

(1) We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and *not* to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for *his* good, to build *him* up. For Christ did not please Himself, but as it is written,

“The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.” (Psalm 69:9)

(4) For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, and through endurance and through encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

(5) May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Therefore, welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

(8) For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God's truthfulness, in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for His mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore, I will praise you among the Gentiles, and sing to Your Name.” (Psalm 18:49)

(10) And again, it is said,

“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with His people.” (Deuteronomy 12:43)

(11) And again,

“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol Him.” (Psalm 117:1)

(12) And again, Isaiah says,

“The root of Jesse will come, even He who arises to rule the Gentiles; in Him will the Gentiles hope.” (Isaiah 11:10)

(13) May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope!

Think on these things:

- 1) For a few weeks now we've been exploring how relationships within the church and among the churches can be strained --- by how we believe differently about so many things (like church music, observing sacraments, smoking/drinking, politics & social movements, and much more). When we have these disagreements, how are we to act towards others (v.1)?

- 2) In these conflicts, when we stop trying to “please ourselves,” what are we committing ourselves to do (v.2)? Whose example are we following (v.3)?

- 3) What gives us hope to endure (v.4)? See Hebrews 3:12-4:12 for an example of something written in the past that is to help and guide us today.

- 4) Can you share an example of how the Bible encourages you to have hope and endure (v.4)?

- 5) When vs. 5-6 speak of having “one mind” like Jesus, what are we talking about? What are we doing together as “The Church”? Consider Ephesians 4:1-6 in your answer.

- 6) Verses 1-6 culminate with a command in v.7. What are we to do despite our differences? Do you find this easy to do? Do you consider yourself to be Christ’s “ambassador” (2 Corinthians 5:17-20)?

- 7) Jesus was a Jew, and the Jews safeguarded all knowledge of the **TRUE** God (see Romans 9:4-8). They did many things right as the custodians of God’s teachings and standards, but there was one major flaw in how they safeguarded this: they never fulfilled the prophecies that they were to be a “light to the Gentiles,” the ones pointing non-Jews to the Messiah/Christ (today’s verses 9-12). In truth --- in arrogance --- they despised the Gentiles. Jesus is the Messiah to the Jews (the ‘circumcision’, v.8), fulfilling their prophecies. Jesus is the Christ for the whole world, based on what (v.9)?

- 8) What is God’s “title” in v.13? Name the four qualities of Christian living He wants to fill us with. Is this a realistic description of you in your daily walk with Jesus today?

People and situations I want to pray for this week: