

THE MARKS OF A STRONG CHRISTIAN ROMANS 15:1-13

Text:

Introduction:

When one speaks of liberty in Christ, it is normal to think of all the things that are at our disposal to do, because we are free in Christ.

Yet, it is important to note that Liberty does not exist to satisfy our dos and don'ts, but as a conduit for God to receive glory.

Let's consider this thought: The Marks of a Strong Christian.

1. THE ABILITY TO BEAR THE WEAKNESS OF THE WEAK (ROM. 15:1-4)

Romans 15:1-4

¹We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ²Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification. ³For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. ⁴For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

A. Paul's Exhortation (vs. 1-2)

Romans 15:1-2

¹We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ²Let every one of us please *his* neighbour for *his* good to edification.

B. Paul's Examples (vs. 3-4)

Romans 15:3-4

³For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me. ⁴For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope.

1. He points to the Scriptures

The Word of God is filled with examples of those who endured and encouraged others.

2. He points to the Savior

Jesus didn't come to gratify Himself but rather to give Himself.

2. TO STUDY THE SCRIPTURES (ROM. 15:4-5)

Romans 15:4-5

⁴For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope. ⁵Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus:

The Scripture was given for our instruction.

2 Timothy 3:15-17

¹⁵And that from a child thou hast known the holy scriptures, which are able to make thee wise unto salvation through faith which is in Christ Jesus. ¹⁶All scripture *is* given by inspiration of God, and *is* profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for correction, for instruction in righteousness: ¹⁷That the man of God may be perfect, throughly furnished unto all good works.

A. God's Word Guides Us

- Guides our walk

Psalms 119:105-106

¹⁰⁵Thy word *is* a lamp unto my feet, and a light unto my path. ¹⁰⁶I have sworn, and I will perform *it*, that I will keep thy righteous judgments.

- Guides in our weakness

Psalms 119:107

¹⁰⁷I am afflicted very much: quicken me, O LORD, according unto thy word.

- Guides in our worship

Psalms 119:108

¹⁰⁸ Accept, I beseech thee, the freewill offerings of my mouth, O LORD, and teach me thy judgments.

B. The Word of God Guards Us

- By calming our fears

Psalms 119:109-110

¹⁰⁹ My soul *is* continually in my hand: yet do I not forget thy law.
¹¹⁰ The wicked have laid a snare for me: yet I erred not from thy precepts.

C. The Word of God Gladdens Us

Psalms 119:111-112

¹¹¹ Thy testimonies have I taken as an heritage for ever: for they *are* the rejoicing of my heart. ¹¹² I have inclined mine heart to perform thy statutes alway, *even unto* the end.

3. WORK FOR HARMONY (ROMANS 15:5-6)

Romans 15:5-6

⁵ Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: ⁶ That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

In music harmony is the blending of simultaneous sounds of different pitch or quality, making chords pleasing to the ear.

The church is a body of different members of every size, shade, shape, and is to blend together in perfect harmony for the honor and glory of God.

Note these are of Harmony that should be obvious in the lives of each Christian.

A. Our Devotion – Our Love for Christ

Colossians 3:14

¹⁴ And above all these things *put on* charity, which is the bond of perfectness.

The one beat of the church's heart should be the Lord Jesus Christ. The heart of the church is Christ.

To love God is to delight in God and demonstrated by two things – obedience to His commands and love for the Body of Christ – the church.

Romans 15:5-6

⁵ Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: ⁶ That ye may with one mind *and* one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

B. Our Direction – Our Commitment to Christ

Philippians 1:27

²⁷ Only let your conversation be as it becometh the gospel of Christ: that whether I come and see you, or else be absent, I may hear of your affairs, that ye stand fast in one spirit, with one mind striving together for the faith of the gospel;

A recent survey was taken of 1000 church attendees and one of the questions asked was, “Why does the church exist?”

89% said that the churches purpose was “to take care of MY family’s and MY spiritual needs.” Only eleven percent said that the purpose of the church was “worship the Lord and to point men and women to Christ.”

God made each of us different and he made us different for a reason. Just as an orchestra is enhanced by various instruments, so the church honors the Lord when it works together as God intended.

Romans 12:4-9

⁴For as we have many members in one body, and all members have not the same office: ⁵So we, *being* many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another. ⁶Having then gifts differing according to the grace that is given to us, whether prophecy, *let us prophesy* according to the proportion of faith; ⁷Or ministry, *let us wait on our* ministering: or he that teacheth, on teaching; ⁸Or he that exhorteth, on exhortation: he that giveth, *let him do it* with simplicity; he that ruleth, with diligence; he that sheweth mercy, with cheerfulness. ⁹*Let* love be without dissimulation. Abhor that which is evil; cleave to that which is good.

C. Our Desires – Our Prayer to Christ

Acts 4:23-31

²³And being let go, they went to their own company, and reported all that the chief priests and elders had said unto them. ²⁴

And when they heard that, they lifted up their voice to God with one accord, and said, Lord, thou *art* God, which hast made heaven, and earth, and the sea, and all that in them is: ²⁵ Who by the mouth of thy servant David hast said, Why did the heathen rage, and the people imagine vain things? ²⁶ The kings of the earth stood up, and the rulers were gathered together against the Lord, and against his Christ. ²⁷ For of a truth against thy holy child Jesus, whom thou hast anointed, both Herod, and Pontius Pilate, with the Gentiles, and the people of Israel, were gathered together, ²⁸ For to do whatsoever thy hand and thy counsel determined before to be done. ²⁹ And now, Lord, behold their threatenings: and grant unto thy servants, that with all boldness they may speak thy word, ³⁰ By stretching forth thine hand to heal; and that signs and wonders may be done by the name of thy holy child Jesus. ³¹ And when they had prayed, the place was shaken where they were assembled together; and they were all filled with the Holy Ghost, and they spake the word of God with boldness.

Andrew Murray once said, “Who can say what power a church could develop and exercise if it gave itself to the work of prayer day and night for God’s power on His servants and His word, and for the glorifying of God in the salvation of souls? Most churches think their members are gathered into one simply to take care of and build up each other. They do not know that God rules the world by the prayers of His saints, that prayer is the power by which Satan is conquered, that by prayer the Church on earth has as its disposal the powers of the heavenly world.”

God delights in the unity of His people, and He does everything in His power to promote that unity, and so He especially honors unity in prayer.

D. Our Declaration – Our Message of Christ

1 Corinthians 1:10

¹⁰ Now I beseech you, brethren, by the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that ye all speak the same thing, and *that* there be no divisions among you; but *that* ye be perfectly joined together in the same mind and in the same judgment.

There is only one message that unites God's people and fulfills the church's mission –the Gospel.

1 Corinthians 2:1-5

¹ And I, brethren, when I came to you, came not with excellency of speech or of wisdom, declaring unto you the testimony of God. ² For I determined not to know any thing among you, save Jesus Christ, and him crucified. ³ And I was with you in weakness, and in fear, and in much trembling. ⁴ And my speech and my preaching *was* not with enticing words of man's wisdom, but in demonstration of the Spirit and of power: ⁵ That your faith should not stand in the wisdom of men, but in the power of God.

4. ACCEPTANCE WITHOUT DISCRIMINATION (ROMANS 15:7-12)

Romans 15:7-12

⁷ Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God. ⁸ Now I say that Jesus Christ was a minister of the circumcision for the truth of God, to confirm the promises *made* unto the fathers: ⁹ And that the Gentiles might glorify God for *his* mercy; as it is written, For this cause I will confess to thee among the Gentiles, and sing unto thy name. ¹⁰ And again he saith, Rejoice, ye Gentiles, with his people. ¹¹ And again, Praise the Lord, all ye Gentiles; and laud him, all ye people. ¹² And again, Esaias saith, There shall be a root of Jesse, and he that shall rise to reign over the Gentiles; in him shall the Gentiles trust.

We are to receive or accept as Christ also received us.
It means to receive and treat as a friend.

Close:

Are these marks present in our lives?