

L. Strong and Weak Believers in Unity - Pt 1 - Receiving and Understanding One Another

A. God Receives Them - vs 1-3

1. The Churches Make Up

a. Saved for a long time

- i. maybe mature, teachable
- ii. maybe immature, satisfied with the status quo

b. Saved for a short time

- i. growing and teachable
- ii. Struggling with past sin issues or understanding

c. unsaved

- i. Willing to learn, *searching*
- ii. Deceived, thinking they are saved

2. Receive one who is weak in the faith - 1 Co 9:22

a. *proslambano* - to take to oneself, use (food), lead (aside), admit (to friendship or hospitality):--receive, take (unto). - Ro 15:1,7

- i. always used in the middle voice
- ii. Connotes personal and willing acceptance of another person

b. *astheneo* - to be feeble (in any sense):--be diseased, impotent folk (man), (be) sick, (be, be made) weak.

- i. present participle - suggests a temporary condition
- ii. "the faith" indicating the issue of understanding the fullness of the gospel, not trust in it

c. but not to disputes over doubtful things.

- i. *dialogismos* - discussion, (internal) consideration (purpose), or (external) debate:--dispute, doubtful(-ing), imagination, reasoning, thought.
- ii. no passing judgment on underdeveloped but sincere opinions about something that God has not directly spoken to

3. First reason to accept all other believers

a. For one believes he may eat all things,

- i. refers to one with understanding of and exercising his liberty in Christ
- ii. No ceremonial or dietary restriction in the New Covenant or the Gospel
  - Example of freedom - eat all things
  - Jesus' teaching - Mt 15:11, 17; Mk 7:18-19
  - Paul's teaching - vs 14; 1 Ti 4:1-4; Tit 1:15
  - God teaching Peter - Ac 10:15-16; some say only referred to vs 28

b. but he who is weak eats only vegetables.

- i. for a variety of possible reasons
- ii. Sacrifices to pagan deities included idolatry and immorality involved in former religions

4. dealing with differences - Col 2:16

- a. Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, - *exoutheneo* - contemptible, despise, least esteemed, set at nought.

- b. and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; - *krino* - basic meaning of separating and isolating, in legal sense - to find an accused person guilty
- c. for God has received him. - applies to both groups

#### B. The Lord Sustains Them - vs 4

1. Who are you to judge another's servant? - Jas 4:12
  - a. what right does either (mature or immature) have to judge another's servant,
    - i. especially a fellow servant
    - ii. Referring to critics in Corinth - 1 Co 4:3-5
  - b. To his own master he stands or falls.
    - i. all (weak and strong) will give an account - 2 Co 5:10
    - ii. Who will bring a charge against God's elect - Ro 8:33-34
2. Second reason to accept all other believers -
  - a. Indeed, he will be made to stand, - Ro 8:38-39; Jd 24
  - b. for God is able to make him stand. - Phil 1:6; 1 Pe 1:5

#### C. The Lord is Sovereign over each of Them - vs 5-9

1. Third reason to accept all other believers - who is bringing each person to maturity?
2. Though all are growing into the image of Christ, individual growth allows for different conclusions at different times
  - a. One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike.
    - i. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. - Ga 4:9-10
    - ii. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks.
  - b. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. - Col 2:16-17
    - i. for things not specifically commanded or forbidden in Scripture, the conscience should never be violated, b/c it represents what we really believe
    - ii. It is sinful to cause someone to violate their conscience - 1 Co 8:9-12
  - c. For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself.- 1Co 6:19-20; Ga 2:20; 1Th 5:10; 1Pe 4:2
    - i. For if we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we are the Lord's.
    - ii. For to this end Christ died and rose and lived again, that He might be Lord of both the dead and the living. - 2Co 5:15

#### D. The Lord Alone Will Judge Them - vs 10-12

1. Fourth reason to accept all other believers - Christ will judge
  - a. But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother?
    - i. referring back to vs 1-3
    - ii. It is each ones job to serve the Lord, not be lord in someone's life
  - b. For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. -Ac 17:31; 1 Co 4:1-5; 2Co 5:10
  - c. For it is written: "As I live, says the LORD, Every knee shall bow to Me, And every tongue shall confess to God." - Isa 45:23; Php 2:10
  - d. So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. - 1Pe 4:5