

Please One Another

As we examine Romans 14-15, it is important to remember Paul's overall objective in the section that began in the previous chapter, where he is dealing with certain attitudes and behavior that can cripple the work, influence, and unity of a local congregation. These problems are over personal preferences and the carrying on of traditions, which, when imposed on others, can cause confusion, strife, ill will, and disharmony. In this lesson, we'll focus on how differences in preference can't be wiped away. We'll learn about three keys to living with them. Finally, at the end of the lesson we'll talk about how all of this leads to authentic worship to the glory of God.

I. Romans 15.1: Differences in Preference Can't Be Wiped Away

- A. Two groups of people Paul identifies.
 - 1. Those who are ***strong***.
 - 2. Those who are *without strength*.
- B. Note here that the differences in preference cannot simply be wiped away.
 - 1. 14.1b: *don't argue about **disputed** matters*.
 - 2. Not every matter that comes up for discussion in the church is a matter of salvation.
 - 3. Paul's intention: not to remove differences in preference, but to teach how to live with them.
- C. Note the end of 15.1: We are in this not to please ourselves.

II. Romans 15.1b-5: How To Live with Differences in Preference

- A. Romans 15.1b: Embrace Self-Denial
 - 1. *Now we who are strong have an obligation to ...not please ourselves*.
 - 2. The priority is to please others for their spiritual good and development.
 - 3. 15.3: Jesus serves as the example and source of our personal example in following through.
 - a) *For even Christ did not **please** himself*. What facilitates our becoming more like Christ?
- B. Practice Edification
 - 1. 15.2: *each one of us is to please his neighbor for his good, to build him up*.
 - 2. See 1 Corinthians 14.31b: everything is to be done for the purpose that everyone may learn and *everyone may be **encouraged***.
 - 3. 1 Thessalonians 5.11: *encourage one another and build each other up...*
- C. Engage in Prayer
 - 1. 15.5: *Now may the God who gives endurance and encouragement grant you to live in **harmony** with one another, according to Christ Jesus,*

III. The Aim is Authentic Worship

- A. 15.6a: *so that you may **glorify** the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...*
 - 1. When we live together with the shared values of building others up and self-denial we will worship as we ought.
- B. 15.6b: *we will do so with **one** mind*.
 - 1. One mind in the shared values ... not shared preferences.
 - 2. Unity is not uniformity. It is agreement on the same larger principles that direct our attitudes.
- C. 15.6c: we work together with *one voice*.
- D. 15.6d: all of this is for *the glorification of the **Father***.

IV. Conclusion

- A. 15.7: *therefore **welcome** one another, just as Christ also welcome you, to the glory of God*.
- B. We are in this together.