lord and He alone will _____ each believer.
- b. The judgment seat that Paul is referring to here is the judgment seat of Christ before which all _____ will stand. (1 Corinthians 3:11-15; 4:4; Isaiah 45:23)

CONCLUSION:

In Romans 14 Paul is speaking about his concern that each believer is diligent to preserve the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace. Again, this concerns the Christian life and how it is lived out, in this case, how it is lived out in the church. Paul zeros in on a situation that often brings about disunity and that is judging a weaker or stronger brother in Christ because their belief or practice of the faith is not the same as yours. Paul says that we are to preserve the unity of the Spirit by accepting each other at whatever maturity level we are at and serve one another and allow the weaker brother the time that is needed to grow.

Paul then presented to us four reasons we are to accept one another. The first reason is that God has accepted each of us. The second reason we are to accept each other is because each believer like yourself is a servant of the Lord Jesus Christ and it is before the Lord that he will stand or fall, and the Lord Jesus is able and willing to make those who are His to stand. The third reason that we are to accept one another is because the Lord Jesus Christ is the sovereign Lord of each of us who belong to Him. He has purchased us with His own shed blood, and we are no longer our own, but we have been bought with a price, freed from our slavery to sin and enslaved to our sovereign Savior and Lord. The fourth reason is that we each will stand before the judgment seat of Christ to give an account of ourselves to God. We need to concern ourselves more with serving Christ and our motive for doing so, rather than with judging others concerning their service and motive.