

Studies In Romans

(Romans 15:1-7)

1. Who is supposed to bear the infirmities of the weak?

The strong: *"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves"* (Romans 15:1).

- Strength here is in the faith of our Lord (**Ephesians 6:10** and **II Timothy 2:1**; cf. **Philippians 4:13**) or of faith (cf. **Romans 4:16-20**).
- Physical weaknesses do not cause spiritual weaknesses. In fact, they can often strengthen one's faith (**II Corinthians 12:10**).
- Support the weak or vulnerable in or of the faith is a consistent Scriptural point (**Galatians 6:1-2** and **I Thessalonians 5:14**).
- The word translated "infirmities" means: "a scruple of conscience; error arising from weakness of mind" (Strong's # 771). This is the only time that Greek term is used in the New Testament. It ties backwards to chapter fourteen wherein we discussed weaknesses in regard to authorized liberties (eating of meats, etc.).

2. Should we be concerned only with our own interests?

No: *"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves.-- Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification"* (Romans 15:1-2).

- Being other people minded is the application here (**Mark 10:43-45**, **I Corinthians 10:23-24**, **I Corinthians 10:33**, and **Galatians 5:13-14**).
- Not helping someone just if you think you'll gain in return (**Luke 6:33** and **Luke 14:12-14**).
- Though we are talking about spiritual things, this point also continues to helping carnally as well (**Luke 10:25-37**, **Acts 20:35**, and **I John 3:16-18**).
- Pleasing your neighbor for his edification (**Romans 13:9-10** and **Romans 14:19**).

3. What kind of example, in this context, did Jesus leave for us to follow?

Not pleasing Himself and allowing the reproaches of others to fall on Him: *"For even Christ pleased not himself; but, as it is written, The reproaches of them that reproached thee fell on me"* (Romans 15:3).

- Jesus was not out to please Himself (**John 4:34**, **John 5:30**, **John 6:38**, **John 8:29**, **John 12:27-28**, **John 14:30-31**, **Hebrews 5:8-9**, and **Hebrews 10:4-10**).
- Good commentary on this: **Philippians 2:3-8**.
- As it is written... (**Psalms 69:9**).
- Jesus gave up everything (**II Corinthians 8:9**) FOR other people (**Matthew 20:28**, **Ephesians 5:2**, and **Hebrews 9:28**) with the mindset of a servant (**Luke 22:27**).

4. Can we learn from those things written aforetime?

Yes: *“For whatsoever things were written aforetime were written for our learning, that we through patience and comfort of the scriptures might have hope”* (**Romans 15:4**).

- For our learning (**I Corinthians 10:1-12**; cf. **II Timothy 3:15-17**).
- Consider how many times Jesus and the Apostles used the Old Testament to teach. Here are just a few examples of likely hundreds that could be cited (**Matthew 2:5, Matthew 4:4, Matthew 4:7, Matthew 4:10, Matthew 11:10, Matthew 21:13, Matthew 26:31, Mark 7:6, Mark 9:12, Luke 19:46, Luke 24:44, John 6:45, Acts 1:20, Acts 3:22, Acts 7:42, Acts 28:25-31, Romans 3:10-18, Romans 9:27, Romans 9:29, Romans 10:16, Romans 11:1-5, Romans 11:26, Romans 13:9, Romans 15:2, I Corinthians 9:9, Hebrews 8:8-13**, etc.).
- Looking back on things written aforetime teaches us endurance and gives us hope (i.e. **James 5:10-11**).
- We read of God’s promise of longsuffering (**Romans 2:4** and **II Peter 3:9**). When you study the Old Testament your hope grows as you see how longsuffering God can be and was (**II Kings 19:21-34** and **Lamentations 3:22**; cf. **Romans 9:22**).

5. Are we supposed to receive one another by practicing unity in diversity?

No, likeminded to the glory of God: *“Now the God of patience and consolation grant you to be likeminded one toward another according to Christ Jesus: That ye may with one mind and one mouth glorify God, even the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God”* (**Romans 15:5-7**).

- Likeminded (**I Corinthians 1:10, Philippians 2:2**, and **Philippians 4:2**) one toward another (**Romans 12:16**).
- That like mind needs to be “according to Christ Jesus” (**Matthew 28:18-20, Luke 6:46**, and **Colossians 3:17**).
- To glorify God (**Psalms 86:12** and **I Corinthians 6:20**) in a united manner (**Acts 4:23-37**).
- Receive one another as Christ receives qualifies and absolutely proves that this is not teaching unity in diversity (**John 15:10, I John 1:3-7, I John 2:3-6**, and **II John 9**). Jesus does NOT receive men who continue to sin (**John 8:1-11, I Corinthians 15:34, II Corinthians 7:1, II Timothy 2:19**, and **I Peter 1:13-16**).