

Romans 14 – 7 March 2021

“Therefore...” Part 3 “Maturing In Righteousness”

Introduction

*Paul wrote Romans as best document on salvation!!

***Rom 12-end** -applying righteousness to all of life

Romans 6:4 – “As Christ was raised up from the dead... even so we also should walk in newness of life.” But how?

Rom 12 showed us how to apply our new righteousness to ourselves, the church & the world

Rom 13 showed us how to apply our righteousness to government by being subject to their authority

*But as we grow in the Lord, we find that we’re all at different stages of maturity

*How do we handle our interactions w/ other believers that allow habits very different from us?

Today, we’ll see 3 ways to handle interactions with other Christians of different maturity levels

#1 – Recognize there IS a time to judge other Christian's actions as wrong (from Matt 7, etc)

Read John 7:24

1. We should be judging between right & wrong.
2. We make decisions everyday

Read I Cor 6:1-4

1. We should be deciding disputes by making judgement.

Read Matt 7:15-16

1. We should be characterizing people by their lifestyle.
 - a. You'll know false prophets by their fruits.
 - b. Matt 5 – doing alms, praying, fasting..."not as the hypocrites do".

Read Matt 7:1-5

1. We should be helping fellow believers stay away from sin

- a. We shouldn't have a condemning attitude.
 - b. We shouldn't pre-judge before knowing all the facts. (Read Prov 18:13)
 - c. We should consider our own lifestyle before trying to help others clear away sin.
2. Interesting that the speck and the beam are made of the same material.
3. How many Christians do nothing when they see sin happening within the Church?
- a. "Oh, I've got my own sin to deal with, I can't be helping them"
 - b. This tells us to take action to get rid of our own problems, so we can move forward and help the greater body of Christ!
4. Remember, we're trying to help believers stay away from sin, not unbelievers. (Read Matt 7:6)
- a. It will do no good to "clean up" unbelievers. They need the Savior & H.S.

Romans 14 now wants to discuss issues of preference

#2 – Don't judge other Christian's preferences as wrong (Vs 1-12)

Read Vs 1

1. “Doubtful disputations” – Arguing about preferences or ‘disputable decisions’
2. “Receive them” – Become friends w/ weaker Christians
3. But don't do it just to argue w/ them & change them to look just like you & your preferences

Read Vs 2-3

1. God has accepted both of you into the faith.
Allow God the room to grow both of you
2. Allow time for the weaker to become stronger
& allow time for the stronger to become humble
3. Your preferences are only wrong when...
 - a. they violate the commands of God's Word
 - b. or you make a required rule out of them
 - i. Read I Tim 4:1-4

Read Vs 4

1. We can differ in good conscience
2. What is our position with other believers?
 - a. Our position isn't that of master over them
 - b. But our position is that of brothers/sisters
3. Therefore, what is our posture toward them?
 - a. Our posture shouldn't be that of ordering them around
 - b. But our posture should be that of advice

Read Vs 5

1. (Joke) My wife esteems Valentine's Day, I don't
2. Some ask, 'why don't you observe the Jewish Feast Days like I do?' (1 man esteems 1 day...)

Read Vs 6

1. If you're doing what you believe will honor God, then hey...you're on track
2. If we live openly before the Lord, He will guide us

Read Vs 7-9

1. Each Christian is held in accountability w/ God
2. Christ is our Master not just in death but ALSO while in this life while we're alive

Read Vs 10

1. Don't look down on your brother as if your preferences are superior...God will judge that

Read Vs 11-12

1. Judgement Seats
 - a. Unbelievers – G.W.T. Judgement of Rev 20
 - i. Judged for their works
 - b. Believers – Bema Seat of Christ of Rom 14
 - i. Christians rewarded or lose rewards based on our commitment to Christ in the things that we allow
 - ii. Read II Cor 5:10
2. Christ will decide if we were effective using our preferences for His glory in this life.

#3 – Limit your own liberties to help others grow (Vs 13-23)

Read Vs 13

1. So what is it that matters regarding Christian preferential activities?
 - a. Don't be concerned w/ changing your brother's preferences
 - b. Be concerned w/ not leading your brother into sin by YOUR preferences
 - i. Read I Cor 8:9-13 – Don't stumble a weak brother w/ your liberty

Read Vs 14

1. Things of this world are just materials to be used to honor or dishonor God
 - a. Money/property can be used for good or evil
 - b. Styles of music can be used for good or evil

Read Vs 15-16

1. Don't allow a changeable preference to stand between you and a brother's loving relationship.
2. That would change the good thing that you allow into something bad

Read Vs 17-18

1. These preferences are just not important compared to living right in peace and joy!
2. How we live in righteousness, peace & joy will determine so much more than...
 - a. Whether we listened to rock-style music or not
 - b. Whether we ever had a glass of wine

Read Vs 19

1. It's easy to argue about preference differences, but harder to find a way to encourage a brother
2. Strive to find out how you can support a brother
 - a. Read I Cor 9:19-23 – Become as them in liberty (or not) in order to win them

Read Vs 20-21

1. Your allowance of preferences BECOMES a sin issue when you stumble a brother by doing it.
2. Rather limit yourself to keep your focus on the work of the Lord and not minor earthly issues

Read Vs 22-23

1. Can you with open face toward God say, “I believe that God is ok with what I’m allowing”?
2. Can you with open face toward God say, “I’m not hindering a brother by allowing this preference in this way”?

Conclusion

So, how do we handle interactions with Christians of different maturity levels?

- 1. Recognize there is a time to judge other Christian's actions as wrong**
 - a. It's the most unloving thing we could ever do to watch a bro/sis dance to destruction and not warn them
- 2. Don't judge other Christian's preferences as wrong**
 - a. Allow time for the weaker to get stronger and for the stronger to get more humble
 - b. Amazing how God is still growing both
- 3. Limit your own liberties to help other's grow**
 - a. May our time be spent growing each other in the Lord & not on what we had for breakfast
 - b. May our focus always be on the deep things of God and not on our preferences