

*Practical Christian Living Based On The Gospel– 12:1-15:13*

# ROMANS

Romans 14:1-23

*Lesson 15*

**The Gospel** – Demands Unity In  
Matters of Judgment

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **The Just Shall Live By Faith**

### **Romans 1:16-17 (NKJV)**

<sup>16</sup> For I am not ashamed of the gospel of Christ, for it is the power of God to salvation for everyone who believes, for the Jew first and also for the Greek. <sup>17</sup> For in it the righteousness of God is revealed from faith to faith; as it is written,  
*"The just shall live by faith."*





# The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man

## Romans 12:1-15:13



- ◆ Paul is making practical application of the great principle of justification by faith established in Romans 1-11.
- ◆ We are no longer to be enslaved to sin (Romans 6-8), but now are to be “conformed to the image of God’s Son” (Romans 8:29).
- ◆ The larger context of the section before us: Describes the Conduct of one Justified By Faith – living a sacrificial life - (Rom. 12:1-15:13)

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **The Gospel Demands Unity**

### **The Gospel Demands Unity**

- ◆ **Jesus willed it and prayed for it -**  
(John 17:20-21)
- ◆ **Paul commanded it in the name of Christ -** (I Cor.1:10)
- ◆ **We are to endeavor to keep the “unity of the Spirit” -** is not produced by accident, but only through hard work and humility (Ephesians 4:1-6)





# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **The Gospel Demands Unity**

### **Absolute Uniformity Is Unrealistic**

- ◆ **NOT because the scriptures lack clarity or sufficient instruction -** (Eph. 5:17; 2 Tim 3:16,17; Jude 1:3)
- ◆ **The reality of sin and bad attitudes -** (I Cor. 5; 2 Thes 3:6-15; Phil 3:15-19)
- ◆ **The reality of false doctrine -** (Rom 16:17; 1 Cor. 1:11,12; Gal 2:4-5)
- ◆ **The reality of spiritual immaturity -** (Rom. 14; I Cor. 8; Heb 5:12-14)



**Not to be  
tolerated**

**Not under  
discussion in  
Romans 14**

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **The Gospel Demands Unity**

### **"The Bond of Love"**

- ◆ **To put off sin – and put on Christ – (Col. 3:1-15)**
- ◆ **See again Romans 13:8-14 –** *(He who loves has fulfilled the Law; love does no harm; love walks properly)*
- ◆ **"In matters of faith, unity; In matters of judgment, liberty; In all things, charity" –**  
(Thomas Campbell 1809)





# **The Gospel** – God's Power To Save Man

## **Romans 14 - Matters of Liberty - NOT Matters of Faith**

- ◆ Matters of Indifference are those beliefs or practices which are not specifically regulated by Scripture:
- ◆ They are things that are neither commanded nor forbidden, - 1 Cor. 9:5
- ◆ They are things that are authorized and allowed – Rom 14:5,6, (Matters Clean, Good, Pure v. 14, 16, 20)
- ◆ To engage in an authorized liberty one is neither the better or worse - 1 Cor. 8:8
- ◆ Just because a thing is an authorized liberty doesn't mean that it is always expedient - 1 Cor. 11:17

# **The Gospel** – God's Power To Save Man

## **Understanding The Problem**



- ◆ During the reign of Claudius (41-54 AD), the emperor ordered all the Jews to leave Rome (Acts 18:2)
- ◆ After the death of Claudius in AD 54, the edict became void, and the Jews returned to Rome.
- ◆ There was a tension in the Roman church between those who are called the “strong” and “weak.”



# **The Gospel** – God’s Power To Save Man

## **Understanding The Problem**

### Two Views Among Roman Christians

“In the liberty of Christ food laws are no longer binding, and one day is no more important than another.”

(Matters of liberty - 14:14, 20; Acts 10:10-16; 1 Tim 4:3).

**Strong**

“In the law of the Lord it is wrong to eat certain meats, and certain days should be observed by others”

(Food requirements - Leviticus 11; Day observances – Leviticus 23)

**Weak**

# **The Gospel** – God's Power To Save Man

## **The Weak And Strong Brother**



### **Romans 14:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things.

### **The Weak**

- ◆ **Weak in understanding but not in commitment** - Uninformed, unable to practice, poor understanding, doing it not to the Lord, convinced in own mind, gives God thanks.
- ◆ **Danger:** Judge his brother, violate his own conscience.



# The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man

## The Weak And Strong Brother

### The Strong

- ◆ **Mature understanding:** Informed, able to practice, right understanding, doing it to the Lord, convinced in own mind, gives God thanks.
- ◆ **Danger:** Cause weak to stumble; set brother at nought. (*Lifted up with pride, 1 Cor. 8:1*)

### Romans 14:1 (NKJV)

<sup>1</sup> Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things.

# **The Gospel – God’s Power To Save Man**

## **The Weak And Strong Brother**

### **Disputes Over Doubtful Things**

“without passing judgment on disputable matters (lit., “but not unto quarrels about opinions”). A believer with certain scruples is not to be welcomed into the fellowship with the intent of changing his views or opinions by quarreling with him about them.” — *Bible Knowledge Commentary*


#### **Romans 14:1 (NKJV)**

<sup>1</sup> Receive one who is weak in the faith, *but* not to disputes over doubtful things.



# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Principles Governing Personal Faith, Convictions and Conscience**

- 
- ◆ One's mistaken concept of what is included in "The Faith" does not change a matter of indifference into "The Faith."
  - ◆ We must come to the absolute certainty in our mind that a thing is a matter of faith, and this certainty must be the result of an objective and diligent study of God's word.
  - ◆ God has not left "The Faith" in Doubt: (Eph. 3:4; 2 Tim. 3:16-17; 2 Pet. 1:5,21)

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Principles Governing Personal Faith, Convictions and Conscience**

### **Comparing With 1 Cor. 8**

- ◆ Love should govern our knowledge (8:1-3).
- ◆ The “weak” are those who do not have an accurate “knowledge” regarding liberties (8:4-7a).
- ◆ The “weak” are those whose conscience has not comprehended the liberties in Christ (8:7b-8).
- ◆ The “strong” are not to use their liberties to destroy the “weak” (8:9-13).





# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Principles Governing Personal Faith, Convictions and Conscience**

### **Instructions For The Weak**

- ◆ Do not condemn another based on your lack of understanding – (bind where God did not). (3,4)
- ◆ Be fully convinced (5)
- ◆ To practice or not is your choice, but whether you do or not – make sure it is for the purpose of serving the Lord (6)
- ◆ All will stand before the Lord, He is the judge (7-13)
- ◆ Nothing is unclean in itself (14,20)
- ◆ Pursue peace (19)
- ◆ Not to violate his conscience (23)

# **The Gospel** – God's Power To Save Man

## **Principles Governing Personal Faith, Convictions and Conscience**

### **Instructions For The Strong**

- ◆ Do not judge i.e. condemn the weak brother because of his lack of understanding. (1,13)
- ◆ Do not despise. (3)
- ◆ What you do – make sure you are convinced it is right & do it to the Lord - You will give account to God (5-12)
- ◆ Not to put a stumbling block in your brothers way – (13,21,22)
- ◆ Not to destroy your brother with your food (15,16)
- ◆ Pursue peace – teaching the weak brother the truth – (19)



# **The Gospel** – God's Power To Save Man

## **Why the Strong and the Weak Should Receive one another**

God receives them (14:1-3)

The Lord sustains each  
believer (14:4).

The Lord is Sovereign to each  
(14:5-9)

The Lord alone will judge  
each (14:10-12).

Do not cause your brother to  
stumble (14:13).

Do not grieve your brother  
(14:14-15a).

Do not devastate your brother  
(14:15b).

Do not forfeit your example  
(14:16-19).

Do not use your freedom in Christ  
to pressure the weak to violate  
their conscience (14:20-21).

Do not denounce or flaunt  
your liberty (14:22, 23).

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Making Application**

### **Biblical Unity In Diversity**

- ◆ Different Races
- ◆ Different Cultures
- ◆ Different family history
- ◆ Different educational backgrounds
- ◆ Different religious backgrounds
- ◆ Different professions
- ◆ Different knowledge
- ◆ Different abilities
- ◆ Eating of meats
- ◆ Observing holidays non-religiously
- ◆ Family customs
- ◆ Marriage
- ◆ Women wearing pants
- ◆ Women working
- ◆ Bible classes
- ◆ # of cups
- ◆ Circumcision



# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Making Application**

### **Authorized Liberties**

Romans 14

"Receive"

Pure, Clean, Good

God accepts both –  
(Practitioner, Non-practitioner)

Continue in Practice

Keep "faith" to Self

Do Not Contend

Continue In Fellowship

### **Sinful Doctrinal Differences**

1 Thes 5:14; Jude 22; Mat 18

"Have no fellowship" Eph 5:11

Sinful, Violation of God's will

God does not accept  
2 Cor 6:14-18

Cannot Continue Rom 6:1, 15

Preach The Faith Gal 1:23

Contend - Jude 3

Withdraw Fellowship - 2 Thes 3:8

# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Making Application**



### **An Attempt to Put Sinful Doctrine or Practices into Romans 14**

- ◆ Violates the Context
- ◆ Puts God in Fellowship with Sin
- ◆ Brings Sin into the Church
- ◆ Provides Basis for Open-Ended Fellowship with Sin



# **The Gospel – God's Power To Save Man**

## **Making Application**



- ✦ Cannot draw lines of fellowship narrower OR wider than God has!
- ✦ All matters of liberty or indifference emanates from authority.
- ✦ Must recognize the need to abide in the doctrine of Christ which includes proper attitudes.

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## **The Just Shall Live By Faith**

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