

God's Reign in Men's Hearts and Lives

Romans 14:1 to Romans 15:13

The kingdom of God is the rule of God in men's hearts and lives. This rule of God calls for a program of right living. We will consider a threefold program this morning which must govern all the Lord's people.

1. Some harmful misconceptions must be avoided.

Romans 14:1-23

a. "The Kingdom of God is not meat and drink." Romans 14:1-4

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. ² One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

One's habits of eating and drinking, so long as they do not injure someone, have nothing to do with God's Kingdom

b. There is no merit in observing certain days - unless the observance is to honor the Lord. Romans 14:5-6

One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

c. Nothing which God has created is in itself impure – only as one thinks it is. Romans 14:14-15

As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean. ¹⁵ If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died

d. No one is permitted to place a stumbling in his brother's way. Romans 14:20-21

Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a man to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble.²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother to fall.

e. No one is permitted to condemn his brother for his eating habits. Romans 14:3

³ *The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him.*

2. Righteousness, Peace, and Joy in the Holy Spirit” are the main things in God’s Kingdom. Romans 14:17-19

For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

And this means that one must be right with God and man, in order to have peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

3. Certain Laws of the Kingdom must always be observed.

a. The brother who is weak in the faith must be given the same rights in the church as the brother who is strong. Romans 14:1

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.

b. Liberty to differ in the matters of diet and the observance of certain special days should be accorded to every one. Romans 14:1-6

Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters.² One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables.³ The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him.⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ *One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.*

c. The Spirit of criticism and faultfinding must be avoided at all costs. Romans 14:10-11

You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹ It is written:

*" 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord,
'Every knee will bow before me;
Every tongue will confess to God.'*

d. Every one must seek to please others rather than himself. Romans 15:1-2

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. ² Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

e. Every one should cultivate those things which make for peace and The up building of the other church members. Romans 14:19

Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

f. The strong must bear the infirmities of the weak. Romans 15:1

We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves.

a. Everything must be done for the glory of God, the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ. Romans 15:5-6

May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus, ⁶ so that with one heart and mouth you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.