

Transforming Daily
“... gives God thanks ...”
Romans 14:6

Paul touches on a recurring issue among the Christians in Rome regarding religious rituals and customs of the surrounding people. The friction arose even among other believers. When the believer was converted from their former religion, often they wanted to bring with them their religious practices. It was the same among those from Judaism. Again it was a matter of thinking that what they did and who they were was more important than Whose they were and what they had become. Nevertheless, at times strife and discontentment would arise over who was right (more spiritual) and who was wrong (less spiritual).

Today the silliness still presents itself. In our day, the battle is usually over “seeker-sensitive” verses tradition, or contemporary church verses traditional church. It’s all nonsense. The Bible is clear that some plant, some water, but God adds the increase. The believer’s primary mandate is to make disciples of all nations (Matthew 28:18-20). The axiom, to become all things to all people that you might win some, has been sorely miscontextualized to say the least, and downright pushed to the brink of perverting its biblical notion to say the most.

The point behind Paul’s instruction is humility. Some claim that it underscores the tenants of the priesthood of the believer. I would agree with that to some extent, to the extent that priesthood of the believer, while emphasizing some privileges, has more to do with responsibility and accountability toward one another. More to the point of the text is what Paul says twice in this one verse about eating. He’s says that irrespective of how one designates the eating of the food, holiday or not, it is the manner in which the food is eaten not its designation, and that manner is to be with thanksgiving to God.

It matters not whether one chooses to recognize a particular holiday. What matters is the individual’s heart toward God. Incidentally, implied (I would say even directly stated in so many words), is the admonition to take care of one’s own business and leave others to their own. In other words, the believer is to mind their own business. As my dad used to say, “David, take care of yourself, it’s a fulltime job!” So, the believer is to be wise as a serpent and harmless as a dove.

Do you find yourself trying to police everyone else instead of taking care of your own matters? As it pertains to Christian maturity, are you thankful to God? Is it easier for you to find fault with others than with yourself? Remember, the text is here is reminding the believer that thanksgiving is a matter of the heart, and no matter the circumstances, it is expressed by he or she who gives God thanks.