

It's Not About Me Romans 15:1-4

When something is important, we repeat it for emphasis. The Apostle Paul repeats what he has said throughout chapter 14, but, in the minds of some, broadens his appeal.

I. Every church has Christians who are weak . . . (vs. 1).

Paul is writing to encourage Christians at Rome to accept the brother who is weak. "*Him that is weak in the faith accept*" (14:1). "*Bear the infirmities of the weak*" (15:1).

(A). The weak are those who are not free . . . There are people who feel that the Christian life is composed of rules and regulations rather than a relationship. "*Taste not, touch not, handle not*" (Col. 2:21) are the doctrines of weak men. These weak brothers say, "To be holy one must abstain from all such practices!" There is no power in this teaching. In fact the word "weak" is "without power." But the doctrine of justification is loaded with power --- the power of the gospel.

(B). The weak are also those who have fallen. . . Dr. Cranfield and Dr. Gill believe that verse one is a transitional verse. Paul has been talking about gray areas of the Christian, but he now expands to talk about believers who are trapped by sin. "*The church is not a museum for saints, it is a hospital for sinners*" Anonymous.

II. Every Christian has a commission to work . . . (vs. 1-2).

God calls you to work on behalf of the weak brother. It may be the great commission. "*Bear the infirmities of the weak*" (vs. 1). "*For his good to build him up*" (vs. 2).

(A). Love those that are not free . . . encourage them, assist them, and accept them. When you are in their presence, accommodate their customs, though you are free.

(B). Lift those that have fallen . . . by refusing to set them aside and casting them off. It's interesting that the word "bear" is *bastazo* and is the same word used in John 10:31 when the Jews "took up (bore up) stones to stone Christ." In our text you are given the work of "bearing up a fallen person." Don't stone him; support him. This is some of the hardest work there is --- by nature we are all selfish. We want to enjoy our lives, be comfortable, but we all must remember -- it's not about me! Do you ever get tired of supporting and loving a Christian who fails often?

III. Every challenge has a comfort in writing . . . (vs. 3-4).

"*For even Christ pleased not himself, but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me*" (v.3). This is a remarkable verse! It is a quotation of Ps.69:9, and points us to Christ's inner struggle when facing Calvary. Dr. Cranfield says that there are clearer passages reminding us of Christ's unselfishness at Calvary, but Paul picks that one that describes the sin that is without excuse --- reproaching God. Christ, not thinking of Himself, but for we who have reproached God, died for us. How painful was it for Christ? How difficult was it for the Lord to think about us? In Mark 14:54, on the night Christ was betrayed, Peter "*warmed himself at the fire.*" It was the same night, "*Christ sweat as if it were great drops of blood*" (Lk. 2:44). How hard do we work at our task? Christ is the example for us in our commission.