

Romans 15:1-3

Pleasing Our Neighbors

1. 15:1 – Strong Ought to Bear

- a. These verses are quickly passed over but are very important for our service.
- b. *“we that are strong”* - This is who he instructed in Rom 14:1, 3, 14-22
- c. Not strong-willed, arrogant, proud, but strong in knowing grace doctrine - 2 Tim 2:1
- d. *“ought to bear”* - If you know, then you are to help the weak - Acts 20:35, 1 Th 5:14
 - i. Strength not carnality, selfishness, ability to argue, but an ability to bear - Gal 6:1-5
 - ii. Strong are made such to edify/build up the weak, not to diminish them. (children)
 - iii. Bearing not ignoring sin, allowing sin, enabling sin... it is Col 3:13-14, Eph 4:2,23, 5:1

2. The Infirmities of the Weak

- a. *“infirmities”* - This is doctrinal baggage that burden people to walk by grace.
- b. They are defined in Romans 14:21, 23 as doubts regarding the faith (what God says).
- c. Remnants of past ignorance, wrong teaching, misunderstanding, immaturity, error.
- d. The weak parts of the body are handicapped doctrinally, and need attention 1Cor 12:21-25
- e. We do not cut off the weak part (we are not a tree), we must give it due care
- f. We are doctor, healer, comforter (i.e. Minister), not the enabler, compromiser, or judge

3. 15:2 – Please Our Neighbour

- a. *“not to please ourselves”* – A summary of Rom 14 admonition, seen also in Gal 5:11.
- b. Pleasing ourselves is natural; helping others is unnatural; edification is godly.
- c. This ministry is sacrifice; liberty gives us the opportunity – 1 Cor 10:23-24, 10:33
- d. *“every one of us”* – Rule for everyone not just the strong.
- e. *“please his neighbour”* – Which sounds like ‘do unto others’ Luke 6:31, Matt 7:12 or 22:39
- f. Love your neighbor never means you doing wrong, ignoring what is right, never correcting.
- g. Lev 19 defines neighbor love as respecting persons, property, rebuke, no rumors, grudge...
- h. Please your neighbor does not mean at the expense of God or truth - Gal 1:10
- i. Pleasing neighbors is not cowardly men pleasing, but true willing servants - Eph 6:6
- j. Pleasing is not putting the neighbor in power over you, but in benefiting your neighbor
- k. This speaks to preferring on another, finding agreement, peace, esteem - Phi 2:2-5

4. Good to Edification

- a. *“for his good...”* – young and weak often do not know what is for their good (God does)
- b. *“to edification”* - Which requires knowledge, wisdom, judgment, mind to build up.
- c. This excludes ministries in bars, strip clubs, Vatican, synagogues, Baptist churches.
- d. Providing a comfortable environment to grow; not pamper or acquiesce to error
- e. The weak are weak in their complete position in Christ; we should be affirming their position in Christ, encouraging their growth in understanding God through grace.

5. 15:3 – As it is Written of Christ

- a. Rom 15:3 is quoting Psa 69:9, speaking of Christ in v21 and John 19:28-30, 2:17
- b. Reproach ~def. Disgrace, shame, derision, the object of blame, fault – sin in Prov 14:34
- c. David bears reproach of men directed at God, Jesus bears the reproach of men as God.
- d. Christ the example of bearing another’s burdens in love/charity, not tolerance.
- e. Our ministry/service is to take part in the fellowship of Christ’s sufferings.
- f. Paul says be followers of him in this example in pleasing God in pleasing our neighbor for his good to edification – 1 Cor 11:1, Phi 2:5-13, 3:17