

Session 9: Community.

How can we live together in love?

ROMANS 13-14

KEY VERSE:

'For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit ...'

ROMANS 14.17 (NIV)

Key themes

- Citizens of earth and of heaven
- Respect authorities, contribute to society
- Live in the light
- Unite around the gospel
- Primary and secondary issues
- The goal for the Church is unity, not uniformity

Possible issues

DIVISION IN THE CHURCH/BETWEEN DENOMINATIONS

Response: We need to be honest here. The Church isn't perfect and we aren't always unified in our views. We are a work in progress and we need to play our part to bring unity where we can or to disagree well where we can't.

DISAGREEING WITH THE STATE/GOVERNMENT/AUTHORITIES

Response: We need to be careful and live as peaceably as we can by obedience to earthly authorities. However, we may also need to take a stand where we see injustice, inequality or evil at work. Always seek the wisdom of others before acting in disobedience.

Wrap up

- In summary: we are citizens of earth and heaven. We belong to God and ultimately we are to obey him. We need wisdom to be effective ambassadors of God's Kingdom – both to live peaceably and to stand against injustice where necessary
- Reminder of daily readings
- Next week: Mission. How can we be ambitious with the gospel? Paul eventually gets to Rome, not as a tourist but as an evangelist desperate to share the gospel. Paul's passion for mission results in small gatherings of Christians from diverse social and ethnic backgrounds becoming one in Christ. Paul is unashamed of the gospel and willing to risk all to share it. This should motivate and inspire us to share the gospel today.

SUGGESTED OUTLINE

- Refreshments
- Welcome and introduction including brief recap of last session (4 minutes)
- Optional discussion starter questions (5 minutes):
What is your nationality? What does it mean to you to be British/French/Nigerian (or wherever you are from)?
- Video part 1 (15 minutes)
- Discussion time (questions in participants' guide) (25 minutes)
- Video part 2 (10 minutes)
- Personal prayer/reflection (10 minutes)