

Biblical Missiology: What to Do When Christians Disagree

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Text: Romans 14-15

Date: Sunday, November 22, 2009

Series: Biblical Missiology

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The Potential of Division

- The Corinthians (1:10-13; 6:1-8)
- The Galatians (5:15)
- The Ephesians (4:1-3)
- The Colossians (2:1-2)
- The Philippians (4:1-3)

“What, pray tell, does the Bible say?”

- Recent Past
 - Instruments in church
 - Card games
 - Wire rimmed glasses
 - Jeans
 - Radio
 - Drama
 - Mixed congregational singing
 - Singing other lyrics besides the Scriptural Psalms in church
- Biblical Times
 - Eating of blood
 - Eating of meat
 - Observance of holy days
- Modern Times
 - Going to the theater
 - Choice of entertainment
 - Clothing on women (pants)
 - Make-up
 - Music
 - Bible versions
 - Holidays
 - Alcoholic beverages

“For the last 150 years the overwhelming majority of Bible-believing Christians have been firmly committed to the practice of total abstinence from alcohol. Only a relatively small proportion of evangelicals have demurred, reserving the right to drink in moderation.”

- Peter Masters, *Should Christians Drink? The Case for Total Abstinence*

It's too easy to feel too strongly about 'doubtful things'

The positive and negative reason

- Positively, we want to glorify God with our lives (Romans 14:6).
- Negatively, we are suspicious of the flesh in our brothers because of what we know about ourselves!

It is unnatural to the natural mind to accept the individuality of Christian relationship.

- In this way we are different than the religions of the world. We do not have an "institutionalized system of religious attitudes, beliefs, and practice." (Websters)
- We understand the two keys of our faith
 - Individuality
 - Relationship
- The individuality of Christian relationship has been called many things:
 - the 'freedom principle'
 - 'Christian liberty'
 - 'soul liberty'
- Baptists have been historically the most consistent proponents of 'soul liberty'

"Most denominations exert a rather significant system of control over their members. It should be understood that certain controls are necessary for people to live harmoniously together, but for Baptists these controls are tied in with the priesthood of the believer. Baptists have consistently taught that every believer has direct access to God, the only mediator being Jesus Christ, the Great High Priest."

- Virgil Bopp, *Confidently Committed*

It is unnatural to the natural mind to accept the mutuality of Christian responsibility (Romans 14:15).

- Christians will answer to God for how they affect the lives of other Christians. This will be included in our individual judgment (14:12).
- "The whole chapter is concerned with the mutual relations of Christians, rather than their relations to God" (Vincent).

Christians disagree as to the juxtaposing of the individuality of Christian relationship with the mutuality of Christian responsibility.

THE SOLUTION!

- Receive (14:1)
- Receive (15:7)