

Hopewell ARP Midweek Sermon
Wednesday, May 15, 2024

Romans 15:1–7

¹ 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.

Sharing Christ’s Pleasure in Welcoming One Another

Main idea: Christians must delight most of all in God and His glory, leading them to prefer their brothers to themselves, just as Christ did.

Introduction: yes, we enjoy liberty, sometimes, by *not* exercising it. But one liberty we always ought to exercise is the liberty of enjoying the Lord and loving our brother.

1. **Carry Others’ Inabilities**, v1a.
 1. The temptation of the strong was to despise, but instead we must love and value.
 2. This love and value are not merely in word or tongue, but in deed and in truth: carry their inabilities.
2. **Pursue the Good Pleasure of Neighbor (and Brother!)**, v1b–2
 1. Don’t pursue the pleasure of self-indulgence, v1b. Watch against the “God wants me to be happy” logic. He desires believers to be happy in Him, so follow the “God wants me to be holy” logic. And pursue the same, wisely/gently/sacrificially, for your brother.
 2. Find pleasure in pursuing others’ having true/good pleasure, v2. Is this not a truer and better pleasure than eating and drinking?
3. **Christ as Example**, v3 (cf. Ps 69:9)
 1. Preferring others to ourselves for the joy set before us. Phil 2:5–8, Heb 12:2.
 2. Suffering anything for God’s glory. Ps 69:9
4. **Christ as Ability**, v4–7
 1. What He Uses: the Scriptures of Patience and Comfort, v4

2. Who He Is: the God of Patience and Comfort, v5a
3. What He does: give like-mindedness
 1. Like-mindedness to one another, v5b
 2. Like-mindedness to Christ, v5c
 1. In glorifying God as His Father and our Father, v6
 2. In welcoming one another, for the sake of that glory, v7

Conclusion: Whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God! Including *not* eating and *not* drinking, as love for God and brother may require.

(The following is a machine-generated transcription. Please be aware of—and patient with—transcribing errors. If there is something confusing or obviously erroneous, you are invited to listen to the audio recording via hopewellarp.org)

Romans 15 verses 1-7. These are God's words. We then who are strong want to bear with the Scruples of the week? And not to please ourselves. Let each of us, please his neighbor for his good.

Leading to edification. For even Christ, did not please himself but As it is written. The reproaches of those who approached you fell on me. For whatever things were written before were written for our learning. That we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures. Might have hope. Now may the god of patience and comfort.

Grant you to be like-minded toward one another. According to Christ, Jesus. That you may with one mind and one mouth. Glorify the God and father of our Lord, Jesus Christ. Therefore receive one another. Just as Christ also received us. To the glory of God. Amen. A This reading of God's inspired.

And they're interpret. Well, one of the things that we Heard about last. A week. The second half for the latter, two thirds or so. Of chapter 14. Is that we employ our Liberty not by taking every opportunity to do the things that we are free to do. Uh which of course would be a slavery.

If you always did those things you wouldn't really be free would you? Because you wouldn't be free to not do. Those things and sometimes we employ our Liberty and sometimes we enjoy our Liberty by not. Exercising it. And this is because there is something that we enjoy even more than our Liberty to do things specifically.

In this case, things that Uh, had been forbidden in the ceremonial law. Uh, and that which we enjoy, most of all, is God himself. And his glory. And our own growing up in the enjoyment of his glory. Part of which is to enjoy our brothers also growing up in the enjoyment.

Of his glory. For this has been God's pleasure to adopt for himself children. That he is conforming to the image of his son and this has been Christ's pleasure. To secure those children. And to conform them to himself by his Spirit unto the glory of the father, And so the

more we're conformed to the father and in particular in our Humanity to the The more it is our pleasure.

That our brother. Would not merely get to eat certain things and drink certain things. But that he would be conformed to Christ. That he would come to have. The pleasure of God, the pleasure. Of the Lord Jesus. So when there is this difficulty, when there are the week who are unable to do things, And that's what we have in verse 1.

This is especially those who are strong, who have more ability. They are able to do or to not do. And they are to carry the load as it. Although none of us really and truly carries the load, but we take up Uh, the greater part of the duty. That has been assigned to us in God's Providence.

And that duty is especially to pursue. The pleasure. Of our neighbor will hear in verse 2. Having Christ as our example. As we see in verse 3, and also Christ, as our ability. Because he is not just an example that we are then to copy as if we do so in our own strength.

But we have this wonderful shared life with Jesus Christ. Talking about. Uh, what is abnormal and difficult for us to wrap our heads around? That what has been given to us by faith? Is a shared life. With Jesus Christ. And we had that wonderful triplet in the middle of chapter eight.

That we would be joint inheritors with him. Although, for a while, we will be joint sufferers of that, which is light and momentary by comparison. And then we will be jointly glorified. Together with him with that, which is eternal, and wit and weighty. By comparison. Well. In this case and the seven verses before us this evening, we have a joint pleasure.

And this ought to be something that catches your attention to your children. Uh, often I have observed since the Lord has given us Um, a tiny little Society of children in our own house. I've observed where one child will be enjoying something and especially if it's one of the older children.

That is enjoying something. It is a magnet to the others. They want to come. See what is this thing? That is of such quality. That older brother or older sister is enjoying it Desiring that they would enjoy it too. Well, here is your elder brother. The Lord Jesus. Who is from all eternity, God, the son.

And we're hearing about something. That is. So enjoyable, so rightly pleasurable that the Lord Jesus finds pleasure in it. And shall we not now by his word flock to him? And see what is it? That is such a good thing that Jesus enjoys it. And it is the welcoming and building up.

Of those who are being joined to him. Which of course we are unable to do in ourselves but he who is our example. There's also our ability. So those are the four. Ways that we'll be considering the text. Themes before us or headings before us this evening. First carrying others, inabilities Second pursuing the good pleasure.

Of our neighbor and especially therefore our brother. Third Christ, as our example. Of this. And Christ, as our ability. For. First, then we then who are strong. Or to bear with. And New King, James has given us the translation Scruples and it's really inabilities. It's a word that means ability or power with a negating particle on the front of it.

And that's what a scruple is. I hope that your good Scruples. That the scriptures continue to teach us our inabilities that we're God's law forbid, something you are unable to do it. Unable to Trust in or Delight in anything other than him. Unable to give worship to any other than him, unable to do worship any other way than how he has set unable to.

Bear his name lightly whether that means in your life or on your lips. Or even tolerating. Yet in others unable to profane his Sabbath and and so forth. That others would find you scrupulous. That others? Um, perhaps who would very much like to disobey the law of God would find it off-putting to be around someone with so many inabilities as they perceive it.

But then there are the weak. Who have their ideas about what the Bible is forbidding them to do, but their ideas that belonged to the priesthood of Aaron. That belonged to the administration of Moses, the servant in the house rather than the son who is over the house. And they are for them.

Genuine inabilities, we remember how we closed last week, in the end of chapter 14. Whatever is not of faith is sin. And so, pressuring a brother into something that he is not convinced of from the Bible is to press upon him that which he is unable to do. Without sinning against the Lord Jesus.

And so here he is with an inability. What what can be done? Well, the strong should carry the load. They are able to do and to not do well, use your ability to not do. To accommodate the inability of your brother. While he's being instructed. While he's growing while he's being edified, Christ has not died for him so that he would be perpetually weak.

And so this isn't just a way of avoiding the subject. This is doing a part that's been assigned to us by the Lord Jesus, while we all do our part and especially Who have been given by the Lord Jesus to instruct, and teach and disciple and to train That is they do their part and we are built up.

Christ would be glorified in his church and God would be glorified in.

And so, The temptation of the strong was to despise the weak, but instead we must love them. And value them. And not merely in word or tongue, but indeed. And in truth Carry the load. Where they are enabled. Or as our English version, has it here. A little less literally bare with the Scruples.

So that's the first thing carry others. Inabilities But as we do, so, We are seeking to have Christ's pleasure in others. Pleasure. So he says, Carrie Uh, the inabilities of the week and not to please ourselves. Let me hear he's talking about pleasing ourselves with food pleasing ourselves with drink pleasing ourselves with those things that he's just told us a couple verses ago.

The kingdom of God does not consist in those things. It is not in bacon and and shrimp. And, The, the Earthly Pleasures that can be enjoyed with the, uh, the end of the ceremonial law. Uh, but righteousness and peace and joy. In the Holy. And so, Not to indulge ourselves or to prefer that, which is Pleasant to sense.

Or even. Pleasant. To our being exalted having Praise esteem, Etc. And he gives us the example of Christ for even Christ, did not please himself. Well, what did Christ humble himself for Christ? Humbled himself for our good. He added to himself Humanity, which is an infinite humiliation. For our good, that we would not perish on our sin.

That we would not be the Objects of the Wrath and fury of God forever. And so each of us then rather than indulging Ourselves and enjoying those things that are our right. So, as Jesus's, right? To be equal with God. It is his by Nature. And here's my right says lead.

Let each of us please, his neighbor. For his good. And so, that doesn't mean. Let each of us please his neighbor according to what his neighbor thinks is good. It's a very different thing,

isn't it? We are to do that, which will bring our neighbor. Into that, which is good into that pleasure, which is right and good.

Helping him Delight in his Lord. Helping him. In his growth, in Holiness, if he's a brother But notice the language here is not brother but neighbor. Aren't there things that you do for Unbelievers are in front of unbelievers. So as not to be a hindrance to their coming to the faith, Uh, if not there ought to be Christians should not be the.

Um, the sort of person who is going around, blosting his rights doing Uh, whatever. He feels as most enjoyable to himself in in the moment without a regard, for the effect that it is going to have Upon his neighbor. To the Greeks. He would be as a Greek and to the Jews, he would be as a Jew, even as The Apostle.

Says that he did in a passage that is very parallel to this one. Um, in First Corinthians 10. Not claiming all of our rights. Well, if we do this for a neighbor, how much more for a brother? You see the neighbor can't be edified into verse 2 until he becomes the brother.

Has to be evangelized first. The goal is edification. The goal is that those who are redeemed by Christ would be not only joined to him but built up into him. The goal is glorification. That's what we've been predestined for. To be conformed to the image of the song.

But if we would do this for a brother, if we would restrain Our exercise of all of our Liberties, Uh, neighbor. And surely we ought to do it for a brother as well. We must watch against the logic. Well, God wants me to be happy. So And then we just do whatever I want.

I've actually heard that multiple times about someone justifying a separation from a spouse and everyone that I've ever heard Using that logic for separation, ended up, using that logic for divorce. Well, God wouldn't want me. Uh, to be in a difficult or miserable situation. Someone who doesn't treat me like I want to be treated or even like he wants me to be treated.

God wants me to be happy therefore and you can use it to justify things that seem a lot more innocuous. Therefore, I'm going to take this job. That pays more so I can buy more of the things that make me happy. And yes, I have to work some Lord's days and yes, I have to do some morally compromising things and Yes, I am not going to be able to Uh, to be with my family for leading them in worship, but after all God wants me to be happy.

And God wants them to be happy too. And the implication is. What will make me? Happy is exercising all my Liberties rather than pursuing that which is for edification pursuing that which helps others have pleasure in the Lord. Well, what God desires is for believers to find their happiness in him.

So, by all means. God wants me to be. Happy is fine. Just as long as you know, that it's the same exact thing as God wants me to be holy. And God wants your brother to be holy too. And he wants you to love the Holiness of your brother.

And so we ought not to please ourselves. But we should please our neighbor. For his good. Leading to edification. That is to say, we ought to find pleasure. In pursuing others. Having true and good pleasure. We fought to find pleasure in seeing others, come to have their pleasure in God.

This is a truer and better pleasure. Than any sort of food. Or any sort of drink. Now, there's nothing wrong with having. Favorite food, or beverage for your birthday. And I suspect there are many of us in here if it's not a unanimous vote who have been offered such a thing, But wouldn't it be wonderful if the Holy Spirit blessing to you?

This part of his word. You would desire for your neighbor to come to be a believer in Jesus and you would desire for your brother and sister. And the church and especially in the church in your house to come to grow in Jesus and find their pleasure in Jesus.

Even more, you found that even more pleasant pleasant and pleasurable. Than whatever your favorite food is or whatever. Your favorite drink is. And so, we ought to pursue the good pleasure of our neighbor. And our brother. Well how can we do this? Well, praise God. We are not left to ourselves.

First of all, we have Christ as our example, which we see in verse 3, And then, Building upon this quotation from Psalm 69 with which he concludes verse 3. We remember that. We also have Christ as our ability That he has given us his word to be written for our learning.

So that we might be built up into his image. By his grace. So Christ is the example we've already. Begun to think a little bit. From Philippians chapter 2, remembering that he That we are to have in us. The same mind that is in Christ Jesus. That he did not consider equality with God.

Something to be grasped. And that means two different things. One, he didn't have to grasp it because it was his And, He didn't insist. On all of the prerogatives of his deity. But he added Humanity to himself, He added a second nature to himself that is emptied. Of. All of the display of the glory, the substance of the divine nature.

And he began in great humiliation. In this other nature. And great humiliation in his Humanity. Not only was he made helpless. Some of you. Recently added to your own house. A helpless little boy. And there's another house, which there's a helpless little boy and that little boy's siblings. Found him.

Help us. You know, the god, the Added to himself a nature, that was helpless. And he was born into a poor family. In the low condition. And even the place where he was born. Was not. His, his parents Hometown. It was the family. The family's original town. Uh, where they had to depend upon the kindnesses of others and there was something of an outsider.

So he was born in a low condition, but he then humbled himself even to the point of death. God, the Before whom The Flaming Angels, the seraphim hide their faces. Marked and spat upon and his beard pulled and exposed. Accused as if he is a troublemaker and a sinner.

Not only cruelly abused but blamed for it as if it is his own fault. And then crucified and suffering, the wrath of God across And all of this, because He wasn't pleasing himself the way verse the end of verse 1, says, not to please ourselves, but because he had a greater pleasure, Than the pleasure.

Of grasping. Equality with God. Then the pleasure of refusing to be. Uh, humbled by adding to himself Humanity. Or even to go to the Cross. Isn't that what? Hebrews 12 verse. 2 tells us that for the joy set before him. He endured the cross. For the pleasure of the glory of God.

In a redeemed and perfected people whom he was redeeming by that cross. For the joy set before him. Of. Gathering to himself or redeemed people, whom he would lead in the worship of God for unending ages. As earlier in the book of Hebrews describes, what he does. Now in in Hebrews chapter 2, and it's quoting there from Psalm 22, When it says that in the midst of the congregation, he will sing God's, praise and declare God's name to his brothers.

Do you know what? Psalm 22 is? It's that one that begins. My God my God. Why have you forsaken me? And has a half a dozen direct prophecies about the cross of Jesus Christ. But the last third of the psalm Are all about. Jesus leading a holy assembly in Praise.

And that was the joy set before him. For which he endured the crosswall. Where does that holy assembly? Come from. That Holy assembly. Is Redeemed by the Lord Jesus Christ and built up by the Lord Jesus's Grace and that Holy assembly is made up of you. If you're a believer in Jesus.

And your brothers and sisters in Christ. Who are still being built up into him. And so the same pleasure, That our elder brother and Redeemer are mediator, our King, Our Savior. The same pleasure that was so great, that he counted the shame of the cross as nothing. He scorned the shame, he despised it.

He's like, oh, that shame is so small. By comparison to the Joy. That was set before him. And now that Joy is set before you. And yes. You are to take up your cross daily, but You don't get an actual Roman cross. You get things sometimes like self-denial. In things that are actual Christian Liberties of yours.

So that you can exercise that Liberty by not pleasing yourself. But by taking the greater pleasure. And participating in the Lord's building up your brother. Building up your sister. Christ. As our example. Indeed, he was willing to suffer anything for the glory of God. And that's the point of the quotation.

The second half of first three, the approaches of those who approached you fell on me. It's uh, it's actually the second half of a verse in Psalm 69 Uh, which the first half is Zeal for your house consumed me? Do you remember when the when the gospel tells us that he fulfilled that Zeal for your house will consume me?

It was when he drove the people out of the court of the Gentiles. You remember, just last week or maybe the week before in the book of Isaiah, how God is determined to add to Israel. Other offspring from other nations and his house is going to be called a House of Prayer for all the nations.

Well, that's the text that Jesus quoted. When he drove all those people out of the court, to the Gentiles, They were there to find pleasure perhaps in money. Many of them. In fact, the money changers are specifically named but others were there to find pleasure in particular, religious exercises.

And not so much and God himself and certainly not in God, bringing his Redemption to all the nations, but that was Jesus's. The glory of God himself, and especially that Glory. In redeeming for himself from all the nations. Those who would not just be forgiven but pressed into the shape of the Lord Jesus Christ.

And so Jesus. For that sake, in his Zeal, for God's house. First, half of Psalm 69 verse 9. Is willing to suffer their approaches. Of those who approach God of those who do not esteem God, as they ought to, and he sure did, didn't he Because those who are self-satisfied those who were in love, not with the god of their religion.

But with the religion itself, They certainly did reproach the Lord, Jesus. And so they despised the father and they despised the son, which is exactly what Jesus said about them. That if they knew the father, if they loved the father, If they knew the father, they would know him.

But because they did not know or love God in truth. That's why they hated him. That's why they wanted to kill him. Jesus himself confronted with them, confronted them with that. What verse 3 here is saying, is For the glory of his father. And for the Gathering in of all those whom he had come to redeem, And for there being built up into himself unto the glory of God.

He happily endured. There were approaches that fell upon him. Christ, as our example. Well, not just our example but our ability. Because, Doesn't just say, Whatever things were written before were written, so that they might be fulfilled in Christ, but also applied to our lives, verse 4. Every once in a while, you'll run into someone who says you should really only In a passage like that.

Obviously, it's fulfilled in Jesus. You shouldn't apply it to us. You shouldn't apply, you shouldn't make a moral lesson out of everything. And they'll refer to any sort of Life application as quote, unquote. Moralizing the text. Well. Here Paul says, moralize the text in First Corinthians 10. Paul says about the Exodus generation moralize the text in First Peter chapter 2, Peter says, even about the cross itself and Jesus, as an example of how Christians should suffer moralize the text, so don't ever let anyone scrunch their face at you and say, well, you're just moralizing.

There's misuse, there's misapplication. But it's not always in this application. There are many places where he says something like this, whatever things were written before were written for our learning. So that we through the patience and comfort of the scriptures might have, So the same patience and comfort that Jesus had by, which he endured the cross.

He has caused his word to be written to ins to be inscripturated. So that in the hope that we have in him, and we had that wonderful opening section of chapter five. Hope of the glory of God and the hope of of God himself. And this hope that doesn't disappoint because the love of God has already poured out in our hearts.

And and by the spirit's work of pouring, the love of God in our hearts. We know that we are going to get to enjoy God's glory the way that we ought to, we will be what we ought. We will desire his glory, the way we ought and we will have and behold and enjoy his glory with that desire.

Having been perfected in So verse 4 4 is saying. The example that Jesus sets, according to verse 3, he is given the scriptures so that we would be conformed to that example. Verse 4. Christ is our ability. You see, the reason that the scriptures, Give patience and comfort here when he says through the patience and comfort of the scriptures, we might hope have hope is because Our Triune God and particularly God.

The son, our Lord. Jesus is the god of patience and comfort. So you see, by the way, Those words are used of the scriptures in verse 4 and then of God in verse 5 what he's saying he's saying Bible study does not produce these things in you mechanically. Bible study, produces these things in you personally or rather.

God personally, produces these things in you by Bible study. He is the god of patience and comfort. And he has designed the scriptures. So that as we are instructed by them, more and more, we would have patience and comfort by means. Of the scriptures. And so, the Of patience and comfort.

That is who Jesus is. So what does he use to make us to be like himself? So that that we will more and more have our pleasure in God and not seek to please ourselves. And if our brothers still needs to grow or our sister still needs to grow, and their conscience is troubled, not quite informed, we restrain ourselves.

Before them.

The Lord Jesus uses the scriptures because the Lord Jesus is our God. And what is he giving us then? By means of the scriptures. How does the god of patience and comfort? Give us. The patient and comfort that comes from the scriptures. What is he aiming at continuing in verse 5?

Now, may the god of patience and comfort, grant you to be like-minded toward one another. According to Christ, Jesus. That you would find. Pleasure. And they're coming to find their pleasure in him. The way that Jesus does. That we would have the mind of Christ toward one another. Just like in Philippians 2, which we spent that time in.

Have this mind in you that is in Christ. Jesus. And what will we do then? Well, as we are being made like Jesus and they are being made like Jesus, then we will with one mind and one mouth. Glorify God. But very specifically glorify him as The God and father of our Lord, Jesus Christ.

You see when Jesus added Humanity to himself, He came to know and worship God. As a human who worships God. From all eternity. He is God, the son from all eternity. He dwells in perfect fellowship, and adoration, and mutual Delight between the father, and the son and the spirit, but then he adds Humanity to himself, And in his Humanity, he glorifies God, as God.

And he comes after his resurrection. And remember what? Uh, sent the woman back to his disciples to say. Said, I am ascending to my God and your God to my father. And your father, So that we're actually United to Jesus and glorifying God. And knowing him as our father.

And that's what we do with one mind and one mouth. And so the summary of all of this, As we have this like-mindedness to one another, which is really a like-mindedness to Christ. Is not only glorifying God as our father, but therefore, since what God is pleased to do.

Is to adopt children. And to conform them to Christ so that they can be in the presence of his Holiness and in joy, his Holiness, and his glory forever. He says therefore receive one, another or welcome. One another just as Christ. Has also welcomed you and it's you. And the, the Greek text throughout the ages.

Receive one, another welcome one, another just as Christ has also welcomed you. To the glory of God. This is what we want to be like-minded to Jesus in, especially from this passage. Welcoming one another. For the sake of God's glory. So, whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God And that includes not eating and not drinking.

As love for God and love for your brother. May require.