

## **The Righteousness of God in the Believer's Life.**

Chapter 12: Wrt God, the Believers, and the World

Chapter 13: Wrt the State, and one's Neighbours.

Chapter 14-15:7: Wrt Differences among Believers.

Chapter 14:1-12. The Weak Believer and Christian Liberty

Chapter 14: 13-23: The Strong Believer and Christian Love

Chapter 15:1-7: Christ our Example.

14:1 Reception of the weak Believer; 15:7-- Mutual reception of strong and weak.

### **I. The Weak Believer and Christian Liberty. 14:1-12**

**1.** Receive-"proslambano": to take to oneself, receive, welcome always in Middle

Voice = a special interest on the part of the receiver; 14 times in NT

The weak brother is to be welcomed, not argued with, over non-essential issues, so as to pass judgement on these disputable matters. This is not reception to the assembly in the first instance: more, personal acceptance.

**2:** two sides - one eats anything (called "strong" in 15:1); another eats vegetables only. Perhaps to avoid eating meat consecrated to an idol, cf. 1 Cor.8:7; 10:28.

**3.** the strong not to despise, belittle, the weak; the weak, not to judge (3,4,10) the strong, for 1) God has rec'd the strong brother.

**4.** 2) the strong is another man's household servant (works in the house of God) and accountable to God, not to the weak; the strong shall stand, for God is able to make him stand. (the weak expects him to fall).

**5;** Days: cf Gal 4:10; Col 2:14. Not entirely clear what these days are...? Sabbath, Jewish feast days? The strong seem to regard every day as a day to serve the Lord, equally with all other days.. The great thing is to be fully persuaded in one's own mind cf. 22, 23. In modern times, it may apply to those who honour Christmas, "saints' days" etc.

**6.** Each day is to be regarded, or not, to the Lord. ( 8 times from 6-11) He is the True Standard and His approval is what we need. We live as before Him.

All food is sanctified by the WoG and by prayer. 1 Tim 4:4,5.

(The first day of the week [the 'Lord's day' or 'lordly day'] is never commanded in WoG like the OT days-- it is a privilege and a pleasure for believers to observe.)

**7.** In our lives we relate to the Lord and to one another; hence, our attitudes and actions affect all.

**8.** Both in life and death, we are the Lord's; we do not stop being His at death, therefore we need not fear death. He controls the time and manner of our decease.

**9.** One of the purposes of Christ's death and resurrection: that He might be Lord of both dead and living; the order here reflects the order of His death and arising; here, wrt believers. In Acts 10:42 He is Judge of living and dead, saved and unsaved. Christ- used twice, of His death- His Person emphasized. 14:9,15.

The Christ: used 4 times -more of His offices and relationships: 14:10,18; 15:3,7.

**10-12:** the Judgment Seat (Bema) of the Christ: .the weak brother, judging the strong, and the strong, despising the weak, are both wrong b/c: 1) we are to live to the Lord vv. 8,9; and, 2) we will stand before the Bema and give account.

The accounting is:

- 1) individual-- every one;
- 2) Personal-- himself;
- 3) Universal - each of us

It has not to do with sin, but with service. 2 Cor 5:10; 1 Cor. 3:14-15

## **II. The Strong Believer and Christian Love--14:13-23.**

**13:** “Judge” now applied to one another, not just to the weak; the strong to decide not 1) either to casually stumble the weak; or 2) to deliberately set a fall-trap for the weak out of malice. (HSJ) Cf. Luke 17:1; 1 Cor.8:9.

**14.** All food is clean ceremonially. Cf Mark 7: 18-20 --“ it doesn’t enter into his heart but into the stomach, and is eliminated (as a result He made all foods clean.) HCSB. Some have needless scruples about foods. They are weak. They can be so upset by the actions of the strong, that they can be destroyed cf Apollyon Rev 9:11; not lost, but wrecked wrt Christian testimony.

**15:** The brother’s value is measured by the death of Christ. Christ died for the man to save his soul; can I not for him give up some favourite food? Here “walking in love” is mentioned.

**16:**Your good (agathos- beneficent in effect) your mature understanding and enjoyment of God’s ways in granting such liberty to His people. Let it not be blasphemed.

**17:** the Kingdom of God: not physical, but spiritual.

Physical eating and drinking perish with the using (Col 2:22). Physical.

Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. Cf. 5:1,2.

Righteousness.: last mention in Romans; right conduct to which a believer is called in obedience to the will of God.

Peace: the result of above. Is. 32:17

Joy: results from righteousness and peace.; first mention here in Romans.

If the two factions acted righteously, then peace and joy would be theirs.

(cf. the unity of the Spirit in the uniting-bond of peace Eph. 4:3.

**18.** Serving as slaves the Christ: wrt the actions of 15-17. Well-pleasing to God; Approved of men- an acknowledgement of the display of God in the believer’s life.

**19:** Pursue--1) the things of peace; 2) the things of mutual building up .

**20.** Food: must not be used to “undo” , “throw down” the work of God, either in the individual or in the assembly or the world. Cf. 15. There. Destroy the brother. All things are pure, but evil nonetheless for the man who eats while stumbling.

(JND)

**21.** Good (kalos- beautiful)

Drinking Wine: not condemned in NT (see 1 Tim 5:23) but governed Eph 5:18. The danger in drinking wine is that it could lead a weak brother into a situation he cannot control eg. alcohol abuse. See 1 Cor. 8:13.

**22.** Faith here, ie, wrt eating meat, and regarding days, should be exercised privately before God; the one eating is blessed if he does not have to condemn himself for eating, and thus causing his brother to stumble..

**23.** The weak over-scrupulous person is condemned by his conscience if he eats meat b/c he believes God does not allow him to do it. He feels guilty and to him it is sin.

There may be a wider application of, "Whatsoever is not of faith is sin."

### **III. Christ our Example 15:1-7.**

**1.** The strong ("those who are able") ought to (owe 13:8):

- 1) bear (Gal.6:2; Is 53:4) the weaknesses (pl) of the "not strong" .
- 2) not to please themselves.

"Bear" is more than tolerance or condescension; it is acceptance; not trying to change the other.

**2.** His neighbour, cf. 13:10. Please-- to these purposes--1) his good (agathos--beneficent). 2) unto edification.

This prevents "pleasing" from being reduced to "niceness". We may be nice or agreeable when we should be truthful and honest.

**3.** The Christ pleased not Himself --John 8:29. "I do always those things....."

Psalm 69:9 is quoted-- the reproaches led all the way to the cross.

Psalm 69 is the psalm of reproach; vv.7,9,10,19,20.

He endured the contradiction of sinners against Himself.

**4.** The scriptures were written for our learning-- therefore we have to read them be familiar with them. The examples of the OT saints. They give us endurance and encouragement, which leads to hope (Cf. 5:3-- we glory in tribulations... hope. Hope = confident expectation.

**5.** The God of endurance and encouragement (He gives us these things by His word) give to us to mind the same thing among one another , i.e., not to please ourselves, according to Christ Jesus. ie, as we have Christ before us as our object.

**6.** With one accord-- the inner motive and thought.

With one mouth-- the outer expression. To glorify the God and Father of the Lord of us, Jesus Christ. This is the ultimate purpose of the Christian life and life in the body of the assembly-- to glorify God.

**7.** Because of this, we are to welcome one another, as Christ welcomed us, to the glory of God. (FWG Numerical Bible) Both Christ's and our welcomes, glorify God.

## **Christ as the Centre.**

1. **The Lordship of Christ.** 14:9. We are the Lord's possession, whether dead or alive.
2. **The Judgement Seat of Christ.** 14:10-12. He is Judge of all, and to Him we must give account.
3. **The Death of Christ.** 14:15. Christ died also for the weak brother. Let us not destroy him by our actions in eating.
4. **The Example of Christ.** 15:3. Christ please not Himself; He bore reproach for God, which took Him all the way to the cross. He fulfilled OT prophecy.
5. **The Reception of Christ.** 15:7. Christ received, welcomed us, to God's glory; we must likewise welcome one another, to God's glory.

### Bibliography.

An Outline of Romans. – CA Coates  
Bible Study Commentary. Romans. – Vaughn/Corley.  
Romans –HA Ironside  
Justification by Faith. –Wm MacDonald.  
Collected Writings of Harold St John  
Expositors Bible Commentary- Gabelein. – EF Harrison  
The Christian Statue of Liberty – JM Davies  
Exploring Romans –John Phillips  
Romans (NIBC) – James R Edwards  
The Numerical Bible –FW Grant  
Romans – Wm R Newell  
Notes on the Epistle to the Romans –W Kelly  
Romans –Alva McClain  
Paul's Epistle to the Romans –James Currie  
What the Bible Teaches -Romans-- FR Stallan  
The World on Trial – RW DeHaan