

Romans 14:1-23
“*Relevant Faith*”

~ INTRO. ~

TODAY...

- We're covering (Chp. #14) with direction for the church...
 - On how to live out a *relevant faith*.

IN OUR CONTEMPORARY SOCIETY...

- People argue that the Bible is out-of-touch with modern issues.
 - AND... many times... the claim is supported...
 - By the disunity in the church.

IN (Rom 14)...

- Paul elevates his instructions to the church....
 - By addressing *Hot-Topic* issues of their time.

TODAY WE HAVE OUR OWN ISSUES.

- If I communicated my personal convictions...
 - About the *Hot-Topics* of our day...
 - Some of you may judge and despise me.

HERE'S THE POINT:

Paul used the *Hot-Topics* in the early Church...

- And he spoke to the issues *causing division*...
 - Which were diets & days to worship.
- He spoke to align the church with Gods will.

~ STUDY ~

(Eph. 4:1-3) NKJV

- The Bible calls us to unity...
 - And a like-mindedness that promotes faith.

IN THE FIRST CENTURY...

- People didn't have the option to run to another church...
 - When they disagreed over no-sinful practices.
- Typically... there was only one local church.
 - So... they had to work thru their issues.

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NOT SO TODAY!

- People avoid the character building... of disagreements...
 - By disappearing from churches.

IDEA #1 – BIG PICTURE LIVING

THIS IS THE HEART BEAT...

- To the whole chapter.
 - (v.1) “*Receive one who is weak in the faith...*”
- We’re to have a gracious attitude toward those newer to the faith
 - AND with those we disagree with over non-sinful issues.
 - (vv.1-4) diets / food
 - (vv.5-9) days / worship

Consider Two Reasons for Weak Faith:

- 1) Being new to Christianity
- 2) Lacking good Bible teaching

(v.13)

- A call to ACTION with three “*therefore’s*”
 - 1) (v.13) Don’t judge one another
 - 2) (v.16) Don’t let your good be spoken of as evil
 - 3) (v.19) Pursue peace & build others up

AS YOU LIVE OUT...

- Your *Christian faith*...
 - You’re going to have to learn how to interact...
 - With people that hold different views.
- Inside the church it’s with non-moral issues.
- Outside the church it will be with moral issues.

(v.13) NKJV...

- The word “*judge*” & “*resolve*” are the same word – *Krino*.

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- But they’re applied differently.

Judge is applied **negatively**...

- While *resolve* is applied **positively**.
- (Matt. 7:1) NKJV = *krino*
 - (1 Cor. 2:15) NKJV = *anakrino*

THE POINT IS...

- We’re NOT to pass judgment according to OUR standard.
 - But we ARE to judge **to help others**...
 - According to God’s standard.

HOW?

BY NOT PUTTING A...

- (v.13) “*Stumbling block*” in front of other believers.

HE’S SPEAKING ABOUT *legalism*...

- That discourages others with **restrictive rules**.

ALSO...

- (v.13) “*a cause to fall*” is
 - A picture of a **reckless** believer who takes liberty to **excess**.
 - Causing a newer believer to stumble.

IDEA #2 – CONSCIENCE & CONVICTIONS

WHAT’S THE DIFFERENCE?

Conscience = Helps us with God given boundary for right or wrong.

- An internal discomfort when I do wrong.

Convictions = Speaks to personal preferences of accepted practices.

MAN’S CONSCIENCE...

- Began after falling into sin in (Gen. 3:22) “*to know good and evil*”
- Our conscience... IS God’s word written IN our hearts.

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(Rom. 2:15) ...*our conscience bears witness to our thoughts...*

WHEN OUR CONSCIENCE IS UNHEALTHY...

- It brings a mental anguish if I'm out of God's will
 - (This is WRONG).
- OR my conscience will excuse me thru peace (this is OK).

OUR CONSCIENCE... HELPS US...

- Develop convictions.
 - **And this is exactly what Paul is speaking about...**
 - (Individual convictions).

GOD WANTS THE CHURCH TO UNDERSTAND...

- How to use individual Liberty without compromising Love...
 - And hurting someone else with different *convictions*.

IDEA #3 – UNDERSTANDING LIBERTY

(v.15)

Grieved = If someone is offended because of your liberty...

- You've gone too far.
- We're to regard the **person over the practice**...
 - We maintain **love over liberty**.

LET ME GIVE A **REAL EXAMPLE**...

- That played out publicly in the History of the Church
 - **C.H. Spurgeon & Joseph Parker**
 - A preacher & a theologian

~ IN CLOSING ~

(vv.19-23)

HERE'S THE TAKEAWAY...

- When we come to gray areas & **non-moral** issues...
 - We're to be sensitive to others.