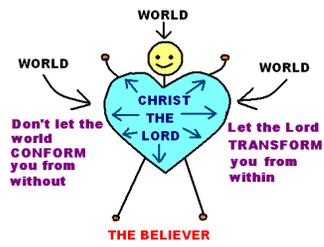


“Every Knee Shall Bow”

August 18, 2019
Philippians 2:1-11

Thank you for an opportunity to preach God’s Word again today. Please find with me the fourteenth chapter of Romans.



There are very few commands given in the first eleven chapters of the Book of Romans. Actually, there are less than five. But, from Romans 12, verse one through the end of the epistle, there are 80. And here’s what those 80 commands are all about.

The world, in general, wants to pour you into its mold; to make you like them; to get you to live by your own power and not the LORD’s. But, as you can see, that’s all self-effort. God’s plan certainly includes effort. But, His way is for you to live by faith in His faithfulness; living on the power of Christ Who indwells you. His plan for the Christian is to transform us into the likeness of His Son, the LORD Jesus Christ. And how does He do that? Here’s how. When you choose to obey the LORD’s command to present your body to Him as a living sacrifice to God, He proceeds to transform your mind into the mind of Christ.

So, when it comes right down to it, the commands are really the kindness and care of the LORD forming you into the new creation that He has placed within you. And right

here in Romans 14 you’ll find the LORD blessing you with nine specific ways; nine ways that you are able to work out the salvation He has worked in you.

I’ve titled today’s message “Every Knee Shall Bow.” Shall we pray?

To study the Bible to obey it is to take it seriously. The simplest way to understand God is to obey what He has already shown you.

So, what can you see here in Romans fourteen?

1. A strong Christian must be considerate of those weak in the faith or those with a weak conscience – vs. 1-2, 13-15, 20-21
2. A strong Christian constantly does things for which he is able to give God thanks – vs. 6

We’ve read and considered the first two on what it’s like to be a strong Christian; being considerate of the weak Believer and only doing the things for which you can give God thanks.

Today, what’s on my heart is this.

1. You will give an account of your own life directly to God; verse 10

Romans 14:10 *“But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. (11) For it is written, as I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. (12) So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.”*

Have you ever noticed your tendency to judge your brother and your sister in Christ? And beyond judging, Paul asks “Why do you set your brother at nought?”

What does he mean? To set your brother at nought is to look on him with contempt. When you see another Christian doing something that he quote “shouldn’t be doing,” and you look down on him, you are doing exactly what Jesus once said not to do “Judge not, lest ye be judged.”

How many times have I reminded you that the LORD is the One Who lives in you to correct your attitude? Folks, check your attitudes before the LORD. Here's why. Because you must personally face the True Judge.

You see, in contrast to *your* judging your brother or sister, Paul quotes an OT passage on *your* being judged by the LORD someday.

The entire 66 Books of the Bible are one book and every book is connected to every other book. It's as if the entire Bible was written by one Person. Well, it was. The Holy Spirit wrote every word, every sentence, every paragraph, every book.

And every time you read an Old Testament quotation from the Old Testament, you can see it. Here's Isaiah 45:21 "*...and there is no God else beside me; a just God and a Savior; there is none beside me. (22) Look unto me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth: for I am God, and there is none else.*

(23) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, that unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear."

Paul quoted this same verse when he was presenting Jesus to the Philippians. Philippians 2:5 "*Let this mind be in you, which was also in Christ Jesus: (6) Who, being in the form of God, thought it not robbery to be equal with God: (7) But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:*

(8) And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross. (9) Wherefore God also hath highly exalted him, and given him a name which is above every name: (10) that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, of things in heaven, and things in earth, and things under the earth; ..."

Imagine, if you can, that you and another person are learning how to play a musical instrument. Both of you are being taught by the same teacher at the same time in the

same class. And you fellow student has put in a lot of effort and time into his practice, yet he or she is not quite as good as you. And in class, you listen to him as your teacher listens to him. And you find that he just doesn't come up to your standards. And what do you do? Maybe not verbally, but mentally, you criticize him and judge him and find him beneath you. You hold him in contempt because you are so much better.

In Paul's day, a Christian Jew who thinks it's fine to eat pork might show contempt for another Christian Jew who doesn't think so. A Gentile Christian who thinks it's fine to eat meat that had been offered to idols might look down on another Gentile Christian who doesn't think he can eat that food.

In our day, "A Christian shouldn't mow his lawn on Sunday, right?" "If he knew his Bible as well as you did, he'd see that he should never drink a glass of wine; right?" "How can he possibly be a Christian if he spends his Sunday afternoon watching NASCAR?"

Folks, can you judge your own contempt of other Christians? That's what Paul is after her.

One day you will die or, you will be raptured out of the world. And one day you'll stand before the LORD alone. And, on that day, you'll be required to give an account of *your* life to the LORD, not his life, not her life.

Now, do you see what the LORD is concerned about here? *You* will give an account, not only of the things you did; but of your attitudes towards other Christians.

When was the last time you had to explain yourself to someone? Think about it like this. Whenever we quote "explain" ourselves, let's say to a boss or a parent, we usually do so with one purpose; to justify ourselves.

But, when we stand before the LORD and give our account, it will be impossible to justify ourselves. Why?

Because He knows the deepest reasons why we did what we did and there will only be an even deeper awareness of those reasons on that day.

And, as you've heard me say so many times, God has a huge concern about *your* attitude towards others. He's the LORD and, as the LORD, He's the Corrector of attitudes. In these examples given by Paul, the stronger Christian is the one who chooses to *not* eat meat when you dine with a Christian who has a quote "conscience" against eating meat. You choose *not* to labor on Saturday when you'd be wounding the conscience of a weak Christian who thinks it's wrong to work on Saturday.

Yes, I said Saturday. In the early Church, many Jews came to Christ and discovered that it had been ingrained in them to not labor on the Sabbath. Now, they are saved. Now, they are hearing that it's OK to eat all types of meat and it's OK to labor on the Sabbath. And they hadn't yet grown up into their new-found freedom in Christ.

So, what is the correct attitude towards these weak Christians? Will you wound their conscience by insisting on your rights? Will you hold them in contempt because you are so much better than they are? Or will you be willing to give up your rights for their sake and for their benefit?

Yes, the LORD sees everything we *do*. He sees every good work. But, folks, your attitude is watched is being closely by the LORD today. And yes, you must give an account of those attitudes directly to the LORD at some future time.

Notice verse ten again. Romans 14:10 "*But why dost thou judge thy brother? Or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*"

The LORD is concerned about one, your conscience and two, your attitudes. He is LORD of the conscience and He's the LORD of attitudes.

So, the question; why do you judge your brother? Why do you dismiss him? Why do you disrespect him? Can you see that disrespecting your brother or sister and judging him is *very* important to the LORD?

Can you see what *you* are being called to do? The best thing in every case is this. Act towards your brothers and sisters in Christ according to the way Jesus acts towards them. Act towards your fellow student the way your teacher is acting towards them. Hard? Sometimes, yes, very hard. Yet, whenever you do that, you are conforming your life to the likeness of Jesus.

So, "Will you attempt to understand them the way the LORD Jesus would understand and treat them if He were right here?"

Do you remember our study on the conscience of the Christian? And do you remember how it is that you develop a strong conscience? One way and one way alone. Learn the Person of Jesus Christ and let *His* ways become your ways. Let *His* attitudes become your attitudes.

So that, when you stand before Him, He's likely to remind you of some simple examples of His own life that you'd read about in the Bible.

First, you will give an account of your own life directly to God.

Second, the LORD's Kingdom is a kingdom rooted in right, in joy, and in peace – vs. 16

Romans 14:16 "*Let not then your good be evil spoken of: (17) for the kingdom of God is not meat [food] and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (18) For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable [pleasing] to God, and approved of men. (19) Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*"

Can you see Paul's contrast between your meals and your attitudes? Foods and beverages are not anyway as important

as your doing what is right, walking in peace, and being filled with the joy of the Holy Spirit in your daily Christian life.

Paul even goes so far as to say that these are the things that are pleasing to the LORD as well as recognized by others as valuable.

Now, the word here in verse sixteen is the word this, “*Let not then your good be evil spoken of...*” “Evil spoken of” in the original language is the Greek word “blaspheme.” Paul actually uses the word “blaspheme.” Whenever you blaspheme, you are “speaking evil of something or someone that is good.”

“One of the Church’s greatest Bible teachers was Harry Ironside. Once at a Sunday School picnic in Detroit where a former Muslim from India who had come to know Christ was present. His name was Mohammed Ali (not the boxer!) and he ran his father’s tea business in the States. As Ironside and he were chatting, a young woman came by passing out sandwiches. Ironside helped himself to several of them, but when Mr. Ali learned that they were all pork or ham, he refused to take any. The young woman laughingly said, “Why, Mr. Ali, you surprise me. Are you so under law that you can’t eat pork? Don’t you know that a Christian is at liberty to eat any kind of meat?” “I *am* at liberty to eat it,” he said, “but I am also at liberty to let it alone. You know that I was brought up as a strict Muslim. My old father, nearly eighty years of age now, is still a Muslim. And every three years I go back to India to give an account of the business and to visit the folks at home. Always I know how I will be greeted. The friends will be sitting inside. My father will come to the door and say, ‘Mohammed, have those infidels taught you to eat the filthy hog meat yet?’ ‘No, father,’ I will say. ‘Pork has never passed my lips.’ Then I can go in and have the opportunity to preach Christ to them. If I took one of your sandwiches, I could not preach Christ to my father

the next time I go home.” [Found on <https://www.preceptaustin.org> “Ray Stedman on verse sixteen].

Romans 14:16 “*Let not then your good be evil spoken of: (17) for the kingdom of God is not meat [food] and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (18) For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable [pleasing] to God, and approved of men.*”

You see, the kingdom of God is not food and drink; but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit because whenever you do these things, you are pleasing the LORD and also approved of men.

So, here’s the word to the stronger brother. “If you [as a stronger brother] are going to create division by arguing so hard for your rights, or your freedom, or by flaunting your liberty in the face of those who do not agree with it, then are you not distorting the Gospel “your good” itself?

You are causing that which is good, Paul says, the Good News about Christ, to be blasphemed because you are making too much of an issue over a minor matter. And, you are insisting that your rights are so important that you have to divide the Church over them, or separate from a brother or sister who does not believe as you do. That is saying to the watching world around that Christianity consists of whether you do, or do not do, a certain thing.

Instead, says Paul; pursue peace; vs. 19.

Romans 14:19 “*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*”

God is the God of peace. Jesus Himself is our peace. And Jesus preached that we should be peacemakers. And the LORD’s brother, James says the peacemaker can be likened to a man who sows his field. He plants peace, but when the crop ripens, he harvests righteousness: “*And the fruit of righteousness is sown in peace by those who make peace*” (James 3:18). For this reason the writer of the book of Hebrews urges us

to “*pursue peace with all men*” (Hebrews 12:14), and Paul tells us, “*If it is possible, as much as it depends on you, live peaceably with all men*” (Romans 12:18). [Found on <https://www.charisma-news.com> “Why Messianic Believers – and Christians – Should Diligently Pursue Peace”].

Some time ago a Church got into an unholy argument over whether or not they should include a Christmas tree at their Christmas program. Some thought that a tree was fine; others thought it was a pagan practice. And they got so angry at each other that they actually got into fist fights over it. One group dragged the tree out, then the other group dragged it back in. They ended up suing each other in a court of law and, of course, the whole thing was spread by the newspapers for the entire community to read. What else could non-Christians conclude other than that the Gospel consists of whether you have a Christmas tree or not? They made such an important issue over it, they were ready to physically attack one another.” [Found on <https://www.pre-cepaustin.org> “Ray Stedman on verse sixteen”].

Romans 14:19 “*Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify [build up] another.*”

Your role as a Christian is to edify each other.

First, you will give an account of your own life directly to God.

Second, the LORD’s Kingdom is a kingdom rooted in right, in joy, and in peace.

Third, things you do that are not of faith are sin – vs. 20

Romans 14:20 “*For meat [food] destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. (21) It is good neither to eat flesh [meat], nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

(22) Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. (23) And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.”

Do you see this word “destroy”? It means “to tear down” or “to pull down” the LORD’s work in that person’s life. Jesus once said this about the Temple. Mark 13:2 “... *Seest thou these great buildings? There shall not be left one stone upon another, that shall not be thrown down [torn down and destroyed].*”

Instead of tearing another Christian down by insisting on your rights, build them up both by the things you choose *to do* or *to not do*. Not only are your attitudes important to the LORD, but your choices, especially those we make in light of our brothers and sisters in the LORD.

Folks, you have the right to do things as a Christian you did not have before you came to Christ. But, having the right to do something does not imply that you are free to do anything you choose at any time.

In every situation, then, what does the LORD call you do. You are called every time and in every situation to exhibit faith; to do everything you do in faith.

Romans 14:22 “*Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. (23) And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*”

The LORD is living in you and it’s His desire to live His life through you daily; in your good works, in your behavior, in your attitudes, in your choices, and in all your relationships.

Faith. Trusting God. Believing God. This comes first in the things that really pleases the LORD. You can see this through the entire Bible.

One man puts it this way. “Trust is the willingness to put all of life before God for his approval” [Bill Mounce]. So

“Faith is a humble reliance on God, on God alone, for salvation and for the living out of the implications of that salvation. What cannot be justified by being in accord with our relation to Christ is sin” [Henry Morris].

So, what will you do with these admonitions from the Holy Spirit in Paul? The Christian Church is a society of people indwelt by the LORD Jesus Christ. We are called to live *to* the LORD and not to ourselves. And the things we find in the Bible are the things that reveal our personal relationship to the LORD. These are the out-workings of the Gospel in your personal life.

First, you will give an account of your own life directly to God.

Second, the LORD’s Kingdom is a kingdom rooted in right, in joy, and in peace.

Third, things you do that are not of faith are sin – vs. 20

So, yes, one on one, each of us will be required by the LORD to give an account to Him of what we’ve done today.

His kingdom is rooted in right, joy, and peace.

And the things that you do today, you must do in faith or they are sin.

And fortunately for us, Jesus died to pay for every one of your sins. Sin was so repulsive the LORD that He had to remove it from His sight. His Own Son became the Sacrifice for your sins.

Have you received Him as your personal LORD and Savior? Today is the day of salvation.

And Christian, will you apply these Scriptures to your life today? Today is also the day of sanctification.

Hymn video after sermon – Now, it’s possible that you’ve never heard “All Hail The Power Of Jesus’ Name” like this before. But remember what we discovered last Sunday from Romans. You have a wonderful, new-found freedom in Christ? God has saved you for freedom. You belong to a

Savior Who has freed you from condemnation, from sin, and from selfishness. You no longer have to live for yourself now that you are saved. You are now living unto the LORD.”

And some of us express our worship to the LORD differently than we do. Let’s watch this before we sing.

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=aIjZxS9nDNo>

Hymn # 43 “All, Hail The Power of Jesus’ Name”