

Romans 14:19

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

Analysis

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another—Ara oun ta tēs eirēnēs diōkōmen kai ta tēs oikodomēs tēs eis allēlous (ἄρα οὖν τὰ τῆς εἰρήνης διώκωμεν καὶ τὰ τῆς οἰκοδομῆς τῆς εἰς ἀλλήλους). Diōkōmen (διώκω, pursue/follow after) is vigorous—actively chase, not passively wait. Ta tēs eirēnēs (the things of peace) means actions promoting harmony, unity, reconciliation. Eirēnē (εἰρήνη, peace) is Hebrew shalom—wholeness, right relationships, communal flourishing.

Oikodomēs (οἰκοδομή, edification/building up) is architectural—constructing the church as spiritual edifice (1 Corinthians 3:9, 'ye are God's building'). Eis allēlous (toward one another) emphasizes mutuality—both strong and weak bear responsibility for building up. Pursuing peace and edification requires self-limitation: strong limit liberty, weak limit judgment, all prioritize unity over being 'right.' This isn't compromise on truth but wisdom in application—choose battles wisely, prioritize what builds up.

Historical Context

The early church faced constant threats to unity: Jew-Gentile tensions, rich-poor divisions, doctrinal disputes, personality conflicts. Paul's letters repeatedly call for unity (1 Corinthians 1:10, Ephesians 4:3, Philippians 2:2). 'Peace and edification' became guiding principles: Does this action promote unity or division? Build up or tear down? Later church councils (Nicaea, Chalcedon) distinguished dogma

requiring unity from adiaphora (indifferent matters) allowing diversity. Augustine's maxim: 'In essentials unity, in non-essentials liberty, in all things charity.'

Related Passages

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

1 John 4:8 — God is love

Study Questions

1. What actions in your church 'make for peace' (ta tēs eirēnēs) versus promote division—and how do you actively pursue peace?
2. How do you evaluate decisions by whether they 'edify' (oikodomē) others or merely assert your rights/opinions?
3. Where might you limit your freedom or opinions for the sake of unity and building up the body?

Interlinear Text

ἄρα	οὖν	τῆς	τῆς	εἰρήνης
therefore	G3767	the things which make for	the things which make for	peace
G686		G3588	G3588	G1515
διώκωμεν	καὶ	τῆς	τῆς	
Let us	and	the things which make for	the things which make for	
G1377	G2532	G3588	G3588	
οἰκοδομῆς	τῆς	εἰς	ἀλλήλους	
may edify	the things which make for	things wherewith	another	
G3619	G3588	G1519	G240	

Additional Cross-References

Ephesians 4:29 (Parallel theme): Let no corrupt communication proceed out of your mouth, but that which is good to the use of edifying, that it may minister grace unto the hearers.

Romans 12:18 (Peace): If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men.

Psalms 34:14 (Peace): Depart from evil, and do good; seek peace, and pursue it.

Romans 15:2 (Parallel theme): Let every one of us please his neighbour for his good to edification.

Hebrews 12:14 (Peace): Follow peace with all men, and holiness, without which no man shall see the Lord:

2 Corinthians 13:11 (Peace): Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.

Mark 9:50 (Peace): Salt is good: but if the salt have lost his saltness, wherewith will ye season it? Have salt in yourselves, and have peace one with another.

Psalms 133:1 (Parallel theme): Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!

1 Corinthians 14:26 (Parallel theme): How is it then, brethren? when ye come together, every one of you hath a psalm, hath a doctrine, hath a tongue, hath a revelation, hath an interpretation. Let all things be done unto edifying.

Matthew 5:9 (Peace): Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called the children of God.