

Fitting In Your New Family

Many of God's children live below their privileges as King's Kids.

That's why the book of Romans teaches us how to access the royalty that is already within us through the power of God's Spirit.

ILLUSTRATION: difficulties caused by lack of coordination (musicians playing in different keys and tempos, singers singing different verses)

Romans 12:5 So we, being many, are one body in Christ, and every one members one of another.

The diversity of the church displays Christ's power to bring together dissimilar people in genuine unity to change the world. Of course, Satan works on man's unredeemed flesh to create division and threaten that unity. The problem Paul addresses in this section arises when mature (strong) believers conflict with immature (weak) believers. He addresses his comments to the **MATURE**, since they should be the ones to **ADAPT!**

An illustration from the home will help us understand what is involved. When a new child comes into a home, everything has to change. Mother and Father are careful not to leave anything dangerous within reach. But as the child matures, the parents adjust the rules of the house and deal with him in a more adult fashion. It is natural for a child to stumble when learning to walk. But if an adult constantly stumbles, something is wrong.

The Body of Christ (as seen in the local church) is like your body – it is **POWERFUL** when it is coordinated and **AWKWARD** when it is not!

PRINCIPLES FOR BODY LIFE:

Romans 12:18-21 If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men. Dearly beloved, avenge not yourselves, but rather give place unto wrath: for it is written, Vengeance is mine; I will repay, saith the Lord. Therefore if thine enemy hunger, feed him; if he thirst, give him drink: for in so doing thou shalt heap coals of fire on his head. Be not overcome of evil, but overcome evil with good.

- If it **DEPENDS** on you, keep the peace in your relationships.
- If you **DEFEND** yourself, the Lord won't defend you.
- The way to overcome evil is not to **FIGHT**, but to **BLESS**.

James 1:19-20 Wherefore, my beloved brethren, let every man be swift to hear, slow to speak, slow to wrath: For the wrath of man worketh not the righteousness of God.

- It is impossible to achieve a good result when you are **ANGRY**.

Romans 13:10 Love worketh no ill to his neighbour: therefore love is the fulfilling of the law.

- The Ten Commandments are not mentioned often in the NT because when we **LOVE** we **AUTOMATICALLY** obey God's law.

Romans 13:14 But put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.

- This summarizes **SANCTIFICATION** through the image of putting on **CLOTHING**, which in Scripture represents our thoughts and behavior.

Romans 13:1-2 Let every soul be subject unto the higher powers. For there is no power but of God: the powers that be are ordained of God. Whosoever therefore resisteth the power, resisteth the ordinance of God: and they that resist shall receive to themselves damnation.

- If you resist **LEADERSHIP**, you are actually resisting God.

(Respect the office even when you don't respect the man!)

HOW MATURE CHRISTIANS ACT:

- They accept everyone without **DISCRIMINATION**.

Romans 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.

- They leave **JUDGMENT** of anyone else totally in God's hands.

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.

Romans 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.

- They take responsibility for their **INFLUENCE** on others.

Romans 14:7 For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Romans 14:13 Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

- They keep their PREFERENCES to themselves.

(The “meat” issue in NT times represents our preferences or liberty.)

- Don't destroy your BROTHER because of your preferences.

Romans 14:15 But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

- Don't destroy your CHURCH because of your preferences.

Romans 14:20 For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.

- Don't ever let your preferences become your FOCUS.

Romans 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

1 Corinthians 10:23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

1 Corinthians 9:22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

Paul probably appeared inconsistent to those that were immature; a compass also appears inconsistent, but it always points north!

Perhaps St. Augustine said it best: "In essentials, UNITY; in nonessentials, LIBERTY; in all things, CHARITY."

John 21:21-22 Peter seeing him saith to Jesus, Lord, and what shall this man do? Jesus saith unto him, If I will that he tarry till I come, what is that to thee? follow thou me.