

- In our zeal to be correct doctrinally, and to have the right practice, we tend to downplay the very real call for unity, that this passage teaches.
- Being “right” is not more important than loving other believers.

1. Do Not Condemn One Another – 14:1-12

a) Exhortation to Unity (14:1-3)

- All are to receive the other.
- Strong in Faith – should not despise the weak in Faith.
- Weak in Faith should not judge/condemn the Strong.
- Reason: God has received the other.

b) Theological Foundation of Unity (14:4-9)

- (1) Both groups serve Christ - the final Judge in the matter. (14:4)
- (2) Christian Practice is determined in one’s conscience and focused on the Lord (14:5-6)
- (3) Christian Practice is part of all aspects of our life which is all lived to the Lord – just as our death is to the Lord. (14:7-9)

c) Further exhortation to Unity (14:10-12)

- Now Paul returns to the theme of 14:1-3 – and repeats his call to stop judging or despising one another.
- Reason given here: we will all stand before the Judgement seat of God – and give account of ourself to God.
- God’s judgment is what we all are destined to receive – with Him as our master, we do not need to be judging one another.
- Our lack of unity, and disdain will itself be judged by our God.

Schedule:

- Next week: we will continue chapter 14 on June 29th.

Previous Handouts

- Online: www.theheightschurchmn.org/adult-sunday-school

Credits:

Main sources for outline and shared quotes are:

- *Epistle to The Romans (NICNT)* by Douglas Moo [Eerdmans, 1996]
- *Romans (IVPNTC)* by Grant Osborne [IVP, 2004]
- *Teaching Romans, Volume Two: Unlocking Romans 9-16 for the Bible Teacher* by Christopher Ash [Christian Focus, 2009]

V. Transforming Power of Gospel: Christian Conduct (12:1-15:13)

A. Exhortation to Live the Christian Life (12:1-13:14)

5. Love One’s Neighbor (13:8-10)

a) The Command: “Love Each Other” (13:8a)

- Love for Christians especially (“one another”).
- But love for all - parable of Good Samaritan (Luke 10:25-37).

“Let your only debt that is unpaid be that of love – a debt which you should always be attempting to discharge in full, but will never succeed in discharging.” ~ Origen (3rd century Church Father)

b) The Reason: Love fulfills the law (13:8b)

- The Law’s fulfillment points to the “eschatological completion of the law, which was accomplished in Christ”. – C. M. Pate

c) The Proof: The Law is summed up by Love (13:9-10)

- Paul quotes several of the 10 Commandments as representative.
- He highlights the significance of “love your neighbor” (Lev. 19:18) – just like Jesus did (Matt. 22:34-40).
- He adds that we should not do harm to our neighbor either. (The “negative Golden rule” of Judaism).
- Love for others embodies or “sums up” the law

“This probably does not mean simply a new focus for the law but rather it means that in loving according to the ‘new commandment’ (Jn 13:34; 1 Jn 2:8) we are replacing the law in the sense that we belong to the new covenant and therefore follow the new ‘law of Christ’ (Mt 5:17-20; Gal 6:2; 1 Cor 9:19-21).” ~ Grant Osborne

- The law still helps us understand what is pleasing to God, but:

“...the love of Christ flowing through the believer fulfills all that the law ever intended.” ~ C. Marvin Pate

6. Live as a Child of Light – 13:11-14

a) The Day (of Jesus’ Return) is Coming (13:11-12a)

- “Besides this” – points back to all the commands in this section.

- “You know the time” – literally “knowing the time”
- We know our salvation is closer in time to us than when we first believed – our Christian life has advanced, the clock has advanced, Christ’s return is imminent.

“The ‘salvation’ must be the completion of God’s work on behalf of the church at the time of Christ’s return.” - Douglas Moo

- Illustration: daylight coming and it is time to be waking up.

“On the certainty of the event, our faith is grounded: by the uncertainty of the time, our hope is stimulated, and our watchfulness aroused”. – Alford

b) Live in Light of Jesus’ Return (13:12b-14)

(1) Cast off works of darkness & Put on armor of light

- Putting on new clothes, or armor is a common metaphor in Paul’s writing.
- Armor reminds us we are in a spiritual battle (Eph. 6)
- The imagery of waking from sleep could also picture putting off pajamas and getting ready for the day.
- Both defensive and offensive weapons may be in view here

(2) Don’t participate in the works of darkness

- Walk properly, or “behave decently”
- Paul has a list of vices / sins that characterize those living in the world – in the darkness.
- **“Sins of the night”** – drunken carousing & sexual immorality
- **“Social sins”** – quarreling and jealousy (seen in chapter 14-15).

(3) Put on Jesus Christ

- Instead, believers are to Put on Jesus Christ – not just armor but Christ himself.
- We are to grow up into him as our head (Eph. 4:15), and to be clothed with Christ (Gal. 3:27)
- This is not a one-time act but a “process of becoming”

(4) Make no provisions to gratify the flesh.

- The negative side of putting on Jesus is we don’t cater to our flesh. We deny ourselves to pick up our cross and follow Him.
- This passage (Rom. 13:13) was instrumental in Augustine of Hippo’s conversion.
- Galatians 5:16-24 points out that the way we stop gratifying our flesh is by walking in the Spirit.

B. Love and Unity in the Community (14:1-15:13)

Background:

• **Occasion:**

- Church at Rome had strife between Jewish and Gentile believers.
- Some Jewish believers were holding on to familiar beliefs derived from the Law, they were not fully grasping the New Covenant freedom from the Law.

• **Points of Dispute**

- Meat: refusal to eat meat if they cannot confirm it is kosher.
- Wine: refusal to drink wine if they cannot be certain it was not dedicated to a false god/idol (cf. Daniel, in Dan. 1).
- Days: insistence on keeping feast days, fast days, and likely the weekly Sabbath.

• **Groups**

- Weak – those whose consciences don’t let them eat and drink indiscriminately, or disregard holy days.
- Strong – those who do partake and treat all days the same.
- Both are strong or weak ‘in faith’

“lack of insight into some of the implications of their faith in Christ.” – Moo

REB: *“one person may have faith strong enough to eat all kinds of food.”*

• **Paul’s aim**

- While he apparently sides with the strong, his aim is to preach unity and not to correct those who are weak.
- He points out that both groups are treating the other in a non-Christian way.

• **Connection with the rest of Romans**

- This Jew-Gentile division has been addressed throughout Romans.
- Here Paul is harshest with the strong – the Gentile group, and we see again his call for them to not boast over against the Jews (what we saw in Rom. 11:17).

• **Relevance**

- While the specific issues that tripped up the Roman church are not common today, there is much that can be applied to our own day.