

Sermon Notes

Power of the Word Part 8B

March 18th – 19th, 2023

- **Last Time: John 17:20-23**, the Unity of the Body of Christ is not optional.
 - o But how do we do that when we are different and disagree?? (two types of different)
 - Do the 4 steps to freedom with Romans 14:1-15:7.
- **Week 8B: Putting Up With Others**
- Let's read the whole thing again, then break it down. **Romans 14:1-15:7**
- First things first, Accept other believers in their weaknesses. **Romans 14:1, 15:1, 15:5-7**
 - o Why? To bring praise to God. When we work together we win. When we don't, we lose.
 - Notice what Jesus said, **John 13:34-35**, and twice in **John 17:20-23**.
 - o Pretty simple. We could just stop here...but there is a problem.
- Problem: Christians would rather be right, than be righteous.
 - o That is, they will give up on walking in love, grace, patience, faith, etc. to cut other believers down.
 - o They end up quarreling over disputable matters. (**Romans 14:1**)
 - In today's language, we would say "divisive issues" rather than disputable matters.
 - Things like politics, Covid protocols, theology, worship style, etc.
 - I used to say "There are not divisive issues, just divisive people."
 - That may not be quite right, but if we all completed **James 1:2-4**, we'd have the same number of petty quarrels as Jesus did.
 - o Side note: mix faith with your trials, let it bake, and spiritual maturity results.
 - The Reality of It: None of us are actually "right." We are in process. **Phil 3:10-12**.
 - o If Paul the Apostle wouldn't claim to have arrived, we shouldn't either.
 - o Let me tell you about a prayer I prayed many long years ago...
 - o None of us, or our groups, have fully arrived.
 - We can be advanced in some areas, but weak in others. Such as: spiritual connection, emotional health, knowledge, living right, theology, gift development, working together, etc.
 - o It helps to realize you, like them, aren't perfect. Now let's have grace for each other! **Romans 14:4**
 - Poor Reaction to The Reality of It: Contempt for others or judging others. **Romans 14:2-3, Rom 14:10**
 - o Two bad reactions to other people's imperfections are listed here: Contempt and judging.
 - The example: dietary restrictions in religious observance. Red meat on Friday during Lent??
 - The one who has advanced past the arbitrary rules can look down on the other.
 - o Like **1 Cor 8:1-2**. A little knowledge makes you prideful, not complete.
 - The one who thinks the rule is important can judge the other.
 - o Notice, judging is linked to the person with weak faith. Just sayin'.
 - The other disputable matter mentioned is observance of Holy days. **Romans 14:5**
 - The thing that matters is the heart of serving the Lord. **Romans 14:6**
 - o So, if you are following your tradition in good conscience, that's cool.
 - Don't pressure people to reject their way of following Jesus, give room for growth.
 - **Romans 14:14-15**. This is the free person messing up the rule follower.
 - **Romans 14:23** is the potential negative result of this.
 - o It is actually wrong to do the right thing if you think it is the wrong thing!!!
 - Next week: The Healthy Reaction to The Reality of It.
 - But let's finish this week with **Romans 15:7**.
 - o Maybe you look down on certain believers. It's time to put Rom 15:7 in to practice.
 - o Maybe you judge certain believers. It's time to put Rom 15:7 in to practice.
 - o "Just as Christ accepted you" is a massive statement. Let's go after that.
 - Get personal prayer by emailing prayer@goodhope.ag.