

**Romans 15:1-7** "We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. 3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." 4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. 5 Now may the God of patience and comfort grant you to be like-minded toward one another, according to Christ Jesus, 6 that you may with one mind and one mouth glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. 7 Therefore receive one another, just as Christ also received us, to the glory of God." This morning, we shall find three basic things by following the example of Jesus Christ: (1) When we follow Jesus, we have purpose and direction; (2) we have patience and comfort; and (3) we have peace and unity.

### **I. FOLLOWING JESUS' EXAMPLE, WE HAVE PURPOSE & DIRECTION**

"We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. 3 For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, "The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me." Other verses with this emphasis: **Gal.6:2** "Bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ." **1 Cor.9:19** "For though I am free from all men, I have made myself a servant to all, that I might win the more".

**1 Corinthians 10:23-24** "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." **Phil.2:4-8a** "Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others. 5 Let this mind be in you which was also in Christ Jesus, 6 who, being in the form of God, did not consider it robbery to be equal with God, 7 but made Himself of no reputation, taking the form of a bondservant, and coming in the likeness of men. 8 And being found in appearance as a man, He humbled Himself and became obedient." (**Note Phil.2:20-21**): 21 "For all seek their own, not..."

**A. Remember definition of weak and strong in the context of **Romans 14:2**** "For one believes he may eat all things, but he who is weak eats only vegetables." {and} **14:14** "I know and am convinced by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself; but to him who considers anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean."

**B. Look at the definition of the Greek word translated, "scruples" = Asthenema = "of error arising from weakness of mind"** and it is translated as "infirmities" in KJV.

**C. The point is....**Even though we have great liberties in Christ, we should not take those liberties if it is going to cause a weaker brother to stumble (**14:21**).

**D. The principle is that, as Christians, our purpose in life toward others "ought" to be the same as our Heavenly Father's purpose for them:** 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. "Edification" = Oikodome = "the act of building up something." We are God's workmanship in Christ. Our Heavenly Father's purpose for us is to "conform us to the image of His Son" (**Rom. 8:29**). The moment we are saved, God begins the process of building within us the character qualities of His Son. Thus, everything we do in relationship to other Christians, should be in done in light of this goal of edification.

**E. Thus our purpose in life is the selfless goal of ministering to others . 2 Let each of us please his neighbor for his good**

(1) This kind of selfless behavior doesn't come natural – its supernatural

(2) This kind of behavior comes at a cost: You will feel like a doormat at times – used and misused: 3 "For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, 'The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.'" (**Psalm 69:9**): this Psalm is quoted directly 7 times in the New Testament including verse 21: "They gave me gall for my food, and for my thirst they gave me vinegar to eat." Note **Psalm 69:4** "Those who hate me without a cause are more than the hairs of my head." **Note verses 69:8,9,11,12**

(3) Remember the judgment of the sheep and the goats in **Matt.25:32-45** We demonstrate our love to Jesus by caring and ministering to the hungry, naked, lonely, imprisoned, thirsty....When we give to them, we are giving to Jesus.

### **II. THROUGH JESUS' EXAMPLE, WE HAVE PATIENCE AND COMFORT**

4 For whatever things were written before were written for our learning, that we through the patience and comfort of the Scriptures might have hope. Jesus frequently quoted Old Testament scriptures speaking of Noah, Lot's wife, the sign of Jonah etc. I've found much patience (steadfastness and endurance) and comfort in O.T. scriptures.

Scriptures (1) Enlighten us, (2) Encourage us and (3) Comfort us, thus increasing our hope. **A. Psalm 13**

**B. Exodus 15:26 C Habakkuk 3:17-19 D. Haggai 1:6,9 E. Psalm 56:8-10 F. Psalm 19**