

SIX PRINCIPLES ABOUT RELATIONSHIPS FOR EVERY DISCIPLE

Kingdom Training Class: Level 4

Eph 5:2 ... walk in the way of love, just as Christ loved us and gave himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God.

Heb 10:24-25 And let us consider how we may spur one another on toward love and good deeds,²⁵ not giving up meeting together, as some are in the habit of doing, but encouraging one another—and all the more as you see the Day approaching.

Psalm 133:1 How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity!

Principle 3: THE UNDERSTANDING: Matters of Faith & Opinion

--This helps us to be practical about loving each other

Romans 14-15:13 The Weak and The Strong / weak conscience and strong conscience

Romans 15:5

Spirit of unity ... love is remaining unified...together / learning how to act in love towards one another

- Unity with God—Rom 1-12
- Unity with people...Christians & Non-Christians
- Where is unity rooted? ... “Jesus is Lord”
- Placing oneself under the authority / Lordship of Jesus

Romans 12:1

- There will never be unity until unified under the Lordship of Jesus
- Will then learn to act / react like Jesus
- When we fail & sin / will be great repenters and great forgivers
- Unity will be maintained / Love one another / God will be glorified

OPINIONS – JUDGEMENT

Matters of Opinion & Matters of Faith...Matters of Faith—Thus says the Lord! Absolutes!

Rom 14:1-12...dealing with matters of opinion...remember this is the context

--Specifics

- Some had a conscience issue about eating meat that may have been sacrificed to an idol and later sold to a meat market
- Some felt a special attraction toward certain holy days from their past

Today...

Drinking alcohol; dancing; dress; watching movies with certain ratings, possessions—houses, cars, boat; Christmas-Easter (pagan holidays Christianized); Halloween; Christmas tree, etc.

Defining Terms

- Strong (strong conscience) (strong faith) can participate
- Weak (weak conscience) (weak faith) cannot without violating conscience

Remember....we are talking about matters of opinion

- I'm strong so I can drink 10 martinis...sleep with my girlfriend...watch adult films...doesn't bother my conscience
- Doesn't have a strong conscience...has a destroyed conscience / a seared conscience

NOTE: --True righteousness cannot be legislated by rules & regulations

--On the other hand, guidelines are often helpful... **example**...dating guidelines

Romans 14:13-23

To Cause to stumble

--no room in the kingdom for behavior that destroys or injures the faith of another

- Must not insist on exercising our liberty at the expense of another's
- Christian freedom....we are free NOT to sin and we are free NOT to use our rights

1 Corth 8:1-13

1 Corth 10:23-11:1 Freedom in Christ

- Never means freedom from the Lordship of Christ
- Never means I'm free to do whatever I want
- Means I'm free to do what Christ wants
- Means I'm free to do what is best for others instead of what is best for me
- Means I'm free to love....love is thoughtful / respectful / helpful / sacrificial / giving
- **Rom 14:23** *But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin. IF IN DOUBT, DON'T!*

UNDERSTAND THE USE OF THE WORD "JUDGEMENT"

--Much is said in this chapter about judgment ... **Rom 14:13**...Stop passing judgment!

Remember the context ... don't pass judgment on matters of opinion

Do Not Judge...(you're judging me!)(As if Christians are doing something wrong to have absolutes in right and wrong that are true for all people for all time)

Matt 7:1-5

- Condemnation of disproportionate judgment
- Condemnation of hypocritical judgment
- Ok to deal with the speck (a loving thing to do) once you deal with the log or don't have a log

John 12:48 / Heb 4:12

- God's word is the judge
- Homosexuality is the big topic now...you are unloving and being judgmental because you condemn their action
- No--just agreeing with God and trying to save their soul...no looking down on a person
- We are all sinners in need of the grace of God...repentance of whatever is the sinful specific lifestyle (liar, drunkenness, pre-marital / extra-marital heterosexual sex) is a must for forgiveness....same for the sin of homosexual sex.

1 Corth 5:9-13

- A disfellowship matter
- The loving thing to do...to try to save his soul
- Separating a person from the fellowship to show they are separated from God

Different uses of the same word.....understand the context.....

For us today "judgment" in the context of Matters of Opinion and Matters of Faith.....

- Don't pass judgment on matters of opinion

With the teaching today.... We can better love each other as God wants us to love each other

- The right understanding of love keeps us unified even though we come from such diverse cultural and religious backgrounds and experiences.