

Monday, May 13, 2024 • Read Romans 15:1–7

Questions from the Scripture text: With whom does the apostle identify in v1? What should they do with inabilities (NKJ “scruples,” for some reason) of the weak? What shouldn’t the strong do? For whose genuine pleasure should each of us labor (v2)? Unto what end? Leading to what outcome? Who is the example of this (v3)? What was He willing to endure, for Whose sake (cf. Ps 69:9)? For what were the Scripture written (v4)? In order that they might produce what two things in us? To give us what? From Whom do those two characteristics come (v5)? Toward whom does He grant that we would reflect His mind toward us? In accord with Whom? What else do we do with one mind (v6)? And one in what else? Unto Whom? Who is His Son, Who also glorifies Him with mind and mouth? What else are we to do like Christ does (v7)? Unto Whose glory?

For what sort of uniformity should believers immediately strive? Romans 15:1–7 prepares us for the sermon in the midweek prayer meeting. In these seven verses of Holy Scripture, the Holy Spirit teaches us that **believers should immediately strive for the uniformity of conformity to Christ in praise and love.**

Because there is such a thing as Christian maturity, the church will always have within it people who are further along in doctrine (the faith), which, due to our inconsistencies, is not necessarily the same as being further along in grace (the “weak” one who heeds the instruction in this part of Romans is certainly acting more by grace than the “strong” one who disregards the instruction for him).

In the first section that we treated, the apostle applied especially to the weak—not to judge the strong, but to reckon that he will stand because the Lord is His Master. Then in the second section, the apostle applied especially to the strong—not to devalue the weak, but to use his own liberty in a way that treasures the actual sanctification of the one for whom Christ died and in whom God is working. We probably should have taken v1 with that section. Now, at the conclusion of this part of the letter as a whole, the apostle turns us to God’s grace as our ability and God’s glory as our aim, as we navigate the reality of this dynamic that He has built into His church.

Carry the inabilities of the weak (v1). The word translated “scruples” is a synonym for “weak.” The idea here is that because of his underinformed conscience, the weak in faith has a disability, and so it is up to the strong (under God) to carry the interaction by a right use of his liberty.

Live for others’ pleasure, for building up into Christ. Who is the great example of this (v2–3a). Implied in vv2–3 is the fact that different sorts of pleasures are being referred to. The strong is not to please his palate (end of v1), but to take his pleasure in the Lord, as he lives according to the hope that not only his brother but even his neighbor would come to have his pleasure also in the Lord (v2a). In the case of a brother, this is the mindset that will bear the fruit of his being built up into Christ (v2b).

And this is what the Lord Jesus has done for us (v3a). He did not do that which was more experientially pleasant (v3a, cf. Php 2:5–8), but taking His pleasure in God (cf. Heb 12:2), did that which would bring us also to have our pleasure in God.

This is living not merely for others but especially for the Lord (v3b). Denying ourselves isn’t the only way that taking pleasure in God may require enduring unpleasant circumstances. Those who delight in the Lord, and identify with Him, will often be abused by those who are abusive toward God (v3b, cf. Ps 69:9). But it is worth it to belong to Him and enjoy His inalienable love (cf. 8:35–39, cf. Ps 44:20–22)!

The Scriptures give us patience and comfort unto hope (v4–5a). What does it take to live this way? What does it take to live for the Lord, and to love our brother, so much that we gladly forgo some personal pleasure? It takes patience and encouragement that the Scriptures readily provide (v4b), because it is the God of patience and encouragement (v5a) Who has caused them to be written (v4a) precisely to make us live in hope. If we are rejoicing already in the hope of the glory of God (5:2), which we are already enjoying by His Spirit’s pouring out His love in our hearts (5:5), then we will gladly imitate Christ’s self-denial.

God gives us from Christ to be like-minded and like-mouthed to Christ unto God (v6) and unto one another to God’s glory (v7, cf. v5b). The patience and encouragement of the Scriptures does not come to us mechanically but personally. It is “according to Christ Jesus” (v5b). It is personally given by God (v5a). It is given by means of His pressing our minds and mouths into the shape of the God-glorifying mind and mouth of the Lord Jesus Christ (v6). He makes our adoration of God as Father to mirror His own, so that we will welcome one another for Father’s sake, just as Christ has welcomed us for Father’s sake (v7).

What an incentive this is to restrain the exercise of certain liberties or to relinquish a judgmental spirit! Are we not amply repaid by conformity to the heart of Christ toward our Father and conformity to the heart of Christ toward our brother? And if the Lord has not yet brought us to a uniformity of doctrine and practice (which He will!), is not the sweeter and better part to be brought to a uniformity of praise and love? No wonder the apostle has already begun spilling over into benediction and doxology (v5–6, cf. v13, 33)!

What are examples of personal liberties that you can refrain from exercising, in order to make time for building others up? What are examples of personal liberties that you can refrain from exercising, in order to contribute to circumstances that are conducive to building others up? In Whom are all patience and encouragement? What does He especially cause to be used for giving you that patience and encouragement? What use are you making of them for patience and encouragement? What other pleasures will you feel less need/desire of, as your pleasure in Him increases? What has He especially given you/us for increasing our pleasure in Him?

Sample prayer: Lord, thank You for giving Christ for us, and for His perfect self-denial. Grant that we would love and glorify You like Christ does, so that we might love and welcome one another as Christ has, we ask in His Name, AMEN!

Suggested songs: ARP197 “Christian Unity” or TPH409 “Blest Be the Tie That Binds”

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. PLEASE BE AWARE of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 15 verses 1-7. These are God's words. We then who are strong ought to bear with the Scruples of the week. And not to please ourselves. Not each of us, please, his neighbor for his good. Leading to edification. For even Christ did not please himself. But as it is written, the reproaches of those who approached you Fell on me.

For whatever things were for, were written for our learning. That we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. Now, may the god of patience and comfort, Grant you to be like-minded toward one another.

According to Christ, Jesus. That you may with one mind and one mouth. Glorify the God and father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another. Just as Christ also received us. To the glory of God.

Oh, this is The third. Section that we've taken. In what began in the beginning of chapter 14. Dealing with the fact that Because people are at different places. Doctrinally. There is inevitably. a mixture in the Church of those who are weak in the faith or weaker. Than the faith and those who are stronger.

In the faith. Noting that weaker and stronger in the faith. Does not necessarily mean. Less conformed to Christ and more conformed to Christ. For those who have made. progress doctrinally are must not. devalue those who have not. And those who have not made that progress. you must be careful.

That they don't judge. Those who have. So, Being stronger in the faith. Does not necessarily mean. Further along in Grace. If someone who is strong in the faith is

Not using his own Liberty. In a way that Treasures, the actual sanctification of the week, And he's not heating. The apostles instruction here. And as we see in these seven

verses, especially, he's not really conformed to Christ. And so his accurate theology is not good theology because it is not making him good like Jesus.

And yet the weak one, who? Does not understand from the scripture, the way the strong one does. Might be further along in Grace. By refraining from judging. The stronger brother.

Since he reckons that, the stronger brother. Will stand because the Lord is his master. And so restrains himself. And so he might actually be weaker in Doctrine. But further along, In Grace. Now, in the first chunk that we Considered and treated, especially the weaker brother, and in the second section that we considered it treated, especially the stronger brother.

And we probably should have taken verse one of chapter 15 with that section. Because he He continues there, commanding that we who are strong? Notice the Apostle puts himself in there. Doctrinally with those who are strong in the faith. Ought to bear with and literally carry. I don't know why.

New King James says Scruples. it's really inability or lack of power. very literally so we ought to carry the lack of power of the week. and Rather rather than pleasing ourselves. And it makes sense if you have the week and the strong and they're in a situation and both require.

Grace. In order to Interact rightly in that situation. Those who have the better Doctrine. have the strength of Faith ought by that strength. Through Union with Christ and Conformity to Christ. they ought to be the ones who carry the load as it were. When. So, he says, To carry the inabilities of the week.

And we heard. That's really concluding last week's portion. And how one can exercise? Liberty or employ Liberty by not exercising. It By restraining himself for the sake. Of the other. Now, this and not to please ourselves. Implies that there's different sorts of pleasure being described here. When it says not to please ourselves, even as Christ, did not please himself.

We know, of course, that the Lord Jesus. Did what he did according to his good and right Joy, even going to the Cross. He did it. Hebrews 12 verse 2 says, for the joy that is set before him. And so, The strong is not to please his palate. the eating and drinking that he is now permitted to do, but rather Taking pleasure in the Lord.

And if he takes his pleasure in the Lord, he's not pleasing himself, pleasing his palate. if he takes his pleasure in the Lord, then What he will want. Even for his neighbor, let alone his brother. Is that his neighbor also would come to have his pleasure in the Lord.

And his brother more and more to have his pleasure on the Lord, that his brother would be built up in the faith and so he says, not to please ourselves. Well, each of us, please his neighbor for his good leading to edification. And he gives Christ as the example for even Christ.

Did not please himself. He did not do that, which was more experientially Pleasant. But he added to himself, Humanity. And not just Humanity, but the form of a bond slave. And, Humbled himself even to the death of the Cross. Which as we noted from Hebrews, 12 2, he endured for the joy.

That was set before him. And so, when we put others ahead of ourselves and particularly others, spiritual good, others pleasure in God. ahead of ourselves. We are imitating Christ. who does all things not merely for us? but especially for The Lord. And here, there's a quote from Psalm 69 verse 9.

There were approaches of those who approached you fell on me. and that's actually the second half of a verse in which he says, Zeal for your house. Will consume me, which we thinking about just this week in Isaiah 56. And how his house. As a House of Prayer for all nations.

And so there is this Joy set before the Lord. Jesus. And he is willing, then. That those who are abusive towards God, those who reproach God himself. Would reproach him. And so there's different sorts of denying ourselves denying our To please ourselves refusing to please ourselves. that come with being conformed to Christ.

one is not exercising particular Liberties in particular situations because it's better. For evangelizing, our neighbor or edifying. Our brother. but another is being willing. to be reproached slandered. denounced. Abused persecuted. For the sake of the Lord. And we saw that earlier in Romans as well.

Romans 8. In that section verses. 35-39 of all the things that we might suffer and yet not be separated from the love of Christ. God in Christ Jesus. quotes from Psalm 44 Where we are accounted as sheep for the slaughter all day long. For his sake, for the Lord's sake, we are slaughtered all day long.

And so we're reminded here, if if pleasure in God and belonging to him and being loved by him. Is worth being slaughtered, all day long is worth being reproached. Is worth suffering in a pattern. In the pattern of Jesus's own willingness to suffer. Then certainly belonging to the Lord, and being loved by him is worth.

Refraining from exercising, particular Liberties is worth. Valuing, our brother is worth. refusing the jar jar brother if we happen to be the weaker brother. And so, the Lord has given us the scriptures. as means by which he conforms us to Christ. Is just quoted from Psalm 69 verse 9.

and then he says in verse 4 for whatever things were written before. Were written for our learning. and it's a learning then that conforms us to Jesus that we may have Patience and encouragement. According to Christ Jesus, the word Comfort here is a little broader than than just feeling better about sad things.

You can see the word forked in there and the strength. but And the god of patience and comfort. The God who gives us patience? And gives us Comfort. does it through the scriptures? So that being instructed by the scriptures, we might become more like the Lord Jesus.

So we might be like-minded towards one another. He says, in verse five, According to the Lord Jesus. That in our like-mindedness towards one another. It's really from like-mindedness towards Christ. So, for six, That you may with one mind and one mouth. Glorify the God and father of our Lord.

Jesus Christ years, the Lord. Jesus Christ, who loves The father from all eternity, as the son, as Loves him with all heart, and mind. And And yet also in his human nature. Loves him as. God and glorifies him as God and even submits to him as God and with respect to his human nature.

So that we may be United to the Lord Jesus. We cannot. Enter into that of that. Which is in Christ, that is divine But glorifying God the way the Lord Jesus Christ. Glorifies his father. In his human nature. It's love for God that produces our love for and welcoming one.

Another And so, for, A complete setting. Therefore Receive one another. Just as Christ also, received us or welcome one another. Just as Christ also welcomed us. And so Christ, humbled himself. And endured. Misery. On the cross. In order to welcome us. And, It is infinitesimally small by comparison. For us to Give up whatever else we might rightfully have enjoyed.

In those circumstances in which the Lord teaches us that it is Edifying to our brothers to do so. And so welcome one. Another just as Christ also welcomed you this is another one of those places where Erasmus's text is. Differs from the majority text. Welcome one. Another just as Christ.

Also welcomed you. This is not only according to the pattern of what he was willing to endure in order to welcome Hudson, to what we ought to be willing to endure to welcome our brother. But also the, the aim. in welcoming, our brother should be like, Christ's To the glory of God.

there at the end of verse 7, And so it is the god of patience and encouragement who grants us to be like-minded and he uses the scriptures. Through the patients and encouragement of the scriptures. We have hope in God. So, God uses the scriptures to Grant to us to be made like Jesus.

So that we will have our pleasure in him. Our pleasure in God. And that with our pleasure in God, we will aim at our brother. Having pleasure in God. And so this really is a great incentive to restrain. The exercises. the exercise of certain Liberties that we might have Or in the case of the weaker brother.

To relinquish a judgmental. Because we will amply be repaid. By being conformed to the heart of Christ. The heart of Christ towards the father that we would have pleasure in him. And, Do all unto the glory of God and be just like Jesus in it. And the Heart of Christ towards our brother that for the sake of God in whom we have pleasure and for whose Glory, we live, We would be welcoming to our brother and neither devaluing on the one hand.

Judging on the other. But that we would walk in love towards one another. So if the Lord has not yet, brought us to a uniformity of Doctrine and practice. Which he will. No one will remain the weaker brother forever. If he's a genuine brother, The Lord will ultimately maybe not even in this life, but ultimately convince him.

Of all that the scripture teaches. But if we are not yet brought to a uniformity of Doctrine and practice, Still, we might have the sweeter and better part. Which would be to be brought to a uniformity of Praise. Doing all for the glory of God. And a uniformity of love.

Walking, in a way, that Neither D values nor judges. But considers our As one who belongs to the master one for whom Christ, died one in, whom God is at work. Like we heard from The second section. And so the sweeter and better part of our uniformity. Is to be brought to the uniformity of praise and love.

And so, the Apostle, here has Started begun. Started his benedictions. Now, may the god of patience and comfort. And so, on, in verse 5, we'll have another one in verse 13. Now, may the god of Hope fill you. With all joy and peace and believing and so forth.

there will be another one in verse 33. another god of peace be with you all. A couple more in chapter 16. But may the Lord give us to Conformed to Christ. It is of no use to be. The stronger brother to have more accurate and Fuller Doctrine.

If through the scriptures, We are not being conformed to Christ. By the god of the scriptures. And spray.

Our Father in Heaven. We pray that You who are the god of? Patience and encouragement would give unto us. To have patience and encouragement through the scriptures so that we will have our hope in. And have your love poured out in our hearts. Please Grant the ministry of your spirit to use your word.

To conform us to Jesus. Before we ask it in his name, amen.