

I. Introduction and review: No Judging. 14:1-12 No tripping. 14:13-23 No pushing. 15:1-13

II. Promote unity by practicing Christlike self-denial. v. 1-6

A. Put your brother's interests ahead of your own. v. 1-2 Phil. 2:3-4

1. Paul openly identifies himself with the strong. v. 1a
2. Bear one another's weaknesses. v. 1b Gal. 6:2 Heb. 12:13
 - a. Paul is not saying merely to bear *with* one another.
 - b. He is saying to carry one another.
3. Don't just please yourself. v. 1c Phil. 2:21
4. Instead do what will please and edify your neighbor. v. 2 I Co. 10:33 .
 - a. Don't become a man-pleaser in a sinful sense. Ga. 1:10 Pr. 29:25
 - b. Nor are you to indulge your neighbor's sins. .
 - c. Rather do whatever you can to build him up spiritually. 14:19-20

B. Imitate Christ's self denial. v. 3a

1. This is the first time Christ is explicitly used as an example in Romans. 8:29
Col. 3:10 He. 12:2 I John 2:6 Mark 10:42-45 I Pe. 2:21 John 13:15
2. He bore us (and our iniquities). Isa. 53:4 Mt. 7:17
3. He did not exercise His rights or please Himself. II Co. 8:9 Phil. 2:5-9 Mt. 26:39
4. Instead He made the ultimate sacrifice for our good. Mark 10:45
5. God asks little of you, by comparison.

C. The Old Testament foretold Christ's sufferings for you. v. 3b-4 Ps. 69:9b

1. His zealous faithfulness to God led to reproach from men. v. 3b Jo. 8:41f 7:2f
2. If you follow Him, don't expect an easy pleasant life. Jo. 15:25
3. The Old Testament is applicable under the New Covenant. v. 4
 - a. Paul's use of the Old Testament is appropriate. II Ti. 3:16-17 I Co. 10:11,6
 - b. What originally was said of David points to Christ, David's greater Son, and now applies to us, who walk in Jesus' steps. Luke 24:27
 - c. God's past dealings with His people give us encouragement and hope in the present so we can persevere. Heb. 11:25-26
 - d. *All* of Scripture is divinely inspired (infallible) and useful. II Ti. 3:16-17
4. Our sure hope enables us to endure. v. 4b Heb. 12:2

D. May God unite us for His own glory. v. 5-6

1. Paul's wish is simultaneously a prayer and an exhortation.
2. God is the source of perseverance, hope, and unity. v. 5a II Co. 1:3
3. May you be of one mind. v. 5b 12:16 Phil. 2:5 Acts 1:14 2:46 4:24 15:25
 - a. Our unity is founded upon truth. Eph. 4:4-6 .
 - b. Paul does not expect we will enjoy perfect agreement on every doubtful point.
 - c. He prays we will serve one another with a Christlike attitude. Phil. 2:5
4. God's ultimate purpose is not your unity, but His own glory. v. 6 1:21

III. Promote unity by accepting one another as Christ has accepted you. v. 7-12

- A. Fully welcome one another unto the glory of God. v. 7 14:1**
- 1. This goes beyond merely tolerating people who are different.**
 - 2. It means fully embracing them into your heart and home.**
 - 3. He who is sinless, accepted you when you were vile. 5:8 Lu. 15:2 5:30-31,12 23:34,47 Mt. 11:28 Jo. 7:37 I Ti. 1:15 Is. 64:6**
 - 4. You glorify God when you imitate Christ's inclusiveness. Phil. 2:9-11**
- B. Christ's service has benefitted both Jews and Gentiles. v. 8-9a Eph. 2:11f Mk. 10:45**
- 1. Christ fulfilled God's promises to the Jews. v. 8 1:16 3:2 9:4-5 Gen. 12:3 Is. 42:1 Gal. 3:16**
 - 2. Christ simultaneously brings mercy to the Gentiles. v. 9a Eph. 2:11f I Pe.**
 - 3. This indicates the nature of the divisions in Rome. 11:17f**
 - 4. What similar divisions or prejudices may exist among us? Js. 2:1f**
- C. Christ's work of uniting Jews and Gentiles in praise to God is in fulfillment of the Old Testament Scriptures (Law, Writings, Prophets). v. 9b-12 Ge. 12:3 Ga. 3:8**
- 1. God's Name will be confessed among the Gentiles. v. 9b Ps. 18:49 II Sam. 22:50 David's victories anticipate the greater victories of Jesus.**
 - 2. Let the Gentiles join believing Israel in joyfully honoring God. v. 10 Deut. 32:43**
 - 3. Let the Gentiles praise God. v. 11 Ps. 117:1**
 - 4. The son of Jesse rules over the Gentiles who hope in Him. v. 12 1:3 Is. 11:10,1-4 Ge. 49:10 Jer. 33:15 Rev. 5:5 22:16**
- D. May God fill you with joy, peace and hope. v. 13**
- 1. This prayer brings the major teaching section of the book of Romans to a close.**
 - 2. God is the source of joy, peace, and hope. 4:18 5:1-5 8:20,24-25 I Pe. 1:8 Phi. 4:4,7**
 - 3. God gives us these blessings by means of faith and the work of the Holy Spirit.**
 - 4. We have a sure hope of a glorious future (and a joyful present).**
 - 5. There is no true joy, peace or hope apart from God.**

IV. Concluding applications.

Discussion questions

- 1. Who are the "strong" and the "weak"? v. 1**
- 2. In what sense should the strong bear the weaknesses of the weak?**
- 3. In what sense is it bad to please men? In what sense is it good to please others? v. 2**
- 4. What should we expect to gain from studying the Old Testament? v. 4**
- 5. What do Paul's prayers teach us about how we should pray? v. 5-6,13**
- 6. How did Christ bring together Jew and Gentiles?**
- 7. On what basis does God accept us?**
- 8. What does the Old Testament teach about God's plan for the Gentiles?**
- 9. How is a Christian able to live selflessly?**
- 10. Why are unbelievers without hope, joy or peace?**