

Prayer:

Slide # 1
Romans

Theme: The Righteousness of God – The Gospel of God

Outline:

- **Prologue:** 1:1-17
- **Doctrinal:** 1:18-8:39
God’s holiness – man’s sinfulness – 1:18-3:20
Justification by grace through faith – 3:21-5:21
Sanctification of the believer – 6:1-8:39
- **Dispensational:** 9:1-11:36 (The place of Israel and the church)
- **Practical: 12:1-15:33** (Duties and privileges of the believer)
- **Epilogue:** 16:1-27

The book of Romans has as a major theme, “Righteousness is acquired by Faith Alone”. The basis of our salvation is the person and the work of Christ, but the way we receive it, the way we appropriate it is by FAITH alone.

Having established this, Paul then deals with how we should then live as believers as seen especially in the practical part of the book, as found in Romans 12-15. A stand-out point is that Christian living has much to do with how we, as believers, should treat one another in the body of Christ. This is essentially what Romans 14 is all about.

In this chapter, Paul recognizes that between true Christians who all believe in Jesus as Lord, there will be differences of maturity and differences of understanding. In secondary matters where there is a difference of opinion, Paul emphasizes that we should not judge or have a critical spirit. Rather, love should prevail and we should live in light of the kingdom values of righteousness, peace, and joy. Such living is pleasing to God and generally respected by people.

A college professor would begin every class by saying, “I am going to tell you what I am going to tell you. Then I will tell you. And then I will tell you what I have told you.” Repetition is the KEY to teaching well, and we see this in the apostle Paul’s teaching.

Paul has instructions for both the weak and the strong Christian. But as he rounds out Romans 14 he is especially speaking to the strong who needs to be sensitive to the weaker Christian and his scruples.

Paul has brought up issues of days and diet. These are issues that converted Jews, in particular, would have to work through because of their background related to OT law. And because of this, some believe that Paul may still have in mind Jewish and Gentile tensions that he dealt with at length in Romans 9-11. There, he warned the Gentiles, in particular, not to have a superior attitude with regard to the Jews.

Slide # 2

Romans 11:25 (NKJV)

25 For I do not desire, brethren, that you should be ignorant of this mystery, lest you should **be wise in your own opinion**, that blindness in part has happened to Israel until the fullness of the Gentiles has come in.

The Gentile converts, in their newfound position of liberty, might have a tendency to look down on the Jews still wrestling through what their faith relationship with Christ now means in practical reality. Paul here tends to speak in general terms and not give many specifics. So, he leaves room for lots of application.

Paul was dealing with a situation where meat was often sold in the marketplace that had previously been offered up to an idol. We don't typically have that exact situation today. However, the principles that he is teaching still have application for us today.

Instead of having a critical/judgmental spirit toward fellow believers regarding secondary issues, Paul has just emphasized living out kingdom values (Rom. 14:17). We are kingdom people called to live out kingdom values in relation to one another. Paul now builds on this...

Romans 14:19–23 (NKJV)

19 Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace and the things by which one may edify another.

In light of how we are to live as kingdom people, Paul says, "Let us pursue the things which make for peace and edification."

The word "pursue" is an intense word meaning "to run after" or to "chase".

It is used in reference to a hunter pursuing game, or an athlete competing in an event. It is also used in reference to persecution in the sense of the persecutors pursuing those they are oppressing (cf. Rom. 12:13).

God's people are called to be "peacemakers". We should want to get along with everyone as much as possible – especially our brothers and sisters in Christ. In Romans 12:18 Paul said...

Romans 12:18 (NKJV)

18 If it is possible, as much as depends on you, live peaceably with all men.

As kingdom people (v. 17) Paul has just said we should live in keeping with the kingdom value of "peace" – which is essentially the fruit of the Spirit. As I explained last week "kingdom fruit" is essentially "the fruit of the Spirit" as both are tied to New Covenant truth and the Holy Spirit.

Slide # 3

Matthew 5:9 (NKJV)

9 Blessed are the peacemakers, For they shall be called sons of God.

This is the mark of the true children of God. So much so that Hebrews 12:14 says...

Slide # 4

Hebrews 12:14 (NKJV)

14 Pursue peace with all people, and holiness, without which no one will see the Lord:

The expectation in all the NT is that God is at work in His children's lives to build holiness into them. If there is no desire at all for peace that is evidence the person is not saved at all. Remember Jesus said, it is the peacemakers who are called the sons of God (Matt. 5:9). Paul said as believers we should make every effort to "keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace." (Eph. 4:3)

The Hebrew word for peace is SHALOM! It is one of my favorite words. In Israel it is a common greeting both coming and going. It is the idea "that all is well" and wishing people well. This should be our constant attitude with regard to fellow believers. We should ever seek to carry on in the pursuit of things which make for PEACE – not war.

It used to be that people could be arrested for “disturbing the peace”. In the body of Christ don’t be guilty of “disturbing the peace”. Let us seek to live in harmony. That is God-glorifying and for our spiritual good!

And then Paul adds, “and the things by which one may edify another.” How great is this: Peace and edification! The pursuit of these is what should define us.

To “edify” means to build up”. It was a word used in reference to the erection of a building. However, in the NT, it is used metaphorically in the sense of building up people. Edification is a favorite word for Paul. He uses it 15 out of the 18 times it is found in the NT. In the midst of the chaos at Corinth, he exhorted, “Let all things be done for edification,” as found in 1 Cor. 14:26.

In the midst of body life with a whole host of differences of opinion, note the words Paul uses that should define God’s people.

Slide # 5

- Rom. 14:15 – love
- Rom. 14:17 – righteousness
- Rom. 14:17 – peace
- Rom. 14:17 – joy
- Rom. 14:19 – peace
- Rom. 14:19 – edify

Back in verse 10, Paul warned us that “we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ,” which is the believer's judgment in which we will be evaluated on our quality of service and rewarded accordingly. What will God be looking for? I submit to you the great issue on judgment day will be the love, righteousness, peace, joy, and edification that was seen in your life and mine. As Paul said in verse 18 he who serves Christ in this way is acceptable to God – that is pleasing to God.

What makes the body grow?

Slide # 6

Ephesians 4:15–16 (NKJV)

15 but, speaking the **truth in love**, may grow up in all things into Him who is the head—Christ—

16 from whom the whole body, joined and knit together by what every joint supplies, according to the effective working by which every part does its share, causes growth of the body for the **edifying of itself in love.**

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are pure, but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.

The word “destroy” (a different word from that in verse 15) means “to tear down” or “demolish”. It is a construction term used in reference to a building being torn down. This is the exact opposite of “edify” (to build up) as seen in verse 19.

Here is a good question: Are you part of the construction crew or the demolition crew? Paul exhorts us to NOT be a part of the demolition crew!

The “work of God” is to build up – to edify. As Paul says in 1 Cor. 8:1, “love edifies”. LOVE is the key thing we use to build people up in the faith.

There is discussion here as to whether this is talking about the work of God in the life of an individual Christian or whether Paul is talking about what is damaging to the entire Church. In this context, Paul has been talking about not making a brother to stumble (v. 13) which would indicate that primarily the work of God in view here is talking about God’s work in the life of an individual believer.

Slide # 7

Ephesians 2:10 (NKJV)

10 For **we are His workmanship**, created in Christ Jesus for good works, which God prepared beforehand that we should walk in them.

It is a sobering thought to realize that God is at work building people up and that we, as fellow believers, could potentially be at work tearing them down. Talk about being out of the will of God. This is totally at cross purposes with what God is doing! That is a really serious thing!

Who wants to show up on judgment day and give account for tearing down what God was trying to build up? Not me!

Certainly, destroying a Christian’s growth over the issue of food is foolhardy!

Again, it would appear that Paul, at this point, is addressing the strong brother who has proper knowledge, realizing that there is liberty to eat meat sacrificed to idols. This person has the liberty to eat!

Paul agrees, Yes, “***All things are indeed pure***”. This is the second time in this chapter that he has made this point. In verse 14, he said, “***I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself.***” So, clearly, Paul agrees with the stronger brother that there is nothing spiritually wrong with eating food that the Jews would not consider kosher.

And yet at the same time there are other considerations. Having the right to do something does not necessarily mean it is the right thing to do.

Slide # 8

1 Corinthians 10:23–24 (NKJV)

23 All things are lawful for me, but **not all things are helpful**; all things are lawful for me, but **not all things edify**.

24 Let no one seek his own, but each one the other’s well-being.

Yes, one may have liberty but there is the spiritual welfare of the weaker brother to take into consideration and so he says...

“but is evil for the man who eats with offense.”

The question is this: Is Paul talking about the person who, in his mind, has the liberty to eat and goes ahead and does so at the expense of the weaker brother’s conscience, or is he talking about the person who eats in violation of his conscience? Because of what he immediately goes on to say in the next verse, it would seem that this is primarily speaking to the stronger brother – who doesn’t care about offending the scruples of the weaker brother.

Charles Spurgeon felt at liberty to smoke cigars. After he had become famous as a preacher one day he was walking down a street and saw a sign that said, “We sell the cigar that Charles Spurgeon smokes”. Spurgeon suddenly realized that this might be an “offense” to some fellow Christians who did not share in this liberty and so he immediately gave up the practice.

Spurgeon realized this was bigger than him. He maturely thought about the bigger picture and the weaker brethren and removed himself from being in the position of being a possible offense.

But note that Paul in the surrounding context is addressing both the strong and the weak and because of this Leon Morris says...

It may be, perhaps, that the vagueness and obscurity of Paul's sentence is due to the fact that he is thinking of both possibilities, and expresses himself so as to allow for both. – **Leon Morris**

The idea of being an “offense” is very closely related to that of being a “stumbling block” and is often even translated as such.

Paul has already talked about the importance of NOT being a stumbling block, or a snare for a brother (v. 13). He has already emphasized the importance of NOT grieving a brother over the issue of food (v. 15). He has already shown that the issue at stake is the conscience of the weaker brother (v. 14) and he will go on to re-emphasize this at the end of the chapter.

This whole section is dealing with matters of conscience based on ones level of spiritual maturity. Both brothers (the strong and the weak) know Jesus as Lord. Both recognize Jesus as “Master” as seen in verse 4. Both do what they do as “to the Lord” (v. 6). Both live and die as “to the Lord” (v. 7-8). This is not a matter of defiance but purely a matter of understanding and maturity and sincerely wanting to do the right thing.

The conscience does not determine truth – the Word does that. However, it is never right to violate conscience. If one learns to violate their conscience they grieve themselves in the process and eventually they do spiritual damage to themselves. Hence, Paul uses the word destroy (in two difference senses) in verse 15 and then again in verse 20.

In Paul's mind, the issue of “conscience” is a really BIG deal.

Slide # 9

Acts 23:1 (NKJV)

1 Then Paul, looking earnestly at the council, said, “Men and brethren, **I have lived in all good conscience before God until this day.**”

Acts 24:16 (NKJV)

16 This being so, **I myself always strive to have a conscience without offense toward God and men.**

2 Timothy 1:3 (NKJV)

3 I thank God, whom I serve with a pure conscience, as my forefathers did, as without ceasing I remember you in my prayers night and day,

Slide # 10**1 Timothy 1:19 (NKJV)**

19 having faith and a good conscience, which some having rejected, concerning the faith have suffered shipwreck,

1 Timothy 3:9 (NKJV)

9 holding the mystery of the faith with a pure conscience.

Paul emphasizes the importance of serving with a clear conscience. Ideally, if you are a believer here this morning there is nothing bothering your conscience. There is nothing between you and God. You are right with Him and your conscience is clear. If not, that is a problem and if you are living with a guilty conscience as a way of life that could prove detrimental in your spiritual life.

In 1984 an Avianca [aa-vee-aang-kuh] Airlines jet crashed in Spain. Investigators studying the accident made an eerie discovery. The “black box” cockpit recorders revealed that several minutes before impact, a shrill computer-synthesized voice from the plane’s automatic warning system told the crew repeatedly in English, **“Pull up! Pull up!”** The pilot, evidently thinking the system was malfunctioning, snapped, “Shut up, Gringo!” and switched the system off. Minutes later, the plane plowed into the side of a mountain. Everyone on board died. – **John MacArthur**

This illustrates the warning function of the conscience and it illustrates what happens if we learn not to listen to it.

Conscience is at the heart of what distinguishes the human creature. People, unlike animals, can contemplate their own actions and make moral self-evaluations. That is the very function of conscience.

– **John MacArthur**

What happens with the conscience has been compared to the drama of a courtroom scene. The conscience serves as a “register” to record what we have thought and done.

It serves as an accuser that logs a complaint against us when we are guilty. It serves as a defender when we are innocent. It acts as a witness, either for or against us. It acts as a judge, either condemning or vindicating us. And it acts as an executioner which smites with conviction when we are guilty. Someone has compared the chastisement of a guilty conscience to “a flash of hell” (Richard Sibbes)

Paul, throughout this whole context, is emphasizing the importance of serving with a clear conscience and that young Christians or weaker brethren do not learn to violate their conscience. It needs to be educated but not violated. The stronger brother has a responsibility to wisely bring them along in keeping with what is for their overall spiritual good.

21 It is good neither to eat meat nor drink wine nor do anything by which your brother stumbles or is offended or is made weak.

Note the older manuscripts do not have the last clause of this sentence, which reads “***or is offended or is made weak.***” With or without it, the point is clearly made that Paul is teaching that we should never intentionally do anything to cause a brother to stumble spiritually. In Paul’s mind, this is a very serious matter.

Paul mentions eating and drinking, but then adds, “***nor do anything by which your brother stumbles,***” showing there is a universal application to what he is saying.

Building up a brother is more important than exercising my liberty in a way that is spiritually damaging to a weaker brother.

Slide # 11

1 Corinthians 8:13 (NKJV)

13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

The concern here is for a green new believer who is serious about the Lord but doesn’t really understand the newfound liberty that he has in Christ. There is to be a sensitivity for this person, but we must be discerning here.

There are those who should know better and who know the Scriptures quite well but end up using the Scriptures in a legalistic way but are quick to say we must not offend them.

Joe Aldrich in his book “Life-Style Evangelism addressed a category of professing believers that he called the “**professional weaker brother**”.

There is a class of weaker brothers who contribute to the problem because of attitudes which could be termed legalistic. The legalist carefully builds his own pattern of living and then tries to make it normative for the entire Christian community. ... He makes other believers prisoners of his expectations. ... He is not “weak” in the biblical sense that his “sensitive conscience” will be injured by the actions of his liberated friends. From a biblical standpoint he is not “weak” if he is not susceptible. In spite of this, he uses his alleged “weakness” to manipulate others. “Not infrequently, it is the weak who are the real tyrant.” This form of hypocrisy contributes more toward the death of beauty in a church than any other single factor.

– **Joe Aldrich**

When people use Scriptures like those here in Romans 14, emphasizing not being a stumbling block and not causing offense, but with a legalistic agenda in view, we must be discerning and not give into that ruse.

The NT also addresses this sort of thing in other places. Paul did not cater to legalistic demands. Rather, in that case, he insisted on standing for liberty.

Slide # 12

Colossians 2:16–17 (NKJV)

16 So **let no one judge you** in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths,

17 which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.

Galatians 5:1 (NKJV)

1 **Stand fast therefore in the liberty** by which Christ has made us free, and do not be entangled again with a yoke of bondage.

Slide # 13

Hebrews 13:9 (NKJV)

9 Do not be carried about with various and strange doctrines. For it is good that the heart be **established by grace, not with foods** which have not profited those who have been occupied with them.

We have to be discerning. Is this really a case of a susceptible, weaker brother, or is this the case of a legalist who needs to be rebuked? We need to be cautious – yes, but we also need to be wise.

Clearly, in the context of Roman 14, Paul is talking about the genuinely weaker brother who needs loving nurturing. He needs to be helped along in keeping with love and wisdom – and not forced.

In such a case Paul says...

22 Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.

Faith is taking God at His Word! The mature understand the freedom they now have to eat anything. They understand they are no longer under the regulations of the Old Covenant but are now under an entirely different NEW Covenant. They believe that and understand the ramifications of it.

The weaker brother is still sorting this out. All believers have FAITH. We all share the same faith in Christ as Savior and risen Lord. As Paul says in Ephesians 4:5 we all share in “one Lord, one faith”. So, saving faith is not the issue here. We are saved by faith and then we walk by faith (cf. Col. 2:6). In view here is the “walk of faith” (2 Cor. 5:7). And in particular he is speaking about the conviction of faith that has the liberty to eat.

Having faith here speaks to the issue of convictions of liberty in one’s walk of faith. It emphasizes a well-thought-out position of faith. It is the place of reasoned convictions (cf. 14:5).

Faith in the Bible always finds its basis in Scripture. Faith is never in a vacuum – rather, it is always connected to the Word of God. Faith and word go together.

Slide # 14

Romans 10:17 (NKJV)

17 So then **faith** comes by hearing, and hearing **by the word of God**.

In some circles, people have the idea that faith is something that is totally subjective. That is it does not necessarily have an objective basis. If you just believe what you say, you can make it happen. But in contrast biblical faith is always connect to the Word. It takes God at His Word.

It believes God! It rests in what God says. That is true faith. Faith is never merely a matter of subjective feelings, but rather of conviction based on God's revealed truth.

A key verse for understanding the nature of faith is found in Genesis 15:6

Slide # 15

Genesis 15:6 (NKJV)

6 And he **believed in the LORD**, and He accounted it to him for righteousness.

The Hebrew word for "believed" in Genesis 15:6 is **aman**, which is the root word for Amen! It denotes trust, a strong confirmation, or personal certainty of what it affirms. It expresses complete reliance or dependence upon. It is not mere mental assent, but an active trust. Note that Abram did not simply believe in the promises of God, but rather believed in the God of the promise. His belief was IN THE LORD. That is, he believed in the character and power of God to bring to pass what He had promised. That is the idea of faith in the Bible.

Slide # 16

Impressions have neither one thing nor the other to do with faith. Faith has to do with the Word of God. It is not impressions, strong or weak, which will make the difference. We have to do with the Written Word and not ourselves or our impressions. – **George Muller**

This strong brother understands from the Scripture that he has absolute freedom to eat. He believes it.

But since the weaker brother doesn't yet get it, Paul says keep your faith liberty private between you and God. Don't flaunt it! Don't push it! Don't parade it and impose it upon the weaker brother. He can't handle it yet. He needs to be brought along through the Word. He is still "weak in faith" (Rom. 14:1) because he is still weak in the Word.

There is a place where, because of LOVE, we don't push our liberty because the weak won't understand. In fact, they very possibly will misunderstand.

Let me illustrate. Social drinking has always been a subject of debate among Christians.

Some are strictly against it, others claim to have liberty within certain bounds. I agree that there is liberty, but there is also danger and so my counsel is always caution.

Some like to flaunt their liberty. They throw caution to the wind and like to post on social media all about it. Is this wise? Might it not be a stumbling block to others? My counsel, when it comes to this sort of thing: **“Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God.”** Sometimes it is counterproductive to flaunt our freedom in areas that are debated or easily misunderstood.

However, someone may say, “Well in that case the stronger brother is being robbed of his liberty.” But Paul is not wanting to strip the strong of their freedom, but rather because of LOVE to use it wisely.

And so he says, **“Happy (or better blessed) is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves.”** You are blessed when you can properly enjoy the freedom you have in Christ without being a stumbling block to others in the process. Blessed is the person who has a clear conscience in how he exercises his liberty!

Living with a clear conscience for the mature believer involves two things. 1) It means in your own mind, you have the freedom to partake in whatever is at issue – in this case, eating. 2) It means you handle yourself wisely, thinking about how this affects others and their spiritual good. Maturity realizes it's not all about me – it's about God, and it's about others.

Slide # 17

1 Corinthians 10:31–32 (NKJV)

31 Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, **do all to the glory of God.**

32 Give no offense, either to the Jews or to the Greeks or to the church of God,

In Romans 14:22, when it says, **“Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves,”** the word **“approves”** literally means **“puts to the test”**. This person has thought it through carefully – has tested it in his own mind and therefore approves enjoying the freedom that he now has in the matter.

Liberty is a wonderful thing. It is a blessing to those who know the truth and can enjoy the fruits of it. It is wonderful to be able to walk in the truth of knowing God “***gives us richly all things to enjoy.***” (1 Tim. 6:17). That is all things that are truly biblical and in which there is freedom to enjoy.

Again, we are not talking about violating clear essential doctrinal or moral issues. That is always wrong! But rather, we are talking about secondary matters in which there are differing levels of thinking and understanding among Christians.

23 But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.

The person who cannot eat with a clear conscience is condemned if he eats. The word “***condemned***” means “***to have a judgment rendered against***”.

First and foremost, it seems that his own conscience condemns him! It renders him guilty because he does not eat from faith. This person is “weak in faith” as Paul terms it in Romans 14:1-2.

“***From faith***” means he is not convinced by the Word this is okay. In fact, looking at certain Scriptures makes him think this is not okay. “***From faith***” is the idea of conviction. He does not have a faith conviction based on the Word that this is okay.

Therefore, for him to eat is a sin because whatever is not from faith is a sin. Here Paul states the principle that whatever does not proceed from faith is sin. If one cannot do it on the basis of faith it is then wrong for them to do it. If they do not think the Word gives them grounds to do it – then it is wrong for them to do it.

Simply stated, if one cannot do something with a clear conscience, then it is wrong for them to do it! It is always wrong to violate your conscience. Faith informs the conscience, and so if they cannot eat from faith, then it would be a sin for them to do so.

The principle is this: “***When in doubt, don’t.***”

The overall emphasis in Romans 14 is that the stronger brother must be sensitive to the weaker brother's conscience. He must not force him to violate his conscience even if, technically speaking, his position is wrong. That is not in keeping with love.

Now having said all this, as we consider the whole counsel of God, the goal is to bring the weaker brother along to maturity. We don't want to cater to weakness and immaturity indefinitely. Over the long haul, that does neither the weak brother nor the body of Christ any good.

Young Christians need the kind of fellowship that will protect them and encourage them to grow. But we cannot treat them like “babies” all their lives! ...To gear the ministry of a Sunday School class or local church only to the baby Christians is to hinder their growth as well as the ministry of the more mature saints. The weak must learn from the strong and the strong must love the weak. – **Warren Wiersbe**

Paul clearly expected that those with weak consciences would grow out of that immature state, like children inevitably outgrow their fear of the dark. – **John MacArthur**

Slide # 18

Matthew 28:19–20 (NKJV)

19 Go therefore and make disciples of all the nations, baptizing them in the name of the Father and of the Son and of the Holy Spirit,
20 teaching them to observe all things that I have commanded you; and lo, I am with you always, even to the end of the age.” Amen.

Slide # 19

Colossians 1:28–29 (NKJV)

28 Him we preach, warning every man **and teaching every man in all wisdom**, that we may **present every man perfect** [mature] in Christ Jesus.

29 To this end I also labor, striving according to His working which works in me mightily.

In view of our study in Romans 14 let me make three applications.

- 1) **Conscience**: Having a clear conscience is a very important spiritual reality! Conscience is not infallible, but it must not be violated. It needs to be governed and educated by the Word. Faith informs the conscience and we grow in faith through the Word. In matters of conscience there is a special “love responsibility” on the mature.

- 2) **Sovereignty & Responsibility**: God is sovereign. He is able to make each one of His children stand. And yet this does not discount human responsibility. God is able to make the believer stand and yet it is also humanly possible to stumble them. We are to live out love to prevent this. We as kingdom people are to live out the kingdom values of righteousness, peace, and joy.
- 3) **The goal of maturity**: The goal is always to build each other up. We are to pursue the things which make for peace and edification. We ought always to live in light of the highest spiritual good of others. The goal is not merely to cater to the spiritually weak but to wisely and lovingly bring them along to maturity. The truth shared in love is how people grow.

My wife and I have always enjoyed walking together. After our children were born, we gladly included them. To do so we had to make some changes. Instead of walking at a rapid pace with a long stride, we had to slow down and take smaller steps to match the capability of a child. Holding the hand of those little children, we would slowly walk around our block in the time we would normally have walked many times farther. We slowed down to accommodate their limitations because we wanted to be with these children and have a relationship with them. – **David K. Lowery**

This illustrates the attitude the mature believer should have with reference to the immature or weak believer. We accommodate them out of love!

We all need to grow. The strong believer needs to grow in love. The weak believer needs to grow in knowledge. We all need to grow in grace!

May we be those who pursue those things by which we may edify one another! As Paul said in verse 18, those who serve Christ in this way are found pleasing to God.

God help us to this end!