

The Gospel Story: Glorify God

A Study of Romans

Romans 15:1-13

Pastor Bryan Clark

Opening Discussion

1. Define and discuss the following terms:
 - a. Legalism
 - b. Grey areas
 - c. Weak Christians
 - d. Christian liberty

2. Practically speaking how do you assess if someone is objecting to certain liberties because he/she is being legalistic or because this is a legitimate area of weakness? How would your responses differ accordingly?

3. What is the difference between unity and uniformity?

4. What would it take for a church family to be a place where:
 - a. Legalism is neutralized?
 - b. Weakness is respected and shared?
 - c. Liberty is celebrated?

Bible Study

1. Review the main points from Romans 14:1-23. What are the two helpful questions we might ask to sort out our own motives for behaviors?

2. What is the difference between a discipleship model focused on getting Christians to obey the rules verses a model that learns to hear and obey the voice of the Spirit in us? (for those who have young children, how might this effect our parenting model?)

3. Read Romans 15:1-6. What is the obligation of the strong towards the weak? What does it mean to “bear” the weaknesses of those without strength? (same word in Gal. 6:2)

4. Compare 15:1b-2 with Romans 12:3,10 and Philippians 2:3. What do you think this means in very practical every day terms?
5. Paul presents Christ as the model for this behavior. How do the words “Christ did not please Himself” define chapters 1-11 of Romans? What would we have if Christ was as selfish as most of us tend to be?
6. Why is unity so important according to this text? What is at stake?
7. Read Romans 15:7-13. Paul says we are to accept one another as Christ has accepted us. How has Christ accepted us? How should this effect the way we view one another as Christians? Would you prefer other Christians evaluate and try to fix you all the time or have them celebrate you because you are radically changed in Christ?
8. Paul quotes from the Law, the Prophets and the Writings to remind us that the Gospel story has always been about bringing together Jews and Gentiles to be one in Christ. What are the implications for us today in the church? What should be the ultimate “melting pot” in the world today?

Application

1. Summarize Romans 14:1-15:13. What do you think are the top 3 points Paul was making?
2. What was your biggest “aha” moment in this text or what did you most need to be reminded of?
3. Start with your small group. What can you do to:
 - a. Neutralize legalism?
 - b. Respect and share in one another’s weaknesses?
 - c. Celebrate liberty?