

## THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS

### ROMANS 12:1-15:13, THE PRACTICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

#### INTRODUCTION

##### A. Outline of Romans

1. Introduction (1:1-17)
2. The need for God's righteousness (1:18-3:20)
3. Justification: the position of righteousness from God (3:21-5:21)
4. Sanctification: from position to practice (6:1-8:39)
5. Vindication of God's Righteousness (9:1-11:36)
6. The practice of righteousness -living what one believes (12:1-15:13)
  - a. Devotion to God and humility toward others (12:1-8)
  - b. Exhibiting love to everyone in every situation (12:9-21)
  - c. Concerning Christian obligations (13:1-14)
  - d. Concerning Christian liberty (14:1-15:13)
    - 1) Principles of Christian liberty (14:1-23)
    - 2) Practices of Christian liberty (15:1-13)

##### B. Comments on Romans 15:1-13

1. Paul concludes this section in Romans 15 with another principle of Christian liberty which is to not please oneself but follow the example of Christ by serving others.
2. Douglas Moo, *Paul gives no indication that he intends to shift his focus from the specific problem of disunity in the Roman church. But the introduction of new vocabulary and new arguments suggests that 15:1 marks a new stage in the discussion*
3. Grant Osborne, *The issue, as we have seen throughout chapter 14, is the Roman Christians' ability to accept the new covenant reality in which all foods are clean and there is no longer an obligation to observe the Jewish holy days (14:2, 5, 14)...However, the greatest problem was not the deficient faith of these Jewish Christians but the overzealous reaction of the strong Gentile believers, who castigated their deficiencies and forced their freedom on many of the weak Christians, destroying their walk with Christ in the process.*

### ROMANS 15:1-13, PRACTICES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

##### A. Christians are to please one another (1-3)

1. The responsibility of the strong to the weak (1-2), ***We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.***
  - a. Identifying the *strong* and the *weak*, Douglas Moo, *...these Christians are "strong" or "capable" ... with respect to the faith to believe that certain practices are legitimate for believers. Conversely, then, those whom Paul here designates as the (weak) are believers who are "incapable" of realizing that their faith in Christ has freed them from certain ritual observances.*
  - b. Strong Christians are to lovingly tolerate those who are weak.
    - 1) Note the Revised English Bible translation, *Those of us who are strong must accept as our own burden the tender scruples of the weak.*
    - 2) Key words
      - a) *obligation*
        - 1] It means *must*, a moral obligation.
        - 2] Based on God's obligation to us through Christ, we are obligated to serve the weaker brother.
      - b) *bear with*
        - 1] It means *to bear patiently, put up with.*
        - 2] The focus is not on the individual but on the weaknesses.
        - 3] Galatians 6:2, *Bear one another's burdens, and so fulfill the law of Christ.*
        - 4] Grant Osborne, *At the least he is exhorting them here not to dominate the weak but to shoulder their burdens. This means more than just tolerance for their views; the strong should attempt to understand where they are coming from and why, as well as adopt a loving approach to them on the whole. Paul wants empathy toward the weak and a sympathetic awareness of the problem.*

- c) *failings of the weak*
  - 1] It means *weaknesses*.
  - 2] As noted in Bauer, Arndt, Gingrich, Danker (BAGD), *conscientious scruples caused by weakness of faith*.
  - 3] Grant Osborne, *The “failings” are their weak faith that forces them to obey the food laws, holy days, and other regulations*.
  - 4] John Stott, *Edification is a constructive alternative to demolition. And this upbuilding of the weak will doubtless include helping to educate and so strengthen their conscience*.

- d) *the good*
  - 1] *The good* is not only for the weaker brother’s edification but for the good of the body of Christ.
  - 2] Douglas Moo, *For the spiritual profit of the “weak” believer is at the same time to the advantage of the Christian community as a whole, as its unity in praise and service is enhanced*.

3) Notes

- a) 1 Thessalonians 5:14, *And we urge you, brothers, admonish the idle, encourage the fainthearted, help the weak, be patient with them all*.
- b) Galatians 14:1, *As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions*.
- c) Paul includes himself in the *strong* group. He is adamant against doctrinal error but tolerates weakness when it comes to preferences.
- d) Thomas Constable, *The weak need knowledge, and the strong need love*.

c. It is a responsibility to not please oneself but others for the good.

- 1) Philippians 2:4, *Let each of you look not only to his own interests, but also to the interests of others*.
- 2) 1 Corinthians 10:24, *Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor*.
- 3) John Witmer, *...a Christian should not be self-centered, but should be concerned about the spiritual welfare of others. Pleasing others, however, is not the end in itself, but is for their good, to build them up...*
- 4) C. E. B. Cranfield, *What Paul is forbidding in particular is that strong Christians should please themselves by insisting on exercising outwardly and to the full that inner freedom which they have been given, when to do so would be to hurt a weak brother’s faith*.
- 5) Douglas Moo, *This does not necessarily mean that the “strong” are to adopt the scruples of the “weak.” But what it does mean is that they are sympathetically to “enter into” their attitudes, refrain from criticizing and judging them, and do what love would require toward them. Love demands that the “strong” go beyond the distance implied in mere toleration; they are to treat the “weak” as brothers and sisters*.

2. Our example is Jesus Christ (3), ***For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”***

a. Jesus is our example of serving others instead of oneself.

- 1) Mark 10:45, *For even the Son of Man came not to be served but to serve, and to give his life as a ransom for many*.
- 2) 2 Corinthians 8:9, *For you know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that though he was rich, yet for your sake he became poor, so that you by his poverty might become rich*.
- 3) Chrysostom (4<sup>th</sup> C. theologian and church leader), *He had power not to have been reproached, power not to have suffered what He did suffer, had He been minded to look to His own things*.

b. His focus came from His love for the Father and for us.

- 1) Paul cites Psalm 69:9, *For zeal for your house has consumed me, and the reproaches of those who reproach you have fallen on me*.
- 2) John 4:34, *Jesus said to them, “My food is to do the will of him who sent me and to accomplish his work*.
- 3) Matthew 26:39, *... “My Father, if it be possible, let this cup pass from me; nevertheless, not as I will, but as you will.”*
- 4) The last section of verse 3 may be paraphrased, *The sins of those who sinned against God the Father fell upon God the Son*.
- 5) Warren Wiersbe, *Does a strong Christian think he is making a great sacrifice by giving up some food or drink? Then let him measure his sacrifice by the sacrifice of Christ. No sacrifice we could ever make could match Calvary*.

- B. Christians are to be hopeful (4-7)
1. Through instruction by the Scriptures (4), *For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.*
    - a. Old Testament Scripture was written for our instruction.
      - 1) *For* looks back to Paul's use of Old Testament Scripture in verse 3.
      - 2) It is an affirmation of Paul's use of the Old Testament to teach truth concerning Christ.
      - 3) 2 Timothy 3:16, *All Scripture is breathed out by God and profitable for teaching, for reproof, for correction, and for training in righteousness,*
      - 4) C. E. B. Cranfield, *All Scripture has its relevance and applicability to us—though of course it must be applied intelligently.*
      - 5) William Hendriksen, *As often, so also here, that word "instruction" indicates far more than impartation of intellectual knowledge. The emphasis, in fact, is on practical knowledge, knowledge that can be, and should be, applied to living the life of a Christian*
    - b. The purposes of biblical instruction.
      - 1) It encourages motivation to endure in the faith.
        - a) *Endurance* is steadfastness in the face of adversities.
        - b) Psalm 119:50, *This is my comfort in my affliction, that your promise gives me life.*
        - c) 1 Peter 1:13, *Therefore, preparing your minds for action, and being sober-minded, set your hope fully on the grace that will be brought to you at the revelation of Jesus Christ.*
        - d) John Stott, *Not only is it able to make us 'wise for salvation through faith in Christ Jesus', but it can bring us encouragement with a view to endurance, so that we might have hope, looking beyond time to eternity, beyond present sufferings to future glory.*
        - e) Grant Osborne, *In the many occasions of trouble and sorrow in this life, the word of God provides needed comfort and consolation as it reminds us that God is still in control and evil is doomed.*
      - 2) It gives hope for Christians as God's faithfulness to others is demonstrated.
        - a) Romans 5:3-5, *Not only that, but we rejoice in our sufferings, knowing that suffering produces endurance, and endurance produces character, and character produces hope, and hope does not put us to shame, because God's love has been poured into our hearts through the Holy Spirit who has been given to us.*
        - b) 1 Peter 3:15, *but in your hearts honor Christ the Lord as holy, always being prepared to make a defense to anyone who asks you for a reason for the hope that is in you; yet do it with gentleness and respect,*
        - c) John Witmer, *As Christians learn from the past (what is written in the OT about others who did not please themselves) they are motivated to endure and be comforted in the present, looking ahead in hope (confidence) to the future.*
        - d) Warren Wiersbe, *We must confess that we sometimes get impatient with younger Christians, just as parents become impatient with their children. But the Word of God can give us the "patience and encouragement" that we need.*
  2. Through unity in the body of Christ (5-7)
    - a. It demands harmonious living empowered by God through prayer (5), *May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,*
      - 1) Endurance and encouragement are gifts from God through the Scriptures.
        - a) Paul is emphasizing his statement in the previous verse which focused on hope.
        - b) He ties the work of Scripture to the important role of prayer.
          - 1] Paul is making a *prayer-wish* in this verse.
          - 2] Douglas Moo, *By sharing the contents of his prayer with the Romans, Paul uses it as an indirect means of exhortation.*
        - c) God is the source of endurance and encouragement for Christians.
      - 2) These gifts are for the purpose of promoting unity in the church.
        - a) In verse 5, Paul's focus is on harmony or unity in the church.
        - b) Grant Osborne, *The Roman Christians will never move on from the divisions that are so endangering the church until they focus on their common need for these things and are able to rise above their differences.*

- c) Such a purpose is in accord with the will and example of Christ Jesus Who is Head of the church.
- 1] Ephesians 5:23, *For the husband is the head of the wife even as Christ is the head of the church, his body, and is himself its Savior.*
  - 2] John 17:21, *that they may all be one, just as you, Father, are in me, and I in you, that they also may be in us, so that the world may believe that you have sent me.*
  - 3] Douglas Moo, *...we must not think that Paul prays that the two groups may come to the same opinion on these issues. He is, rather, asking God to give them, despite their differences of opinion, a common perspective and purpose...that they remain united in their devotion to the Lord Jesus and to his service in the world.*
  - 4] John Stott, *It must therefore be a prayer for their unity of mind in essentials...This seems to indicate that Christian unity is unity in Christ, that the person of Jesus Christ himself is the focus of our unity, and that therefore the more we agree with him and about him, the more we will agree with one another.*
  - 5] William Murray, *The Christian fellowship should be marked by harmony. However ornate a church may be, however perfect its worship and its music, however liberal its giving, it has lost the very first essential of a Christian fellowship if it has lost harmony.*
- b. It is evidenced in glorifying God in community (6), ***that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.***
- 1) *that together*
    - a) Other versions translate this phrase, *with one accord* (NASB), *with one mind* (NIV, NKJV).
    - b) John Witmer, *The ultimate purpose of this unity was that with one heart and mouth (a unity of inward feeling and outward expression) they would glorify (pres. tense, "keep on glorifying") the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ...*
  - 2) True unity in the church is manifested when every member is glorifying God together..
    - a) Thomas Constable, *United vocal praise of God in the assembly would be an evidence of unity among the strong and the weak.*
    - b) Douglas Moo, *Divisions in the church over nonessentials diverts precious time and energy from its basic mission: the proclamation of the gospel and the glorifying of God.*
    - c) Grant Osborne, *The true purpose of both the inner and the outer aspects of church life is not to expose our differences but rather to "glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ." The goal is not theological triumph but united witness.*
  - 3) *the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.*
    - a) Note John Calvin concerning John 20:17, *Now Christ calls Him his God, inasmuch as by taking the form of a servant, He humbled Himself. This is therefore proper to His human nature, but it is applied to His whole person in respect of His unity, because the same one is both God and man.'*
    - b) The phrase may be noted elsewhere in Paul's writings, including Colossians 1:3, *We always thank God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ, when we pray for you,*
    - c) Grant Osborne, *The idea of the Father being "the God of Jesus" makes sense as a reference to Jesus' incarnate state of being and helps us understand the offices of the Father and Son within the Trinity.*
- c. It requires accepting one another as Christ accepted us (7), ***Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.***
- 1) *Therefore*
    - a) This can be either the summary verse for Romans 15:1-6 or the introductory verse to the conclusion of Romans 14:1-15:3.
    - b) My outline is following the English Standard Version which places it as the summary verse for Romans 15:1-6.
  - 2) *welcome*
    - a) It means *to receive or accept in one's group.*
    - b) The word is used twice in Romans 15:7 with the second usage giving added importance to the first.
    - c) The first welcome is horizontal, person to person and the second is horizontal, deity to humanity.

- 3) Christians are to welcome each other as Christ welcomes every Christian.
  - a) Again, we are reminded to follow Christ's example.
  - b) If God the Son can welcome me, a sinner, by grace, so must we accept others accepted by Him by grace.
  - c) It follows in context that the strong and weak are to welcome one another.
  - d) Frederic Godet, *Mutual love ought to reign supremely in a church wholly composed of the Lord's well-beloved.*
  - e) William Hendriksen, *For Christ to be able to accept sinners meant nothing less than leaving the glories of heaven, entering into the miseries of earth, and undergoing a death so agonizing that words are lacking to describe it. For saved sinners to accept one another implies no such sacrifice.*
- 4) Such behavior glorifies God.
  - a) There is no place for infighting within the family of God.
  - b) *For the glory of God should be tied to welcome one another.* The emphasis is on proper behavior by Christians glorifies God.
  - c) John Witmer, *Certainly Christians can receive others who differ with them on nonessential matters. Jesus Christ received them so that they can bring praise to God (lit., "unto glory of God"), which is the purpose of Christian unity (15:6).*
  - d) Warren Wiersbe, *Disunity and disagreement do not glorify God; they rob Him of glory. Abraham's words to Lot are applicable to today: "Let there be no strife, I pray thee, between me and thee ... for we be brethren" (Gen. 13:8). The neighbors were watching!*
3. The marks of Christian fellowship in Romans 15:1-7 as noted by William Barclay.
  - a. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by the consideration of its members for each other.*
  - b. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by the study of Scripture...*
  - c. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by fortitude.*
  - d. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by hope.*
  - e. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by harmony.*
  - f. *The Christian fellowship should be marked by praise.*
  - g. *...the Christian fellowship takes its example, its inspiration and its dynamic from Jesus Christ.*
- C. Christians are to accept one another (8-13)
  1. Introductory note, John Stott, *With verse 8 Paul slips almost imperceptibly from the unity of the weak and the strong through Christ to the unity of Jews and Gentiles through the same Christ.*
  2. Accepting others is based on the work of Christ which provides acceptance with God the Father (8-12)
    - a. Jesus confirms God's promises given to the patriarchs (8), ***For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs,***
      - 1) Christ became a servant to the Jews.
        - a) Matthew 15:24, *He answered, "I was sent only to the lost sheep of the house of Israel."*
        - b) Acts 3:26, *God, having raised up his servant, sent him to you first, to bless you by turning every one of you from your wickedness.*
        - c) C. E. B. Cranfield calls this statement, *a solemn doctrinal declaration.*
        - d) Paul is emphasizing what he will declare in verse 8-9a and supports with Bible citations in 9b-12.
        - e) Warren Wiersbe, *In the Old Testament period, God chose Israel to be a minister to the Gentiles; but instead, Israel copied the idolatrous ways of the Gentiles and had to be chastened. In the New Testament period, God chose Jewish believers to carry the Good News to the Gentiles, and they obeyed Him.*
      - 2) Christ's servanthood demonstrates God's truthfulness.
        - a) *Truthfulness* means dependable, upright.
        - b) What Christ did in the flesh validated what God declared with a promise.
        - c) Grant Osborne, *The first purpose of God's plan is "so that the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed." This means more than proving their reliability or truthful character but contains also the idea of Christ fulfilling the promises in himself. Both the certainty of the promises and their fulfillment in Christ are intended.*

- 3) Christ confirmed the promises made to the Jewish patriarchs.
  - a) Romans 9:4-5, *They are Israelites, and to them belong the adoption, the glory, the covenants, the giving of the law, the worship, and the promises. To them belong the patriarchs, and from their race, according to the flesh, is the Christ, who is God over all, blessed forever. Amen.*
  - b) Galatians 3:16, *Now the promises were made to Abraham and to his offspring. It does not say, "And to offsprings," referring to many, but referring to one, "And to your offspring," who is Christ.*
  - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *He is the servant of the Jewish people, inasmuch as, born a Jew, of the seed of David according to the flesh, living almost all His life within the confines of Palestine, limiting His ministry of teaching and healing—apparently with the deliberate intention of obeying God's will (cf. Mt 15:24)—almost exclusively to Jews, He both was in His earthly life and His atoning death, and also still is, as the exalted Lord, the Messiah of Israel.*
  
- b. Jesus reveals God's mercy to the Gentiles (9a-b), **and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.**
  - 1) Grant Osborne, ... *"This is the second part of 1:16, "first to the Jew, then to the Gentile."*
  - 2) Gentiles have always been included in God's salvific plans.
    - a) Genesis 12:13, *I will bless those who bless you, and him who dishonors you I will curse, and in you all the families of the earth shall be blessed.*
    - b) Genesis 26:4, *I will multiply your offspring as the stars of heaven and will give to your offspring all these lands. And in your offspring all the nations of the earth shall be blessed,*
    - c) Romans 3:29, *Or is God the God of Jews only? Is he not the God of Gentiles also? Yes, of Gentiles also,*
  - 4) The usage of Scriptures which reveal the place of God's plan for Gentiles (9b), **As it is written**
    - a) Paul cites from every section of the Old Testament to validate his statement concerning the Gentiles.
    - b) They are from *the writings* (9c, 11), *the law* (10), and *the prophets* (12).
    - c) Grant Osborne, *Paul now quotes four Old Testament passages, all of which focus on the place of the Gentiles in God's plan and center on the unity of Jew and Gentile in the worship of God. Paul's goal is to help the Romans understand that the unity of the two groups was always essential to God's covenant purpose.*
  
- c. Old Testament passages selected by Paul (9c-12)
  - 1) From *the writings* (9c), **Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to your name."**
    - a) Psalm 18:49, *For this I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations, and sing to your name.*
    - b) 2 Samuel 22:50, *For this I will praise you, O LORD, among the nations, and sing praises to your name.*
    - c) The context of these verses is David's thanksgiving to God for victory among the Gentiles.
      - 1] Douglas Moo, *...Paul may cite the verse as a claim of the risen Christ...It would fit Paul's purposes perfectly if he were attributing to Christ this praise of God for the subduing of the Gentiles under his messianic rule.*
      - 2] Grant Osborne, *Paul is saying that the Jewish Christians in Rome are to follow David's model and praise God along with the Gentiles.*
  - 2) From *the law* (10), **And again it is said, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people."**
    - a) Deuteronomy 32:43, *"Rejoice with him, O heavens; bow down to him, all gods, for he avenges the blood of his children and takes vengeance on his adversaries. He repays those who hate him and cleanses his people's land."*
    - b) The Gentiles rejoice with the Jews.
    - c) John Stott, *In the second quotation the nations are definitely participants. Moses is represented as summoning them to rejoice in company with God's people.*
    - d) Douglas Moo, *So what the OT text calls on the Gentiles to do, they now, through God's mercy to them in the gospel, are able to do—join Israel in praise of God.*
  - 3) From *the writings* (11), **And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him."**
    - a) Psalm 117:1, *Praise the LORD, all nations! Extol him, all peoples!*
    - b) The Gentiles are commanded to praise the Lord along with all people.
    - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...it stresses the fact that no people is to be excluded from this common praise of God.*
    - d) Grant Osborne, *...this is universal worship with no one left out.*

- 4) From *the prophets* (12), ***And again Isaiah says, “The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”***
  - a) Isaiah 11:10, *In that day the root of Jesse, who shall stand as a signal for the peoples—of him shall the nations inquire, and his resting place shall be glorious.*
  - b) Gentiles and Jews will be ruled by the Messiah.
  - c) Douglas Moo, *...the Gentiles’ participation in the praise of God (vv. 9b–11) comes as a result of the work of “the root of Jesse,” a messianic designation.*
  - d) Grant Osborne, *This culminates the emphasis on God’s plan of salvation in verses 9–12, showing it was prophetically predicted as a messianic act.*
  
3. Acceptance is empowered by the Holy Spirit (13), ***May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.***
  - a. Introductory notes
    - 1) Verse 13 is the conclusion of Romans 12:1-15:3, on practical righteousness, living what you believe.
    - 2) Words like hope, joy, peace, and power in this verse are key words throughout the section.
    - 3) Paul is offering these words as a prayer for the Romans Christians (and us) at the conclusion of this section.
  
  - b. This is a chronological perspective of the Christian’s life.
    - 1) Hope focuses on the future.
      - a) 1 Corinthians 15:19, *If in Christ we have hope in this life only, we are of all people most to be pitied.*
      - b) Thomas Constable, *Throughout this epistle Paul kept referring to the fact that God had not finished His saving work in his readers’ lives. They were still under construction as Christians...In closing his treatise on God’s righteousness the apostle focused his readers’ attention on the rest of their sanctification and final glorification.*
      - c) John Witmer, *The description of God as the God of hope relates to hope mentioned in the preceding verses and to the promises of God recorded in the Scripture which give hope (v. 4).*
      - d) William Hendriksen, *The phrase “the God of hope” means: the God who is the Source of hope and imparts it to those who trust him.*
  
    - 2) Joy focuses on the past and present.
      - a) 3 John 4, *I have no greater joy than to hear that my children are walking in the truth.*
      - b) A joyful Christian is one who takes time to smell the roses, one who remembers spiritual sign-posts. Joy is a result of knowing God is with us in space and time.
      - c) John Witmer, *Joy relates to the delight of anticipation in seeing one’s hopes fulfilled.*
  
    - 3) Peace focuses on the present and future.
      - a) Romans 5:1, *Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ.*
      - b) Philippians 4:7, *And the peace of God, which surpasses all understanding, will guard your hearts and your minds in Christ Jesus.*
      - c) A person at peace is one whose trust for today and every tomorrow is in our omnipotent and faithful God.
      - d) John Witmer, *Peace results from the assurance that God will fulfill those hopes (cf. 5:1; Phil. 4:7).*
  
    - 4) Hope, joy and peace are connected by the power of the Holy Spirit.
      - a) Acts 1:8, *But you will receive power when the Holy Spirit has come upon you, and you will be my witnesses in Jerusalem and in all Judea and Samaria, and to the end of the earth.*
      - b) Ephesians 3:20, *Now to him who is able to do far more abundantly than all that we ask or think, according to the power at work within us,*
      - c) A Christian is empowered by the indwelling Holy Spirit Who has been gifted to us by our Lord and Savior, Jesus Christ.
      - d) The practice of righteousness is not for the strong but for the weak who submit to the leading of the Holy Spirit.
      - e) John Witmer, *The achievement of all God’s purposes for the spiritual welfare of His children comes from the power given by the Spirit of God. What a fitting closing reminder to the apostle’s discussion of Christian living.*

## **CONCLUSION**

- Accepting others in church or society is a matter of personal sanctification. Accepting others is not based on my ability to change others but on the Holy Spirit's ability to change me, conforming me to the image of Christ.
- Grant Osborne, *Both Jew and Gentile are included in God's plan of salvation and are recipients of Christ's redemptive work. The two are one in God and Christ and must become one in heart and mind in the church (15:6). It is in oneness that the church will grow and begin to reflect the unity of the Godhead.*