

(6) PRACTICAL ADVICE: *Romans 12-15:6***Welcome**

- Christianity in Rome: Rom 1:1-17
- The letter as a whole: Rom 1-16
- Need of grace: Rom 1-4
- Gift of grace: Rom 5-8
- Jews and Gentiles: Rom 9-11
- **GRACE IN PRACTICE: ROM 12:1-15:6**
- Conclusion: Rom 15:7-33; 16
- Romans for today's church

(A) IS THERE A UNIT OF ARGUMENT?

There is a kind of frame, between the opening appeal and the final prayer, as follows:

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that you may abound in hope by the power of the Holy Spirit.

(B) WHAT STEPS ARE THERE IN THE ARGUMENT?

- i. Christian life as “reasonable worship” (12:1-2)
- ii. What does Christian living require? (12:3-13:14)
 - a) Your own gifts
 - b) Gift of love within the community (12:9-16)
 - c) Love in action outside the community (12:17-21)
 - d) How should we treat civil authorities? (13:1-7)
 - e) Being indebted in love (13:8-10)
 - f) “Knowing the time” (13:11-14)
- iii. Living “inclusively” and in tolerance of each other (14:1-15:13)
 - a) Tolerance is the call of everyone (14:1-12)
 - b) Especially the strong should be tolerant of the weak (14:13-23)
 - c) The example of Jesus, who was himself so tolerant (15:1-6)

(C) WHAT ARE THE KEY TEXTS, IN EACH SECTION, ALONG THE WAY?

A few key texts capture the import of all this advice:

12:1 I appeal to you therefore, brothers and sisters, by the mercies of God, to present your bodies as a **living sacrifice**, holy and acceptable to God, which is your spiritual worship. 2 Do not be conformed to this world, but **be transformed by the renewing of your minds, so that you may discern what is the will of God**—what is good and acceptable and perfect.

13:10 Love does no wrong to a neighbour; therefore, **love** is the fulfilling of the **law**.

14:7 We do not **live** to **ourselves**, and we do not **die** to **ourselves**. **8** If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord; so then, whether we live or whether we die, **we are the Lord's**.

15:7 Welcome one another, therefore, just as **Christ** has welcomed you, for the **glory** of God. **8** For I tell you that Christ has become a servant of the **circumcised** on behalf of the **truth** of God in order that he might confirm the **promises** given to the patriarchs, 9 and in order that the **Gentiles** might **glorify** God for his **mercy**.

(D) HOW FAR HAVE WE GOT IN THE ARGUMENT?

Romans 1-8	Romans 9-11	Romans 12-15
Inclusion of the <i>Gentiles</i> ("Rejection of Israel")	Inclusion of Israel	Exhortation: "Live inclusively"

Pointers for Prayer

1. *Conflict in community is really normal and everyday. However, resolving tensions is not easy — what has my experience been?*
2. *Do you find the principle given my Paul that the strong should give way to the weak a good and useful principle?*
3. *Attachment to human regulations not essential to the faith is not unknown (!) among us. Anything come to mind?*