

Transformed!

How God Renews the Lives
of His People

Get Personal

Part 20: *Overflowing Hope Abounding Praise*

A Note from Pastor Keith...

This week picks up where last week left off: *How do we handle the inescapable reality of differing convictions?*

Q: How do we handle our differences?

A: *With Love and Acceptance.*

1. Be considerate of differing convictions.

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

Romans 15:1 (NIV)

We who are strong must **be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this.**

Romans 15:1 (NLT)

2. Build each other up.

Each of us should please his neighbor for his good, to **build him up.**

Romans 15:2 (NIV)

3. Be unified—one in heart and voice.

⁵May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you a spirit of **unity among yourselves as you follow Christ Jesus,**⁶so that with **one heart and mouth** you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:5-6 (NIV)

4. Accept one another.

Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

God isn't asking us to resolve our differences. He's telling us to rise above them in love and mutual acceptance.

Q: Why are love and acceptance so vital?

A: *Three Reasons*

1. Because that's the way Christ treated us.

³For **even Christ did not please himself** but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me."⁴For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through endurance and the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.

Romans 15:3 (NIV)

Get Personal!

What disagreements are dividing YOU from your brothers and sisters in Christ?

Your **mandate from God** (this isn't the least bit optional) is to approach each disagreement with:
1) *consideration* and *sensitivity*,
2) the goal of *building others up*,
3) the priority of *unity*, and
4) absolute *acceptance*. With all of this in mind, what will you do?

How is this different from "resolving" those differences?

This approach to others reflects Christ's approach to us. But so what? Why should that matter?

⁷Accept one another, then, **just as Christ accepted you**, in order to bring praise to God.

Romans 15:7 (NIV)

2. Because MASSIVE diversity is part of God's plan.

⁸For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, to confirm the promises made to the patriarchs ^{9a}so that the Gentiles may glorify God for his mercy as it is written: "Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing hymns to your name." [2 Sam. 22:50; Ps. 18:49] ¹⁰Again, it says, "Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people." [Dt. 32:43a] ¹¹And again, "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples." [Ps. 117:1] ¹²And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; the Gentiles will hope in him." [Is. 11:10]

Romans 15:8-12 (NIV)

[The Lord said to Abram,] "...all peoples on earth will be blessed through you."

Genesis 12:3b (NIV)

^{9b}"with your blood you purchased men for God from every tribe and language and people and nation. ¹⁰You have made them to be a kingdom and priests to serve our God, and they will reign on the earth."

Revelation 5:9b-10 (NIV)

He said to them, "Go into all the world and preach the good news to all creation."

Mark 16:15 (NIV)

Jesus said to his followers, "Go **everywhere** in the world, and tell the Good News to **everyone**."

Mark 16:15 (New Century Version)

3. Because unity, love, and acceptance are the very roots of *overflowing hope* and *abounding praise*.

...so that...we might have **hope**.

Romans 15:4 (NIV)

...so that...you may **glorify** the **God** and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

Romans 15:6 (NIV)

⁹so that the **Gentiles may glorify God** for his mercy as it is written: "Therefore **I will praise you among the Gentiles**; I will **sing hymns** to your name." ¹⁰Again, it says, "**Rejoice, O Gentiles**, with his people."

¹¹And again, "**Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and sing praises to him, all you peoples.**" ¹²And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; **the Gentiles will hope in him.**"

Romans 15:9-12 (NIV)

May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace as you trust in him, so that you may **overflow with hope** by the power of the Holy Spirit.

Romans 15:13 (NIV)

Where unity dies, hope dies.

*Where there is no acceptance,
there is no praise of God.*

Get Personal!

If God wants us to share His love with *everyone everywhere*, how accepting do we need to be of differing sensitivities and convictions?

Sometimes we give in to our desire to "set everyone straight" and our need to be acknowledged as being right. When we do, what impact does that have on our spiritual life and relationships?

Think about a time when **YOU** withheld love and acceptance. Did hope overflow? Did praise abound? What *did* happen?

If you are experiencing a disagreement with a fellow Christian, what will **YOU** do to make hope overflow and praise abound?