

Luther refers to sinning against conscience, and reference is made to Luther's words at the Diet of Worms that acting against conscience is neither safe nor salutary"; Sanday-Headlam for its part says the maxim is not concerned with the usual conduct of unbelievers and must not be extended to cases other than those St. Paul is considering; Cranfield characteristically has a comprehensive treatment of the statement's generality, sense of "faith", and "is sin"; Grothe comments, "As God *continually* pours the forgiveness of sins over him the Christian sees his venturing into action as a sort of *forgiven adventure*, an *attempt* to show the will of God in his daily life.") ...

- 15:1-13 Praise God with One Voice: As outlined on p.269, we are continuing the fifth and final of Romans' five major sections, "Righteousness Practiced" (Romans 12:1-15:13), continuing the third and final of its three subsections, "Specific Encouragements to Christians in Rome about Relationships to Other Christians" (14:1-15:11), with the third of three sub-subsections given the sub-subheading "Praise God with One Voice" (15:1-13, the title is drawn from 15:6). As noted previously, there is some difficulty distinguishing between the sub-subsections, as, for example, the preceding discussion of the strong and weak continues into this sub-subsection, as does the idea of "welcoming", with the same Greek verb used in 14:1 and 14:3 used twice in 15:7. Christ as "example" seems to bridge issue of the strong and weak and the Jew and Gentile (despite the ESV's title, Christ is not explicitly called an "example" in the section, even if He implicitly is made to be one, and treating Christ only as a law example is to miss His embodying and enacting the Gospel [with due respect to Luther, whom *TLSB* cites in regard to Christ as example in this passage]). In the critical edition of the Greek text that I usually use (and, generally, in the ESV), 15:1-6 is formatted as one paragraph (with an Old Testament poetry quotation embedded in it), and 15:7-13 is formatted as another paragraph with four Old Testament verses formatted as extended quotations (not all are poetry, though all arguably are formatted as such). Sanday-Headlam in some way treats 14:1-15:6 together as toleration of the strong and the weak and distinguishes 15:7-13 as toleration of the Jew and the Gentile. In what follows, we treat 15:1-13 together, noting the paragraph break between v.6 and v.7. ... **V.1 We who are strong have an obligation** (the Greek connects the preceding to v.1 with a simple "and" or "but" left untranslated by the ESV, though Sanday-Headlam refers to the immediate connection of ch.14 to ch.15; the first-person plural present-tense indicative verb "we owe" or "are debtors" is first in the Greek construction with some degree of emphasis [in Romans, the Divinely-inspired St. Paul had used the same verb back in 13:8 regarding love and uses it again in 15:27 regarding the offering he has collected from the Gentiles for the Jews]; since the verb entails the subject "we", Paul's use of the first-person plural pronoun is also an emphatic "we ourselves"; in this clause St. Paul, by way of a nominative substantive appositive using an adjective for "able" or "powerful" [seemingly not predication], explicitly associates himself with "the strong" [as we have noted, the discussion of the strong and the weak began back in 14:1; with reference to 14:14, *TLSB* refers to the strong's grasping the extent of their

freedom but the weak's being still uncertain; Franzmann seems to suggest that Paul moves past specific examples and deals more-generally with the relationship between the strong and weak in the worship life of the Church [confer Sanday-Headlam and Cranfield], and Franzmann refers to the obligation not as ethical but an "ought" that has its basis in God's redeeming act in Christ; Grothe similarly says people do not owe God anything for the gracious gift of justification but that the lordship of Christ and their status as Christians entail certain things that members owe one another]; the debt or obligation of the strong is twofold as he describes in what follows) ... **to bear with the failings of the weak**, (the "infirmities" come first in the Greek construction [*TLSB* refers to their inadequate recognition of freedoms in Christ; *CSSB* rules out sins], followed by their attribution to the "unable" or "powerless" [the same root word as the "able" or "powerful" but with the alpha-privative; Cranfield notes the new term introduced here to refer to those previously called weak in faith, though compare Grothe, who prefers the idea of able to bear burdens and not able to bear burdens], and finally the present active infinitive "to take up" or "to carry", which *CSSB* comments is not merely to tolerate or put-up-with but to uphold lovingly [in the earlier written Galatians 6:2, St. Paul using the same verb told the Christians to bear one another's burdens and so fulfill the law of Christ, and Sanday-Headlam refer to the verb's use for bearing the cross literally in John 19:17 and figuratively in Luke 19:27]; Roehrs-Franzmann refers to Paul's stating the obligation to love negatively in 14:13-23 and positively in 15:1-6) ... **and not to please ourselves**. (the usual conjunction for "and" conjoins the two infinitive phrases that complete the thought of the debt or obligation that was mentioned at the start of the verse [Cranfield says this second serves to clarify the first]; in the Greek construction the negative particle for "not" comes first, followed by the reflexive pronoun for "ourselves", and finally the infinitive "to please" [the repeated uses of the verb in vv.3 and 4 in some sense link the verses together]; *TLSB* says Paul urges us to use and, if necessary, give up our freedoms in order to serve others; *CSSB* says not that Christians should never please themselves but not without regard to the scruples of other Christians; Sanday-Headlam refers to the root of Christian disunion as selfishness) ... **V.2 Let each of us please his neighbor** ("each of us" comes first in the Greek construction [referring back to the "ourselves" in the preceding phrase and the "we the strong" earlier in that same verse, though Grothe thinks of it as every Christian, who one minute may be able and the next minute not be able]; next in the Greek phrasing is juxtaposed "the neighbor"; and finally in the Greek text is the third-person singular present active imperative verb "let please", with the form's exhortative but still imperative force and presumably the usual sense of continuing to do so or doing repeatedly [the specific verb was used at the end of v.1 and is used again in v.3]; Paul in the earlier written 1 Corinthians 9:19 refers to making himself a servant to all in order to win more of them) ... **for his good, to build him up**. (two prepositional phrases ostensibly provide the purpose or reason for each of the strong's pleasing his or her perhaps presumably weak neighbor; arguably the "good" is more-

specifically an “act of building” [confer Sanday-Headlam and Cranfield {who cites Käsemann}; likely with some contrast to the spiritual loss and destruction that had been discussed in the preceding verses of ch.14]; Paul in 1 Corinthians 10:24 similarly says to let no one seek his own good but the good of his neighbor, and 1 Corinthians 10:33 is similar to both 9:19 and 10:24; in Romans 14:19 Paul exhorted pursuing mutual upbuilding; Cranfield contrasts pleasing the neighbor by flattery and condonement of his wrong-doing with pleasing that has regard to his edification and salvation and God) ... **V.3 For Christ did not please himself**, (the Greek text has the usual conjunction for “and”, as well as the coordinating explanatory conjunction “for”, which in this instance seems to explain the basis for the preceding exhortation with the following Scriptural citation; the use of the title “the Christ” may be notable in this context; the negative particle “not”, the reflexive pronoun “Himself”, and the verb simple-past tense verb “pleased” reflect the construction of the expression of the second part of the debt or obligation in v.1; Franzmann considers noteworthy that Paul does not point to the life of Christ to support his claim but that Christ lived that way according to the Scriptures [confer and compare Cranfield]) ... **but as it is written**, (the Greek uses the strong-adversative “but”, followed by the subordinating comparative conjunction “just as” and the third-person singular perfect-tense passive-voice verb “it had been written” with ongoing result so that “it stands written” [ultimately God is the one carrying out the action, even if the following verse, Psalm 69:9, essentially quoted from a Greek translation of the Hebrew, was inspired through David; note that the first half of the verse is the familiar “For zeal for your house has consumed me”]) ... **“The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.”** (the noun for the “reproaches” derives from the root verb of the participle for the “reproaching ones” have the same root; the “you” is singular and appears to refer to God in its original context [confer *CSSB*]; the verb “fell” is third-person plural simple-past tense active-voice indicative; the prepositional phrase “upon me” comes at the end of the Greek construction, perhaps with some degree of emphasis; presumably if the Christ had been trying to please Himself, He would not have let others’ reproaches fall on Him [confer Luther]; *TLSB* notes the messianic significance of Psalm 69 and says, “Jesus suffered the reproaches we deserve from God because of our sins. On the cross, He also bore the judgmental and harmful actions we impose on fellow believers.”; Roehrs-Franzmann refers to the Jews reproaching Jesus for the prodigal liberality of His grace and thereby reproaching God for sending His Son to seek the lost; Sanday-Headlam, on the other hand, sees Paul saying that, as Christ bore our reproaches, so we must bear the reproaches of others; Cranfield sees Christ as bearing people’s hostility towards God) ... **V.4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction**, (the Greek text again has the coordinating explanatory conjunction “for”, in this instance again introducing the explanation that follows; the Greek text’s “whatever things” is plural, though the verb is third-person singular [arguably a collective plural] simple-past tense passive voice indicative “written before”, again arguably with God as

the ultimate agent [the ESV perhaps paraphrases a bit with “in former days”]; the Greek text has the prepositional phrase “for the our instruction” next [the specific preposition can be used to express purpose, though confer and compare the purpose/result that follows in the verse]; and finally in the Greek text is the verb “was written”, a third-person singular simple-past tense passive voice indicative [God as the agent, and not denying and lasting force to the writing just because the usual perfect tense is not used; *TLSB* notes the Old Testament is still God’s teaching for us]; presumably the specific “instruction” in view is Christ’s not seeking His own pleasure but the neighbor’s; we might discuss whether the purpose of instruction was any different for Paul’s and the other New Testament authors’ writing [confer such passages as 1 Corinthians 9:10 regarding things written for our sake and 2 Timothy 3:16 regarding the inspiration and purpose of Scripture [and note that Scriptures inerrancy comes as a result of its inspiration]] ... **that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.** (the subordinating conjunction can indicate a final purpose [and with God such purposes can also be results, though working through means God permits Himself to be resisted]; two prepositional phrases follow [that is “through the endurance” and “through the encouragement”, though some manuscripts omit the second use of what is the same preposition], with the modifier “of the Scriptures” perhaps only attached to the second prepositional phrase [though see how the endurance and encouragement are somewhat combined in v.5; an alternative perhaps would be “our” endurance]; “endurance” is a “remaining behind” or “patient enduring”; “encouragement” is a “calling to one’s aid” or “encouragement” or “comfort”; “of the Scriptures” is more-literally “of the writings”, though the specific sense is surely intended; next in the Greek construction is “hope” [what Cranfield refers to the importance of hope in Romans, and Grothe refers to both the subjective hoping, as well as its object, that is, the promises of God], and last in the Greek construction is the verb “we might have” [the subjunctive mood perhaps appropriate given not the uncertainty of the hope that we hold fast to {Hebrews 3:6} but the uncertainty of whether or not we endure and let the Scriptures work in us as God intends; *TLSB* quotes the Formula of Concord Solid Declaration XI:92 regarding weakening consolation and hope as misunderstanding Scripture and explaining it contrary to the Holy Spirit’s will and meaning]; “we” in this context presumably including the neighbor; we can discuss how what Paul says fits in this particular context is nevertheless a very general statement about all of Holy Scripture, Old and New Testaments; the blessing that the Divinely-inspired St. Paul gives to his Roman hearers/readers in what follows seems to follow quite naturally) ... **V.5 May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus,** (the Greek text connects v.4 to v.5 with the simple conjunction that can be translated “and” or “but”, which the ESV does not translate [Cranfield says the conjunction marks the fact that the prayer-wish brings the present paragraph to a conclusion]; “the God of the endurance and the encouragement” is next in the Greek text,

echoing the preceding v.4 [Cranfield says the words are taken up from the preceding verse; see also, for example, 2 Corinthians 1:3 regarding the God of all comfort]; the verb “may give” is in the optative mood for a wish or entreaty; the indirect object “to you” is a plural “all y’all” [Paul arguably is not so much excluding himself as blessing them]; next in the Greek text is perhaps “the same”, in the accusative case, perhaps the object of the infinitive “to have understanding” or “to think” [the ESV seems to reach for “to live in such harmony”; see also Romans 12:16 but compare 2 Corinthians 13:11 and, on the sentiment, confer Philippians 2:2; 4:2; 1 Corinthians 1:10; and 1 Peter 3:8]; the prepositional phrase can be “in” or “by” or “with” one another; “according to Christ Jesus” ends the clause in this verse; Cranfield says Paul has not presumed to decide the exact content of the agreement he desires to be given; the CPH editors of the *CSSB* say, “Not that believers should all come to the same conclusions on the matters of conscience discussed above, but that differences in these matters should not be allowed to destroy basic unity”; Grothe comments, “The focus here is especially the outlook of ‘pleasing the neighbor for his good for edification’) ... **V.6 that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.** (used again is the subordinating final conjunction “so that”, introducing the purpose or result; the adverb “with one mind” is next [under translated, I would say by the ESV; the adverb is a compound of the words for “rush along” and “in unison” and suggests a musical image of different notes harmonizing in pitch and tone: “As the instruments of a great concert under the direction of a concert master, so the Holy Spirit blends together the lives of members of Christ’s Church”]; “in” or “by” or “with” one mouth [note the inner leads to the outer; like Romans 10:10 believe then confess, and the mouth includes the voice {confer Grothe}]; “you-all might glorify” is again a present-tense active-voice subjunctive appropriate with the wished purpose/result; Paul arguably continues blessing his hearers/readers, not excluding himself; the glory to “the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ” need not necessarily exclude the Son Himself and the Holy Spirit [Cranfield notes Michel’s observation of a gradation from Christ in v.3, through Christ Jesus in v.5, to the Lord of us Jesus Christ in v.6]; we again note the paragraph break between v.6 and v.7 in the Greek text, if not in the ESV [its placement of v.7 seems to reflect a different understanding of v.7’s serving as a conclusion to vv.1-6 rather than an introduction to vv.8-13]) ... **V.7 Therefore welcome one another** (the Greek coordinating inferential conjunction can be “wherefore” or “on which account” [Cranfield says it introduces the concluding paragraph of the section, that the conclusion which the Christians of Rome must draw from what has been said in 14:1-15:6 is summed up in the following command]; the verb “welcome” is a second-person plural present-tense middle-voice imperative, the same particular verb as used back in 14:1 and 14:3 [Philemon 17 is another example of Paul’s use of the verb]; the reciprocal pronoun “one-another” arguably cuts across boundaries of strong/weak and Jew/Gentile [confer Sanday-Headlam, who comments, “All whom Christ has received should, without any distinction, be accepted into

His Church. This is intended to apply especially to the main division existing at that time in the community, that between Jewish and Gentile Christians,” though Sanday-Headlam also later admits the probability that the relations between Jew and Gentile were directly or indirectly involved in the relations of the weak and the strong [confer Cranfield]) ... **as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.** (the subordinating comparative conjunction “just as” is followed in the Greek text by a word that can be translated “also”, which the ESV omits [Cranfield follows Käsemann and says the clause states the reason why they must accept one another]; here “Christ” has welcomed, and back in 14:3 “God” had welcomed; “you” is a plural “all-y’all”; “to” or “for” the glory of God can be a purpose [and relates to the glorifying of v.6]; the ESV puts a comma that perhaps leaves intentionally or unintentionally ambiguous whether “for the glory of God” goes with the Romans’ welcoming one another or Christ’s welcoming them [the Greek text has a comma after “one another” that the ESV omits; we might discuss whether the glory of God belongs to one, the other, or both [perhaps as a distinction without a difference]; *TLSB* comments, “Paul’s prayer for the Roman Christians summarizes his hope for how they will respond to the entire Letter. Paul makes clear that the specific unity he seeks to reinforce is between Jew and Gentiles.”; Roehrs-Franzmann comments, “God’s love in Christ spanned greater and graver differences than those which separate vegetarians from those who eat meat” (confer Franzmann); and Franzmann refers to Christ’s welcoming the Romans as the Romans’ motivation for welcoming one another; Sanday-Headlam says, “As the following verses show, Christ has summoned both Jews and Greeks into His kingdom in order to promote the glory of God, to exhibit in the one case His faithfulness, in the other His mercy”.) ... **V.8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to the circumcised to show God’s truthfulness,** (the coordinating explanatory conjunction “for” can express cause, explanation, inference, or continuation [Cranfield thinks it marks the relation between the main sentence of v.7 and vv.8-12]; St. Paul refers to his present-tense “saying” [even if dictating a letter; Cranfield says the expression introduces a solemn doctrinal declaration, and Grothe rejects the idea of its being Paul’s personal opinion]; again the use of the title “Christ” may be notable; “a servant” is the slightly-higher household servant not the lowest outside slave, which is used in other places [Cranfield mentions the likelihood that the Old Testament idea of the servant of the Lord is being referred to]; next in the Greek text is a perfect-tense passive-voice infinitive “to have become” [not a finite verb as the ESV translates it, though Cranfield says the force of the infinitive is has become and remains]; the Greek literally says “of circumcision”, though it seems “those of the circumcision” are meant [reference is made to Matthew 15:24 where Jesus says He was sent “only” to the lost sheep of Israel”, and *TLSB* also refers to Paul’s “to the Jew first” in Romans 1:16; compare Sanday-Headlam, however, who thinks that the reference is to Christ’s carrying out the promises implied in that covenant the seal of which was circumcision]; the preposition that follows can mean “on behalf of” or “for the sake of” or

“concerning” [the ESV paraphrases a bit with “to show”]; in this instance the action is concerning “truth of God”) ... **in order to confirm the promises given to the patriarchs**, (the Greek text uses a preposition for “to” or “for” that can express purpose; the infinitive that follows can be “to confirm” or “to secure”; “the promises” are modified as “of the fathers”, but the ESV arguably correctly paraphrases the sense of God’s having given those promises “to the patriarchs”; *TLSB* notes that the Old Testament promises to the Jews are fulfilled in Jesus and suggests the promises to all nations are treated in vv.9-12, though the promises to the patriarchs arguably already were in some sense promises to all nations) ... **V.9 and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy.** (the Greek conjunction can be “and” or “but”; next is the “Gentiles” or “nations” [in some contrast to those of the circumcision in v.8; next in the Greek text is the same preposition for “on behalf of” or for the sake of” or “concerning” only this time followed by “mercy”; there is no second “for”, though the second infinitive “to glorify” could be taken as parallel to the infinitive “to confirm” in v.8 [and the glorifying goes back to vv.7 and 6; Sanday-Headlam suggests that the call of the Gentiles is shown to be equally with the fulfilment of the promise to the Jews, dependent on the covenant made with Abraham, but compare Cranfield on the solution to the difficult construction, and see also Grothe]; in this instance, “God” is the object of their glorifying; *CSSB* summarizes well, “From the beginning, God’s redemptive work in and for Israel had in view the redemption of the Gentiles [see Ge 12:3]. They would both see God’s mighty and gracious acts for his people and hear the praises of God’s people as they celebrated what God had done for them...Thus they would come to know the true God and glorify him for his mercy...God’s greatest and climactic act for Israel’s salvation was the sending of the Messiah to fulfill the promises made to the patriarchs and so to gather in the great harvest of the Gentiles.”) ... **As it is written**, (the Greek subordinating comparative conjunction “just as” introduces the usual third-person singular perfect-tense passive-voice indicative verb “it has been written” with the ongoing result in the present that “it stands written” [we might discuss to what extent the passages that follow support the Divinely-inspired St. Paul’s preceding claim]; in this instance, what follows appears to be from Greek translations of the Hebrew of Psalm 18:49 with further reference to David’s song of deliverance in 2 Samuel 22:50) ... **“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles**, (the reason behind “therefore” does not seem clear in the excerpt; the verb might be more-literally say-out-the-same-thing [the root is often translated “confess”; we might discuss hymns as sung confessions of the faith]; “you” is singular of the Triune God; “in” can be “among” [so the AV translates it some 117 of its 2782 uses]; the “Gentiles” or “the nations”) ... **and sing to your name.”** (perhaps more-literally the clause could be rendered, “and to the name of You I will play”; God and His Name can be used interchangeably in some cases; the Greek verb is the root of the noun for “Psalm” and has to do first with plucking strings or striking chords, playing or singing to a stringed instrument such as a harp [so much for speaking the psalms or not using instruments?])

... **V.10 And again it is said**, (“and again” we might better translate “he is saying” [the ESV changes the active voice to passive; Cranfield says the Scriptures could be the supplied subject or Moses, better than God]; what follows is essentially a quotation of a Greek translation of the Hebrew of Deuteronomy 32:43) ... **“Rejoice, O Gentiles, with his people.”** (the ESV text note indicates that the reading used is reflected in the Masoretic Text; “people” is a usual reference to God’s people of Israel) ... **V.11 And again**, (“and again” is followed in some manuscripts by “he is saying”, as was found in v.10; in this case what follows is from Psalm 117:1) ... **“Praise the Lord, all you Gentiles, and let all the peoples extol him.”** (again “Gentiles” can be “nations”, and “the peoples” would seem to be the Israelites) ... **V.12 And again Isaiah says**, (the “again” is referring to another passage, not another passage from Isaiah; in this case Isaiah 11:10 from a Greek translation of the Hebrew [confer also Revelation 5:5; 22:16]) ... **“The root of Jesse will come, even he who arises to rule the Gentiles; in him will the Gentiles hope.”** (if Jesus’s service to the Gentiles was unexpressed in vv.7-9, it is more explicit in this verse; the reference to God the Son is followed by references to God the Father and God the Holy Spirit, for a nice Trinitarian reference; Cranfield notes that the fourfold testimony given, there is at least one passage from the Law, Prophets, and Writings) ... **V.13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing**, (first in the Greek text is the conjunction that can be translated “and” or “but”, which the ESV omits; next is “the God of hope”; “hope” was just mentioned in vv.12 and 4 and is mentioned again in v.13b [Sanday-Headlam says the special attribute and the whole benediction is suggested by the concluding words of the previous quotation]; the verb “fill” is optative again [confer v.5]; “you” is a plural “all-y’all”; there is no preposition in the Greek text behind the ESV’s “with”, but the Greek genitive case can be used in reference to a content that fills and so is translated “with”; Sanday-Headlam refers to joy and peace as the result of true faith in the Christian’s heart, and we might think of the Lord’s greeting of “peace” on Easter Evening and the disciples’ reaction of joy [John 20:19-20]; more-literally we might translate “in the to-believe”) ... **so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.** (again the preposition usually translated “to” or “for” gives the purpose more-literally translated “for the to-abound”; “you” is a plural “all-y’all”; again “hope” had just been mentioned in vv.4, 12, and 13a; “in” or “by” or “with”; “power” or “might” or “Strength”; “of the Holy Spirit” [again with the Father earlier in this verse and the Son at the end of the preceding verse, this is a nice Trinitarian reference; reference is made to Romans 14:17 where Paul mentions peace and joy in the Holy Spirit; Roehrs-Franzmann comments that by believing, by receiving from God, both strong and weak can receive the joy and peace they need for living and worshiping together, that by God’s working, by the power of the Holy Spirit, they can abound in hope and meet the severest demands made on their love with kindly evenness of mind) ...