

Romans 14:7

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself.

Analysis

For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself—The Greek οὐδεὶς γὰρ ἡμῶν ἐστῶς ζῆ (oudeis gar hēmōn heautō zē) emphasizes complete corporate solidarity in Christ. Paul uses the strong double negative to obliterate radical individualism: believers exist in mutual interdependence. The parallel construction (living/dying) spans all of existence—every moment belongs to the community, not autonomous self.

This verse demolishes the false dichotomy between 'personal faith' and 'corporate Christianity.' The dative ἐστῶς (heautō, 'to himself') shows that self-referential existence is impossible for those in Christ's body. Even death—the most solitary human experience—is a corporate event affecting the whole church. Paul grounds his argument about disputable matters (ch. 14) in this ontological reality: your dietary choices, Sabbath observance, and conscience decisions impact the entire body because you don't exist as an isolated unit.

Historical Context

Written from Corinth (AD 57) to a church torn by Jewish-Gentile tensions over food laws, holy days, and purity regulations. Roman house churches were small (20-40 people) meeting in close quarters where one person's practices directly affected others. The cultural context was highly collectivist—Roman patronage systems, Jewish covenant community, and Greco-Roman household codes all emphasized group identity over individualism. Paul's argument would have resonated naturally with his original audience.

Related Passages

Revelation 20:12 — Judgment according to deeds

Matthew 25:31 — Final judgment

Study Questions

1. How does recognizing that you 'live not to yourself' challenge Western individualistic Christianity?
2. In what specific ways do your daily choices (diet, entertainment, speech) affect other believers in your community?
3. How should corporate solidarity shape disputable matters like alcohol consumption, entertainment choices, or political activism?

Interlinear Text

οὐδεὶς	γὰρ	ἡμῶν	έαυτῷ	ζῇ	καὶ	οὐδεὶς	έαυτῷ
no man	For	of us	to himself	liveth	and	no man	to himself
G3762	G1063	G2257	G1438	G2198	G2532	G3762	G1438

ἀποθνήσκει·

dieth

G599

Additional Cross-References

1 Peter 4:2 (Parallel theme): That he no longer should live the rest of his time in the flesh to the lusts of men, but to the will of God.

2 Corinthians 5:15 (Parallel theme): And that he died for all, that they which live should not henceforth live unto themselves, but unto him which died for them, and rose again.

1 Thessalonians 5:10 (Parallel theme): Who died for us, that, whether we wake or sleep, we should live together with him.

Romans 14:9 (Parallel theme): For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.

Titus 2:14 (Parallel theme): Who gave himself for us, that he might redeem us from all iniquity, and purify unto himself a peculiar people, zealous of good works.

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