Grace for Gentile Believers

Scripture: Romans 15:1-13

Big Idea:

Stronger believers should focus on unity and coming alongside those who think “rules” will help their walk. The focus should be love and unity.

Call to Action:

How can you help someone who is still growing in their faith when it comes to “rules” they must think they need to follow to be close to God?

Family Action:

Talk with your kids about how God gives different convictions, and remind them not to force those convictions on others.
Specifically, here speaking of the laws God gave Israel and “doing” them.

Exposure to Exposition & Exploring the Scriptures: (10-20 mins)

- Bible Drills (Memorization of OT & NT Book order)
- Guide the children to Romans 15:1-13 in the Bible. (Help them as needed, NT vs OT)
- Say: We are going to continue through Paul's letter to the church of Rome.
- We will learn that the gospel is God’s power to save everyone who believes, and we should never be ashamed of Jesus.
- Read aloud. (Ask kids to see their pointers on V1)

Review:

vv. 11:1-27 God is not done with Israel; He is showing kindness towards Gentiles (Israel’s Future)
vv. 11:28 — 12:2 God keeps His promises & Our relationship with God
vv. 12:3-13 Our Relationship with Believers & Serve the Body with spiritual gifts
vv. 12:14-21 Our Relationship with Unbelievers
vv. 13:1-14 Our Relationship with Governing Authority
vv. 14:1-23 How we can show Grace to Jewish Believers (Liberalism - Freedom)
vv. 15:1-13 How Jews show grace to Gentiles (Legalism- Laws/ Rules)

Opening Question

Have you ever had to give up something you wanted so you could help someone else? → How did it feel?

Notes:
In Romans 12–15, Paul teaches us how to live in response to God’s mercy—like a target, starting with our relationship with God, then others, the world, and society. As we grow in God’s Word, our lives change to reflect Jesus. In chapter 14, Paul explains that even when believers have different convictions (like food or

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special days), we should treat each other with patience, love, and kindness, remembering that we are all still growing.

In this chapter, Paul continues teaching how believers should treat one another, especially when they have different convictions. He reminds us that we should respect each other, not judge, and not force our personal rules on others.

Paul has already explained that we are saved by grace, not by following rules, so the Law no longer controls us. Because of this, the biggest focus is not about rules, but about loving and accepting one another in the church.

Side note: This does not mean that sin should be accepted in the church. Paul is not saying we accept everything—he is specifically addressing differences about old Law-based practices, not sinful behavior.

Remember, Paul is writing to the early church where some Jewish believers still followed parts of the Law and were teaching Gentiles to do the same. In this situation, Paul teaches that believers should not force their personal convictions on others, but instead walk in grace and unity.

Paul teaches that strong believers should be careful to help and encourage weaker believers, not confuse or hurt them. In everything, we are called to live in unity and show Christ's love.

***Some Jews were explaining to Gentiles that "doing" the law made you closer to God. Those Jews and Gentiles who know salvation has nothing to do with "doing" the law must show these believers love and unity. Do not be prideful or arrogant.

Key Theological Term:

Sanctification- The process of becoming more like Jesus in our lives.

ROMANS 15:1-13 NLT

We who are strong must be considerate of those who are sensitive about things like this. We must not just please ourselves. 2 We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord. 3 For even Christ didn't live to please himself. As the Scriptures say, "The insults of those who insult you, O God, have fallen on me." 4 Such things were written in the Scriptures long ago to teach us. And the Scriptures give us hope and encouragement as we wait patiently for God's promises to be fulfilled.
5 May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. 6 Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
7 Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory. 8 Remember that Christ came as a servant to the Jews to show that God is true to the promises he made to their ancestors. 9 He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his mercies to them. That is what the psalmist meant when

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he wrote:
“For this, I will praise you among the Gentiles;
I will sing praises to your name.”
10 And in another place it is written,
“Rejoice with his people,
you Gentiles.”
11 And yet again,
“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles.
Praise him, all you people of the earth.”
12 And in another place Isaiah said,
“The heir to David’s throne will come,
and he will rule over the Gentiles.
They will place their hope on him.”
13 I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- V1-4 The Strong Should Help Others Grow
  - Paul teaches that stronger believers should lovingly support and be patient with those who are still growing. Instead of focusing on themselves, they should help others grow in their faith. (v.1-2)
    - This means helping them, not getting frustrated with them.
    - This doesn’t mean we agree with everything— it means we care about people more than our preferences.
  - Follow Jesus’ Example (v.3)
    - He didn’t live to please Himself—He suffered to help us.
    - If Jesus gave up His comfort for us, we can give up small things to help others.
  - God’s Word Teaches and Encourages Us (v. 4)
    - The Bible helps us learn how to live and love others well.
    - It gives us: Instruction (teach us)
    - Hope (Future Glory)
    - Encouragement
  - **Kid Point:** Strong believers honor God by patiently helping others grow

ROMANS 15:5-6 May God, who gives this patience and encouragement, help you live in complete harmony with each other, as is fitting for followers of Christ Jesus. 6 Then all of you can join together with one voice, giving praise and glory to God, the Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.

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- V5-6 Unity Brings Glory to God
  - When believers live in harmony, it brings glory to God.
    - Unity doesn't mean everyone is the same— it means we love each other despite differences.
    - This will lead to worship among the Body of Christ (believers)
  - **Kid Point:** Unity glorifies God

> ROMANS 15:7 Therefore, accept each other just as Christ has accepted you so that God will be given glory.

- V7 Accepting Others like Jesus (summary verse)
  - Paul says we should accept one another just like Christ accepted us.
    - Jesus didn't wait for us to be perfect— He welcomed us first.
    - We didn't earn Jesus' love.
  - We must remember what we were like when Christ came to us:
    - Sinful
    - Different from Him
    - Not perfect
    - But Jesus still accepted us.
  - Instead, we must show grace and love.
    - Acceptance helps people grow
    - People grow best when they feel loved and welcomed.
    - The Father is glorified when His people live in unity and grace.
  - **Kid Point:** We glorify God when we accept others with grace, just as Jesus accepted us.

> ROMANS 15:8-12 Remember that Christ came as a servant to the Jews to
> show that God is true to the promises he made to their ancestors.
> 9 He also came so that the Gentiles might give glory to God for his
> mercies to them. That is what the psalmist meant when he wrote:
> "For this, I will praise you among the Gentiles;
> I will sing praises to your name."
> 10 And in another place it is written,
> "Rejoice with his people,
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> 11 And yet again,
> "Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles.
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> 12 And in another place Isaiah said,
> "The heir to David's throne will come,

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> and he will rule over the Gentiles.
> They will place their hope on him."

- V8-12 God's Plan Includes Gentiles for Salvation
  - Paul teaches that God's plan was always to save both Jews and Gentiles through Jesus. (v.8-9)
    - Jesus came first to the Jewish people to fulfill God's promises.
    - God didn't just save one group—He made a way for all people.
    - Gentiles (non-Jews) are included in God's family too.
    - This is nothing new. The Old Testament (Hebrew Scriptures) showed this plainly.
    - God planned this from the beginning!
  - Psalm 18:49 (v.9b)
    - Jews will praise God AMONG the Gentiles
  - Deuteronomy 32:43 (v.10)
    - Gentiles will rejoice WITH the Jewish people
  - Psalm 117:1 (v.11)
    - ALL people will praise Him together.
  - Isaiah 11:10 (v.12)
    - Gentiles will place their hope in a Jewish Messiah
  - Paul uses Old Testament scriptures to show the Jews and Gentiles in this early church that God has always planned for salvation to be for both Jew and Gentile. This is nothing new.
    - None is better than the other.
    - Our focus should be to unite together, setting aside differences in worship, and this glorifies God.
  - **Kid Point:** God's plan was always to save people from every nation through Jesus, so we worship Him together as one family.

> ROMANS 15:13 I pray that God, the source of hope, will fill you completely with joy and peace because you trust in him. Then you will overflow with confident hope through the power of the Holy Spirit.

- V13 Filled with Joy, Peace, and Hope
  - Paul teaches that God gives believers joy, peace, and hope as they continue trusting and following Him.
    - God is the one who gives us true hope—not in this world, but in what is to come. (Hope)
    - When we follow Jesus closely, we experience His joy and peace.
    - Joy and peace aren't based on our circumstances.
    - Even when life is hard, God can give us: Joy in our hearts & peace in our minds

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- These are gifts from walking with Him.
- The Holy Spirit works in us to grow these things.
- As we walk with Christ, our hope grows.
- We begin to focus more on eternal things than temporary things.
- And in turn our walk as a Christian is more confident and strong

- **Kid Point:** When we walk closely with Jesus, the Holy Spirit fills us with joy, peace, and a strong hope that lasts forever.

Observation Questions (What did it say?)

1. What are strong believers told to do for weaker believers? (Strong believers are told to bear the weaknesses of others and not just please themselves. v.1)
2. Who is given as the example of not pleasing Himself? (Jesus Christ is given as the example, because He bore our sins, not for Himself but for others. v. 3)
3. What does Paul say God will fill believers with? (God will fill believers with joy and peace in believing. (v.13 - through the Holy Spirit)

Understanding Questions (What does it mean?)

1. Why should believers put others before themselves? (Because it helps build others up and follows the example of Christ, who sacrificed for us. v. 2-3)
2. Why must believers accept one another? (Because Christ accepted us by grace, and doing so brings glory to God. v.7)
3. Why does Paul emphasize both Jews and Gentiles praising God together? (To show that God's plan was always to include all people in salvation through Jesus. Still today, there are HUGE disagreements between Jews and Gentiles. Jews claim Jesus is not the Son of God, while Gentiles proclaim that a Jewish man is the Son of God, in whom salvation is found. v.9-12)

Application Questions (What should I do?)

1. How can you help someone who is still growing in their faith? (By being patient, encouraging them, and putting their needs before your own. v. 1-2)
2. How can you follow Jesus' example in your daily life? (By choosing to serve others instead of always choosing what pleases yourself. v.3)
3. How can a believer experience more joy and peace in their life? (Walk closely with Jesus by trusting and obeying Him daily. v.13)

Activities

1: Game

Build Each Other Up Relay

Supplies:

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- Cups or blocks (to build towers)
- Index cards or slips of paper
- Markers

Instructions:
Help students understand that our choices can help or hurt other believers, and we should live in a way that builds others up instead of causing them to stumble.

Step 1 – Set Up Teams

- Divide kids into small teams (3–5 per group).
- Each team gets: A pile of cups/blocks
- A stack of cards

Step 2 – Write Encouragements

- Before the game starts, have kids write encouraging or helpful actions on the cards, such as:
- "Help a friend carry something."
- "Be patient"
- "Let someone go first."
- "Say something kind."
- "Ask a friend for a suggestion."
- "Give up turn for a friend to go instead."

Step 3 – The Relay Challenge

- One child from each team runs to the front.
- They draw a card and act out or explain it quickly.
- If the team guesses correctly → they get to add one block to their tower.
- Then the next teammate goes.

Step 4 – Twist (Important Lesson!)

- If a team: Interrupts, laughs at someone, or acts impatient, they must remove one block from their tower.
- This shows how selfishness tears others down instead of building up.

Discussion: After the game, gather everyone and ask:

- Was it easier to build or tear down?
- How did it feel when others were patient and encouraging?

Connect this to the Bible passage. Romans 15:2 We should help others do what is right and build them up in the Lord.

Explain:

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- We are called to build others up, not tear them down
- Strong believers help others grow
- Unity happens when we put others first

2: Memory Verse

Come up with moves
Romans 14:19 So then, let us aim for harmony in the church and try to build each other up.

- • • •

3: Discussion

For Older Youth students, see separate printable handout.

Remind them: What is the Gospel?

Jesus' perfect life paid for the sins of all who believe. Jesus died on the cross as the punishment for sin. But Jesus did not stay dead, three days later He rose to life (resurrection) defeating the power of death. Believe, and you will be saved!

- We are all sinful. We all deserve the consequence of sin- death.
- Jesus is what saves us from the sin we all have in our bodies. And one day, he'll even give us a new body.

Supporting Truths Kids Can Grasp:

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- Strong believers should help and be patient with those who are still growing in their faith. (Romans 15:1).
- We should put others first and do what helps them grow. (Romans 15:2).
- Jesus is our example—He didn't live to please Himself but served others. (Romans 15:3).
- Believers should accept one another just as Jesus accepted us. (Romans 15:7).
- God fills us with joy, peace, and hope as we trust and follow Him. (Romans 15:13).

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