

# The Importance Of Our Individual Relationship To God.

Romans 14:11,12

## Introduction:

- A. The relationship of each person to God is the point of emphasis in the New Testament
  - a. Each stands on his own. (Rev. 3:4; Gal. 6:4-10)
  - b. Each to be judged on his own. (Rom. 14:4-12; 2 Cor. 5:10; 1 Cor. 4:1-5).
- B. The relationship between each individual to God may be replaced in our emphasis.
  - 1. We tend to follow society in emphasizing group action and responsibility.
    - a. Tend to think of church's responsibility rather than my responsibility.
    - b. Tend to look to "church" to solve problems rather than individual study and action.
    - c. Tend to shift most of responsibility for lost and wayward to church.
  - 2. We tend to look more to relationship to church than personal relationship to God.
    - a. Tend to look to "church" to assign and guide us in Lord's work.
    - b. Tend to think of relationship to church than to God--what church teaches or allows.
- C. Relationship between each individual and God is basic to the "church's" relationship to God.

## Discussion:

### I. Individual Christians Make Up The *Universal Church*.

- A. They share a common salvation. (Jude 3; Acts 2:47; Heb. 12:23).
- B. They share a common faith. (Tit. 1:4; cf. 1 Cor. 4:17).
- C. They work only as individuals in the Lord's work.
  - 1. No joint fund, oversight, nor work.
  - 2. Each fulfills individual responsibility. (Gal. 6:6; Jas. 1:27).

### II. Individual Christians Make Of Each *Local Church*.

- A. Individuals joined together at a given place.
  - 1. No part of larger organization.
  - 2. Not "a congregation of the church of Christ".
- B. Bound together for mutual edification and joint action.
  - 1. Mutual edification either by joint or reciprocal action:
    - a. Teaching and preaching. (Eph. 4:11-16).
    - b. Worshipping together in assembly. (Heb. 10:25; 1 Cor. 12-14)
    - c. Discipline (1 Cor. 5:4).
  - 2. Joint action by pooling resources.
    - a. To support preaching. (Phil. 4:4)
    - b. To support needy saints. (Acts 11:26; 1 Cor. 16:1,2).
- C. Working together as church requires actions of each individual.
  - 1. Some things done by individuals rather than as the church. (1 Tim. 5:16).
  - 2. Some things done by individuals acting together as the church. (Eph. 4:16).
    - a. Church work is combined action of individuals as the group.
    - b. Individual work is work done independently of the group.
- D. Working together as the church still requires individual initiative.
  - 1. Lord's Supper (1 Cor. 11:28).
  - 2. Contribution. (1 Cor. 16:1,2; Acts 11:29).
  - 3. Singing & praying. (Eph. 5:19; 1 Cor. 14:15).

## Conclusion:

- A. Helps greatly to understand this basic principle.
  - 1. Keeps us from making unnecessary judgments. (Rom. 14:4-12).
  - 2. Keeps us from over reacting to judgment from others. (1 Cor. 4:1-5).
  - 3. Makes us aware we must obey God regardless of others.
  - 4. Makes us aware we will be judged as individuals not as a church.
  - 5. Causes us to look to Christ, not church, as savior and authority.
  - 6. Causes us to do our duty without waiting to be told by church.
- B. Takes nothing away from the importance of the church, properly understood.
  - 1. Universal church a host of saved individuals--each serving God independently.
  - 2. Local church a group of saved individuals working together as a unit--or group.