

5 practical

WEAK in FAITH

Now accept one who is weak in faith, but not for disputes over opinions. One man has faith to eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables. Don't let him who eats despise him who doesn't eat. Don't let him who doesn't eat judge him who eats, for God has accepted him. Who are you who judge another's servant? To his own lord he stands or falls. Yes, he will be made to stand, for God has power to make him stand.

One man esteems one day as more important. Another esteems every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks. He who doesn't eat, to the Lord he doesn't eat, and gives God thanks. For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord. Or if we die, we die to the Lord. If therefore we live or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died, rose, and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.

But you, why do you judge your brother? Or you again, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

For it is written,

“ ‘As I live,’ says the Lord, ‘to me every knee will bow. Every tongue will confess to God.’ ”

So then each one of us will give account of himself to God.

Therefore let's not judge one another any more, but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block in his brother's way, or an occasion for falling. I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean of itself; except that to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. Yet if because of food your brother is grieved, you walk no longer in love. Don't destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. Then don't let your good be slandered, for God's Kingdom is not eating and drinking, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit. For he who serves Christ in these things is acceptable to God and approved by men.

So then, let's follow after things which make for peace, and things by which we may build one another up. Don't overthrow God's work for food's sake. All things indeed are clean, however it is evil for that man who creates a stumbling block by eating. It is good to not eat meat, drink wine, nor do anything by which your brother stumbles, is offended, or is made weak.

Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who doesn't judge himself in that which he approves. But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because it isn't of faith; and whatever is not of faith is sin.

UNITY

Now we who are strong ought to bear the weaknesses of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each one of us please his neighbor for that which is good, to be building him up. For even Christ didn't please himself. But, as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that through perseverance and through encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Now the God of perseverance and of encouragement grant you to be of the same mind with one another according to Christ Jesus, that with one accord you may with one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Therefore accept one another, even as Christ also accepted you, to the glory of God. Now I say that Christ has been made a servant of the circumcision for the truth of God, that he might confirm the promises given to the fathers, and that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.

As it is written, “Therefore I will give praise to you among the Gentiles and sing to your name.”

Again he says, “Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people.”

Again, “Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles! Let all the peoples praise him.”

Again, Isaiah says, “There will be the root of Jesse, he who arises to rule over the Gentiles; in him the Gentiles will hope.”

Now may the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, that you may abound in hope in the power of the Holy Spirit.

I myself am also persuaded about you, my brothers, that you yourselves are full of goodness, filled with all knowledge, able also to admonish others. But I write the more boldly to you in part as reminding you, because of the grace that was given to me by God, that I should be a servant of Christ Jesus to the Gentiles, serving as a priest of the Good News of God, that the offering up of the Gentiles might be made acceptable, sanctified by the Holy Spirit.

I have therefore my boasting in Christ Jesus in things pertaining to God. For I will not dare to speak of any things except those which Christ worked through me for the obedience of the Gentiles, by word and deed, in the power of signs and wonders, in the power of God's Spirit; so that from Jerusalem and around as far as to Illyricum, I have fully preached the Good News of Christ; yes, making it my aim to preach the Good News, not where Christ was already named, that I might not build on another's foundation.

But, as it is written, “They will see, to whom no news of him came. They who haven't heard will understand.”

Therefore also I was hindered these many times from coming to you, but now, no longer having any place in these regions, and having these many years a longing to come to you, whenever I travel to Spain, I will come to you. For I hope to see you on my journey, and to be helped on my way there by you, if first I may enjoy your company for a while. But now, I say, I am going to Jerusalem, serving the saints. For it has been the good pleasure of Macedonia and Achaia to make a certain contribution for the poor among the saints who are at Jerusalem. Yes, it has been their good pleasure, and they are their debtors. For if the Gentiles have been made partakers of their spiritual things, they owe it to them also to serve them in material things. When therefore I have accomplished this, and have sealed to them this fruit, I will go on by way of you to Spain. I know that when I come to you, I will come in the fullness of the blessing of the Good News of Christ.

Now I beg you, brothers, by our Lord Jesus Christ and by the love of the Spirit, that you strive together with me in your prayers to God for me, that I may be delivered from those who are disobedient in Judea, and that my service which I have for Jerusalem may be acceptable to the saints, that I may come to you in joy through the will of God, and together with you, find rest. Now the God of peace be with you all. Amen.

GREETINGS

I commend to you Phoebe, our sister, who is a servant of the assembly that is at Cenchreae, that you receive her in the Lord in a way worthy of the saints, and that you assist her in whatever matter she may need from you, for she herself also has been a helper of many, and of my own self.

Greet Prisca and Aquila, my fellow workers in Christ Jesus, who risked their own necks for my life, to whom not only I give thanks, but also all the assemblies of the Gentiles.

Greet the assembly that is in their house.

Greet Epaphroditus, my beloved, who is the first fruits of Achaia to Christ.

Greet Mary, who labored much for us.

Greet Andronicus and Junia, my relatives and my fellow prisoners, who are notable among the apostles, who were also in Christ before me.

Greet Amplias, my beloved in the Lord.

Greet Urbanus, our fellow worker in Christ, and Stachys, my beloved.

Greet Apelles, the approved in Christ.

Greet those who are of the household of Aristobulus.

Greet Herodion, my kinsman.

Greet them of the household of Narcissus, who are in the Lord.

Greet Tryphaena and Tryphosa, who labor in the Lord.

Greet Persis, the beloved, who labored much in the Lord.

Greet Rufus, the chosen in the Lord, and his mother and mine.

Greet Asyncritus, Phlegon, Hermes, Patrobas, Hermas, and the brothers who are with them.

Greet Philologus and Julia, Nereus and his sister, and Olympas, and all the saints who are with them.

Greet one another with a holy kiss.

The assemblies of Christ greet you.

Now I beg you, brothers, look out for those who are causing the divisions and occasions of stumbling, contrary to the doctrine which you learned, and turn away from them. For those who are such don't serve our Lord Jesus Christ, but their own belly; and by their smooth and flattering speech they deceive the hearts of the innocent. For your obedience has become known to all. I rejoice therefore over you. But I desire to have you wise in that which is good, but innocent in that which is evil.

And the God of peace will quickly crush Satan under your feet. The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you.

Timothy, my fellow worker, greets you, as do Lucius, Jason, and Sosipater, my relatives.

I, Tertius, who write the letter, greet you in the Lord.

Gaius, my host and host of the whole assembly, greets you.

Erastus, the treasurer of the city, greets you, as does Quartus, the brother.

[The grace of our Lord Jesus Christ be with you all! Amen.]

Now to him who is able to establish you according to my Good News and the preaching of Jesus Christ, according to the revelation of the mystery which has been kept secret through long ages, but now is revealed, and by the Scriptures of the prophets, according to the commandment of the eternal God, is made known for obedience of faith to all the nations; to the only wise God, through Jesus Christ, to whom be the glory forever! Amen.



Please read the above text and complete the below in preparation for class. Give priority to the text!

1. What are some things we should consider when determining the balance between our liberties and consideration for weaker believers? (this question is carry over from last week)
2. How do we reconcile Paul indicating all of the following to the saints in Rome “repay no one evil for evil”, “[authority] is an avenger of wrath for [God]” and “let us not judge one another”? (this question is carry over from last week)
3. What purpose do “things written before” serve?
4. How do we reconcile Paul just discussing liberties, weak and strong christians, then he says “be of the same mind”?
5. How long has the plan for the Gentiles been in place? How do you know?
6. How would you summarize the end of Paul’s letter to the saints in Rome?