Gospel Unity - Romans 14:1-15:13

Note: you'll need to print out copies of the passage on page 2 for your group.

Pray for our mission partners and your time time in the word

Notice

1. Scan back over chapters 12-13 and briefly discuss: "where are we in the book of Romans? What have we seen so far?"

2. Read 14:1-15;13.
   Then, **on your own,** use the printout to re-read and mark...
   a. Repeated words of themes
   b. How you might break it into sections
   c. any questions you have

3. **In pairs,** break the passage into sections and give a summary for each.

Clarify

Re-read

4. Have a couple of pairs share. Then invite comments from the rest of the group if there is time.

5. What do you think is the biggest issue to resolve to get to the main point of this passage?

6. Agree on one or two key questions and have a go at resolving them. (see suggestion to the right)

7. As we wrestle with what Pual is saying to the Romans, which issues are unique to them, and what are the universal principles we can apply?

prompts /notes if needed:

5/6 For any question you can ask
1. What are the options?
2. What verses support/oppose the options
3. Is there further evidence in Romans or elsewhere?

Who are the weak/strong?
- Options: jew; gentile; a combination based on tender conscience
- The passages differs from 1 Cor 10 (smilar). Days and foods are mentioned rather than meat sacrificed to idols which suggest weak = primarily Jews with tender consciences. But some Jews (like Paul are not in this category).

7. Another way of asking this could be: what's the issue in question, and what's the principle Paul applies?

Respond

8. Where do you see issues of conscience most causing division in Christian community today? What does it look like to apply these principles there?

9. Are there other contexts you need to give expression to unity and acceptance of others who differ from us?

10. Are there people you are prone to look down on or "judge" unfairly?

Pray in your pairs

14:1 Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. 2
One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only
vegetables. 3 The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who
does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for
God has accepted them. 4 Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own
master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.
5 One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day
alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. 6 Whoever regards one
day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give
thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For
none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. 8 If we live, we
live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to
the Lord. 9 For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the
Lord of both the dead and the living.
10 You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with
contempt? 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 acknowledge God.' "
12 So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. 13 Therefore let us stop
passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling
block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. 14 I am convinced, being fully persuaded
in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as
unclean, then for that person it is unclean. 15 If your brother or sister is distressed because
of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone
for whom Christ died. 16 Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil.
17 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 receives human approval.
14:19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual
edification. 20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is
wrong for a person 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 or sister to
fall. 22 So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God.
Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. 23 But whoever
has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and
everything that does not come from faith is sin.
15:1 We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please
ourselves. 2 Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. 3 For
even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: "The insults of those who insult you
have fallen on me." 4 For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us,
so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they
provide we might have hope.
5 May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of
mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, 6 so that with one mind and one voice you
may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7 Accept one another, then, just as Christ accepted you, in order to bring praise to God. 8
For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the Jews on behalf of God's truth, so that
the promises made to the patriarchs might be confirmed
9 and, moreover, that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written:
"Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles; I will sing the praises of your name." 10
Again, it says, "Rejoice, you Gentiles, with his people." 11 And again, "Praise the Lord, all you
Gentiles; let all the peoples extol him." 12 And again, Isaiah says, "The Root of Jesse will
spring up, one who will arise to rule over the nations; in him the Gentiles will hope." 13 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.