

“Love and Kingdom, Not Eating and Drinking”

Romans 14:13-15:6

Oct. 2, 2022

I. We Shouldn't Hurt Weaker Believers – (Rom. 14:13-15, 20b-23)

- A. Paul agreed with the strong; all foods were, in fact, permissible.
- B. Yet the weak could not yet accept that, thus for them to eat previously unclean food was truly sinful.
- C. The strong needed to recognize their ability to hurt the weak by their eating in the weak's presence:
 - 1. By grieving/distressing the weak with unnecessary temptation.
 - 2. By pressuring them into sin (putting a stumbling block before them).
 - 3. Certainly, this type of behavior by the strong would have led to church conflict as well.
 - 4. All such behavior was the opposite of genuine love.
- D. Do we pressure others to sin by our permissiveness?

II. We Shouldn't Hurt the Kingdom's Reputation – (Rom. 14:16-20a)

- A. “What you regard as good” = the Kingdom of God
- B. Unbelievers were speaking against (blaspheming!) God's Kingdom because of the disputes that resulted from the way the strong were treating the weak.
 - 1. The strong had turned the Kingdom of God into nothing but eating and drinking.
 - 2. In doing so, they were no longer pursuing righteousness, peace, and joy with one another.
- C. If they had been loving each other correctly, the world would've taken notice of that.



D. Have we allowed our petty disputes to damage the reputation of God's kingdom?

III. We Should Imitate Christ Instead (in Hope!) – (Rom. 15:1-4)

A. The strong needed to deny themselves (at times) and seek the good of the weak instead.

B. In doing so, they were doing no more than Christ had already done for His people.

Philippians 2:4–7 - ⁴ do not merely look out for your own personal interests, but also for the interests of others. ⁵ Have this attitude in yourselves, which was also in Christ Jesus, ⁶ who, although He existed in the form of God, did not regard equality with God a thing to be grasped, ⁷ but emptied Himself, taking the form of a bond-servant...

2 Corinthians 8:9 - For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though He was rich, yet for your sake He became poor, so that you through His poverty might become rich.

C. Following in the prophesied footsteps of Christ should have told the strong that their service to the weak was not in vain.

IV. We Should Look to God for Help – (Roman 15:5-6)

A. Loving one another this way is not possible in our own strength.

B. We need the God of Endurance and Encouragement.

1. Only God can provide the endurance we need to love consistently.

2. Only God can provide the encouragement we need when things don't go well.

C. When believers love each other like this, it brings glory to the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.