

An Advise to the Stronger Christians.

By Nick Bibile

Text Romans 15:1-7

Who are the stronger Christian and the weaker Christian here? We should be able to distinguish easily as we have been studying scripture by scripture, line by line. The weaker Christian here according to the entire chapter 14, is the one who is still observing the ceremonial laws of Moses. They are mistaken, ignorant, in error when Christ came, and abolished the ceremonial law. But Paul did not call them unsaved or cults, but call them brothers in Christ but they are weak, He did not dump them just because they are not like other Christians, but encouraged them had a lot of patience with them. He did not pass judgment and brand them unsaved evil people, but called them as weaker brothers in the Lord.

Let us see some examples of Paul him self when it came to different situations how he dealt with this matter.

Ac 16:1 Then came he to Derbe and Lystra: and, behold, a certain disciple was there, named Timotheus, the son of a certain woman, which was a Jewess, and believed; but his father was a Greek:

2 Which was well reported of by the brethren that were at Lystra and Iconium.

3 Him would Paul have to go forth with him; and took and circumcised him because of the Jews, which were in those quarters: for they knew all that his father was a Greek.

Timothy's father was a Greek but the mother was a Jewess who believed in Christ. But Timothy was not circumcised, as his father was a Greek. His mother brought him up in the Lord and did not circumcise him. Young Timothy had a good reputation among the brethren in Lystra and Iconium. Now Paul took him and circumcised him. This apostle Paul was against the Jews who made circumcision necessary for salvation. Was Paul hypocritical? Teaching one thing and doing another? Paul had a great concern for the Jews, the weaker Christians, as they will not respect Timothy as one unclean because he was uncircumcised. Paul was taking Timothy in to his Ministry but the Jews will not hear of Timothy as he was uncircumcised, so Paul instead of going by the decree he went according to the spirit of tenderness towards the Jews to win the Jews.

Let us see another example of Paul.

Ac 21:26 Then Paul took the men, and the next day purifying himself with them entered into the temple, to signify the accomplishment of the days of purification, until that an offering should be offered for every one of them.

Paul circumcised Timothy to please the Jews, and now we see the same apostle is observing the ceremonial law. The whole motive of Paul was to win the Jew.

1Co 9:20 And unto the Jews I became as a Jew, that I might gain the Jews; to them that are under the law, as under the law, that I might gain them that are under the law;

1Co 9:21 To them that are without law, as without law, (being not without law to God, but under the law to Christ,) that I might gain them that are without law.

22 To the weak became I as weak, that I might gain the weak: I am made all things to all men, that I might by all means save some.

But we do not have this situation in the church. How can we apply this to us in the church today? Who are the stronger Christian and the weaker Christians?

The general answer is, the person who has a lot of knowledge of Christian doctrine is regarded as the stronger Christian. This is only partly true. Then some say, the stronger Christian is the pastor and the elders of the Church. This is written to the common lay people and this does not apply only to the pastors. Let us see according to scripture that is the stronger Christian.

The strong Christian realizes he is weak in the flesh. He depends his strength from another, and that is Christ. There is nothing good lives in the flesh.

(Romans 7:18) If we live after the flesh we will die and but the spirit gives life.

(Romans 8:13) When we are weak, we are strong in him. (2 Corinthian 13:9)

The stronger Christian is strong in the Lord, depending on the strength of Christ. (Eph 6:10) He is a Christian soldier wearing the whole armor of God. He is strong in the scriptures, as he studies and meditates them daily. (1 John 2:14, Joshua 1:7-8)

The stronger Christian who studies God's word, meditate and pray is strong in the faith of God. (Rom 4:20) He will trust in God's word, not depending on the circumstances. One of the highlights of the stronger Christian is that he can go through much hardship and tribulations. (2 Corin 12:10; 2 Corin 4:7-9) The stronger Christian will not get into the flesh in the time of testing, but is calm and have a lot of patience, he is not the hot headed, high tempered worldly person.

The stronger Christian is not living in another world, but in a real world, with a real devil always trying to tempt, deceive and make him to fall. He is living in the flesh, and his flesh is weak like any other. He is living in a world surrounded by temptations, evil, filth and lusts. It is much easy to say in word, the stronger Christian is the one who does not waver in his faith in the real world. Even the strongest Christian can fall, like David. We see in Scripture even Abraham who was strong in faith listen to the advise of Sarah and lay with the servant Hagar. The stronger Christian needs to understand that he too can fall if he is not humble before the Lord.

1Co 10:12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

We all need to realize that we are all weak creatures and lowly creatures. We are all living in a very fragile body, a very powerful enemy the Satan confronts us, and we are living in weak grounds that are very suitable for the enemy, as this world is also tempting us in all directions with all kinds of lusts. Our only ground to stand against the enemy is Christ. He is our stronghold, our anchor in times of defeat, we run to him and his grace is sufficient for us when we are weak.

The weaker Christians, need much attention and much care. Spiritual pride can be very harmful to the body of Christ, instead we should not please ourselves and pass judgments on the ones that are weak but endure them in Christ. It is very easy for us to say that we know it all and forget the others. Even Christ did not come to please himself but to please the Father.

Joh 4:34 Jesus saith unto them, my meat is to do the will of him that sent me, and to finish his work.

He did not come in pride but in humility.

Mt 20:28 Even as the Son of man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister, and to give his life a ransom for many.

He came to the weak and he died for them, there is much suffering for the weak. It pleased him to suffer for the weak. He was obedient to death.

Php 2:7 But made himself of no reputation, and took upon him the form of a servant, and was made in the likeness of men:

8 And being found in fashion as a man, he humbled himself, and became obedient unto death, even the death of the cross.

Many times the pride of the strong Christian will make the weak shy, as they feel uncomfortable to come close to them. They feel that they are being looked through a magnifying glass at their weaknesses and faults. Instead there needs to be mutual embracement.

So instead of pride we need to be humble before God, and be like-minded towards one another, do not ignore the weak but receive them as Christ received them also to the glory of God.

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