**SERMON OUTLINE**

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| **SERMON TITLE:** | The Things That Make for Peace |
| **SERMON REFERENCE:** | Romans 14:15-19 |
| **LWF SERMON NUMBER:** | #2084 |
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1. INTRODUCTION
   1. The book of Romans is a solid word for an unsure age.
      1. It has been called the Constitution of Christianity.
      2. We could spend years and never do a full exposition of this book.
   2. The devil would like to send division into the body of Christ.
      1. He wants to divide the brethren.
   3. Today’s message is about unity in the church.
      1. The key verse is Romans 14:19.
         1. What God wants in the church is unity.
   4. We need to understand three things about unity in the church:
      1. It is the desire of the Savior.
         1. Jesus wants unity in His church.
         2. John 17:22
            1. Jesus prays His great High Priestly prayer in this passage.
         3. One thing that gives great joy to parents is to see their children loving one another.
            1. The Lord wants us to love our brothers and sisters in Christ.
      2. It is the delight of the saved.
         1. There is nothing more heartbreaking than to be in a church where there is division.
         2. There is nothing more glorious than to be part of a church where there is a sweet fellowship and a oneness of spirit.
            1. Psalm 133:1
      3. It is the dread of Satan.
         1. Satan gets nervous when God’s people dwell together in unity.
         2. When we dwell together in unity, we become a winning team.
            1. What it takes to make a great church:

Get right with God.

Learn what being a Christian is all about.

Become a team for the Lord Jesus Christ.

* + - 1. When we are united together, there is awesome power.
  1. Unity is difficult because there are many different opinions in the church.
  2. The church at Rome was in danger of disunity.
     1. They were not divided over fundamentals but incidentals.
        1. They were divided primarily about days and diets.
           1. What foods they could eat and what days they should keep.
     2. Both sides were sincere in their beliefs.
     3. Paul wrote to the church to bring unity.
        1. Sincere people who love God with all of their hearts can have different opinions.
     4. In essentials, unity. In non-essentials, liberty. In all things, charity.
  3. In today’s message, we will discuss essentials, non-essentials, and the love that we should have in all things in the Lord Jesus Christ.

1. unity is a matter of lordship
   1. The essential is the Lordship of Jesus Christ.
   2. Romans 14:9
   3. There were some incidentals that, when compared to the fact that Jesus is Lord, didn’t seem so important.
   4. They were disagreeing over diets.
      1. Romans 14:1
         1. Take a new believer (somebody who is weak and doesn’t understand many things), receive him into the church, but don’t argue with him about incidentals.
            1. Incidentals are doubtful disputations.
      2. Romans 14:2
         1. Herbs in this passage refer to vegetables.
         2. In the church at Rome, there were some people who had been saved out of raw paganism.
            1. In paganism, they made blood sacrifices to their pagan idols.
         3. They saw that some of the people in the church were buying meat that had been offered to idols, and they were eating that meat.
         4. These new Christians, who were weak in the faith, were scandalized.
            1. They were former pagans.
            2. They didn’t understand how others could partake of that kind of food.
            3. To even keep from touching any of that meat, they became vegetarians.
      3. Romans 14:3
         1. The Jewish believers, who had been in the faith for a long time, knew that an idol was nothing.
            1. They knew that meat is meat and that an idol was just a stick or a stone.
            2. Sheer rationality told them that there was nothing wrong with the food.

And so, they were a little upset with the weaker believers who said that they should not be eating that meat.

They looked down upon them and criticized them.

* + 1. They were divided over an incidental.
       1. Whether or not to eat food that had been offered to idols.
    2. Paul said that it was a matter of Lordship, not a matter of diet.
  1. It is not a matter of days.
     1. Romans 14:5
        1. Paul was dealing with the incidentals.
     2. The Jewish people, who thought that it was alright to eat the meat that had been sacrificed to idols, had also come out of Judaism, where they had their special high holy days.
        1. Even though they had become Christians, these high holy days meant so much to them that they still observed these days.
     3. The believers who had come out of paganism had not previously observed the high holy days, and these days did not mean anything to them.
     4. The Jewish believers looked down upon the believers who came out of paganism because they would not keep the high holy days.
  2. Paul said that it was not a matter of diet or a matter of days; it is a matter of devotion.
     1. Jesus is Lord.
        1. We can get divided over incidentals, but we must stay united over one thing; Jesus is Lord.
           1. If we do not get this settled in our hearts, then we will have a hard time in this matter of being a Christian.
     2. When someone receives Jesus as Lord, we receive him and we do not divide over incidentals.
        1. Romans 14:1
        2. Romans 15:7
     3. We can be brothers and sisters in Christ without being twins.
        1. We do not have to be just alike if we are from the same family.
        2. We can have different ideas and different opinions.
        3. We can have unity without having uniformity.
  3. Reasons we should receive one another:
     1. Their salvation is from God.
        1. God has received them.
        2. Romans 14:3
        3. When God receives someone, we need to receive them.
        4. If a brother or a sister is a Christian, then we are in the same family.
           1. We are in the same body.
           2. If we hurt him or her, then we dishonor the Father and harm ourselves.
     2. His service is to God.
        1. Romans 14:4
        2. Brothers and sisters in Christ are servants of God; they are not our servants.
           1. We are not to judge another man’s servant.
        3. It is not our job to pull them down, and we do not have to prop them up.
           1. Paul stated that God is able to make him stand.

This is also a great statement on eternal security.

Romans 14:4

* + 1. His security is of God.
       1. Romans 14:4
          1. God is able to make him stand.
       2. Someone may not be where we are spiritually, but just give him time.
       3. God will help him to grow in the grace and knowledge of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.
    2. His stewardship is to God.
       1. Romans 14:10-11
          1. When we stand before Jesus Christ, we are only going to have to answer for ourselves.
       2. Rather than going around judging other people, we need to be ready to answer to God for ourselves.
       3. So many times, we are looking at other people rather than looking at ourselves.
  1. Romans 14:1
     1. We are to receive Him.
        1. Our salvation, service, security, and stewardship are from God and to God.
  2. We are not to disagree about doubtful things.
     1. Today, the great issues of disagreements are not about diets and days.
        1. For example, some disagree on whether or not to celebrate Christmas.
           1. But we do know that our Savior was born some time and we need to take a time to celebrate His birth.
        2. Others may disagree on whether or not they should applaud when someone sings in church.
           1. Neither is right or wrong; it is just a matter of preference.
     2. We don’t have to make everybody a clone of ourselves.
     3. It is easy to get divided over things that are incidental and not fundamental.
        1. Don’t look down on someone, and don’t criticize.
           1. We’re never going to please everyone.
           2. If we keep finding fault with people over incidentals, then we’re going to divide until there’s nobody left standing.
  3. This is the reason why Paul said that it is not a matter of days and diets, but it is a matter of devotion.
     1. Jesus Christ is Lord.
        1. He died, rose, and revived that He might be Lord of the living and the dead.
  4. The unity in our churches is not in the organization, the music, or the preaching.
     1. It is in Jesus Christ our Lord.
  5. In essentials, we have unity.

1. unity is a matter of liberty
   1. Romans 14:17
   2. When we are saved, the Lord sets us free.
   3. Liberty has its rights.
      1. There are certain things that we can do just because we have been set free in the Lord Jesus Christ.
      2. Romans 14:14, 22
         1. Paul was saying that he had faith and that there was nothing wrong with the meat.
            1. He could eat it if he wanted to.

He had his rights.

* 1. Liberty has its responsibilities.
     1. Romans 14:16-17
        1. Paul talks about things that are good, but he says that we should not let our good be evil spoken of.
           1. This is the responsibility of liberty.
     2. Paul said that there were some things that he would give up because it was no big deal to give them up.
        1. Romans 14:17
     3. It is wrong for people in the church to take their liberties and make such rights out of them that they end up wounding the fellowship.
        1. This is what happens when we do not realize that rights have responsibilities.
  2. We are here to reach souls for the Lord Jesus Christ, and there are some things that are incidental and some that are fundamental.
     1. The thing that is fundamental is that Jesus Christ is Lord.
        1. It is a matter of Lordship and a matter of liberty.
           1. We have liberty, but liberty has its rights and responsibilities.

1. unity is a matter of love
   1. Romans 14:15
      1. “Charitably” means in “love.”
   2. If we wound a weaker brother, then we are not walking in love.
   3. Things love will do in a church:
      1. It will keep your brother from stumbling.
         1. Romans 14:13, 21
         2. Love is not going to give someone a reason to stumble.
         3. There are certain things in life that we don’t do, not because we think that they would hurt us, but because they may hurt somebody else who might see us doing those things.
            1. We do not want to cause anyone else to stumble.
         4. We should not do anything that would hurt our testimony.
      2. It does not give somebody a reason for sorrow.
         1. Romans 14:15
            1. We should not want to do anything that would break someone else’s heart, even if we have every right to do it.
            2. Don’t destroy your brother with your rights.
            3. The word “destroy” in this verse actually means “to overthrow” or “to ruin.”

Do not mar his well-being.

* + 1. It does not give my brother reason for separation.
       1. Romans 14:19
       2. Love asks what we can do that will maintain unity in the church.
          1. We must not do anything that causes division or separation.
    2. It must not give my brother reason for suspicion.
       1. Romans 14:16, 22
       2. Perception is one of the cruelest forms of reality.
          1. Don’t let your good be evil spoken of.

Romans 14:16

* + - 1. We should not do something that would cause someone to be offended.

1. CONCLUSION
   1. Don’t get divided over incidentals.
      1. Not over days, diets, opinions, or what somebody else does.
   2. Exercise your rights in love, and receive one another.
   3. When someone comes into your church, they may not know what you know.
      1. They don’t need to be criticized.
      2. They need to be loved.
      3. They need to be received.
      4. Help them to grow in the grace and the knowledge of Jesus.
   4. What makes a church great?
      1. It is not what but Who.
         1. His name is Jesus.
         2. Christ is Lord.
      2. The Lord Jesus is like the hub of a wheel.
         1. Our membership is the rim of that wheel.
         2. The members are the spokes in that wheel.
            1. The closer the spokes get to the hub, the closer they get to one another.

Our unity is found in Jesus.

* 1. Do you know Jesus personally? If not, you can pray to Him today by asking Him to come into your life.
  2. Call upon Jesus today. Repent (turn) from your sins, and turn to Jesus. Ask Him to forgive you of your sins, and acknowledge Him as Lord of your life.
     1. Romans 3:23
     2. Romans 10:9-10
     3. Romans 10:13
     4. Acts 16:31
     5. John 3:16