

**September 14, 2014**

**Live (with) it!**

Romans 14: 8 – *If we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.*

Listen to Paul's words here in Romans.

He talks about acting in a way that is very foreign to our minds. Instead of judgment over a difference of opinion, he talks about a world where we work with people where they are at in their life of faith. For Paul it took this form: Some people were comfortable that their faith allowed them to eat anything. Others thought that their Christian faith limited what foods they could eat. Instead of siding with one group or the other, Paul says let each one be convinced in his own mind that they are doing the right thing.

In much of our church at large today, we have lost this feeling. One might make this argument: "One group will only play organ, while others will only play jazz instruments for worship. Whichever you choose to do, like it and do it well." (If only the people who might make this argument could see us here at Tree!)

The point Paul is trying to make is twofold: First, we are to welcome all faithful people through our doors, but not to beat into them the so called "right" way of being a Christian. Second, within reason there is no one right way of living out your faith. Just live it! Live out your faith in all you do. In fact, in everything you do, do it for Jesus. In this way our lives become living sacrifices to the Lord.

# Roots

In other words, we live our lives not to pass judgment or be theological police, rather doing everything with love for Christ and neighbor.

When we learn to do this, which we will never do perfectly this side of Christ's return, we will also learn to live with others and their methods of living the Christian faith. Yes, there is a time for correction when a person strays from following Christ in their actions. But, we want to be careful to not judge one person's way of serving Christ's Kingdom and worshipping the Lord as wrong. So we pray that Jesus teaches us to live our faith in all we do and to help others live theirs.

*Dear Christ,*

*Teach us to live our faith that we may understand and help others live their own. Amen.*

***This time, I MEAN IT!***

I would like all who read this to email or, if you would prefer, write a letter to your pastor letting me know what you think Tree of Life does well as a church. Only **one** thing. Then when you are done with that, pick **one** thing you would like to see either done better, or done for the first time at Tree and include that as well. I am not looking for a lengthy response, I just want to hear the ideas **you** have about **your** church.

*Pastor Carl Jh*

