

Outline for May 23, 2010 Romans 14:1-12

Introduction: Paul's response to those weak in faith at Rome was quite different in tone from his response to those attempting to subvert the faith in Galatia and Colossae. In Rome, the issue was one of growing in grace and coming to fully grasp the finished work of Christ. In Galatia and Colossae, the issue was the gospel. In those cities, there were those in the church who were tampering with and attempting to alter the gospel by undermining the doctrine of justification by faith.

I. The worship that is expressed in a life of obedience (12:1-2)

II. The worship that is exercised in a life of service (12:3-8)

III. The worship that is evidenced by genuine love (12:9-21)

A. Imperatives for the believer in relationship to the household of faith (12:9-13)

B. Imperatives for the believer in relationship to the world (12:14-13:14)

C. Imperatives for the believer in his or her obligation to love (13:8-15:13)

1. The obligation to love – "Owe no one anything..." (13:8)

a. What is this obligation?

b. What does Paul mean by this debt of "love"?

c. The big picture – Eleven imperatives that frame this principle for Paul

(1) Love displays the very character of Christ in holiness – "Let us walk properly..." (13:11-14)

(2) Love dresses for war – "and put on the armor of light..." (13:12b-14)

(3) Love delights in accepting and receiving those who are "weak in faith" (14:1-3, 15:7)

NOTE: This debt is renewable as we think of our acceptance in Christ and how we ought to overflow in welcoming our brothers and sisters in Christ

(a) The definition of "weak in faith" – "weak" – to be unsettled in mind, timid, to hesitate; "faith" – the gospel; "to fail to trust God completely without qualification" – James G.D. Dunn

- Not fully trusting in the finished work of Christ (14:1-3)
- Not confidently resting in God's sovereignty (14:4, 7-9)
- Not esteeming joyfully or glorifying God in all things (14:1-6)

(b) The demonstration of love – "welcome"

- To welcome is to take to oneself, receive into fellowship with, to receive into community and family
- To treat with kindness
- To encourage their growth in grace

(4) Love does not despise a brother or sister because of their particular convictions concerning food or days
"Let not the one who eats despise..." (14:3; I Corinthians 8:6, 9)

(a) Definition of "despise"

- "despise" – an imperative that means to consider as nothing, to disregard, to disdain, to dismiss, thus, to not receive
- The weak in faith are characterized, often, by legalism that is evidenced in their attempts to prove themselves better by adhering to certain rules or regulations

NOTE: In Rome, these were Jewish Christians who were still living under the influence of dietary laws and days (I Corinthians 8:8-10; Galatians 4:8-11; Colossians 2:16-17)

(b) The discernment necessary to encourage and endure with those weak in faith (14:5-7)

- Three tests that help discern those who are weak in faith, yet progressing (ever so slowly) in sanctification or those not even in faith -
First test: Are they fully convinced?
Second test: Are they honoring the Lord?
Third test: Are they giving thanks to God?
- Hear the words of the Lord Jesus (Mark 7:13-23)
- This debt of love commands us to love our brothers and sisters where they are, not where we want them to be.
- However, it is the responsibility of the strong to encourage the weak in faith to grow in grace, "build them up" (15:1-2)

NOTE: Five questions of application