**7 23 17*"THOUGHT FOR THE WEEK"***

***“Brethren, we who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves”***

Beloved in our Lord, St. Paul’s statement in Romans 15, reminds us of our true calling as Christians and our true duty as a Church. That is, we must imitate our Lord Jesus in the way we live our lives. We must strive to please others, so that we might make them better and lift them up to God. We must desire with all of our hearts ***“all men to be saved.”*** If our Lord desires this, so should we. St. Paul strived to do this in his own life and he tells us to do the same- ***“Just as I also please all men in all things, not seeking my own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved. Imitate me, just as I also imitate Christ.” (1Co 10:33-1 NKJ)***

So my beloved, if we are to follow our Lord, we must live as He lived, not seeking our own advantage but seeking to please God first, and then others before we please ourselves. To some who are weak in the faith or in their moral lives, we must make them strong by ourselves becoming weak. We must correct them, but only with the mind of Christ. That is, we must not correct them with cold theology or morality, but we must correct them with love and with a warm heart. We must correct them with our own quiet example, with forgiveness, and with forbearance. For it is when we become weak that we are made strong, for the weakness of love is stronger than the strength of knowledge. The grace of God will be poured out into our hearts, if we love them more that we love our own opinions, if we do not judge, and if our only desire is for the salvation of our brother’s or sister’s soul.

Thus, my dear ones in our Lord, let us seek this same mind that is in Christ Jesus. In all of our actions let us imitate the blessed Paul who shows us what this mind of Christ is; ***“To the weak I became as weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all men, that I might by all means save some. (1Co 9:22 NKJ)*** Our Lord made Himself weak, even to the point of submitting to the cross, so that He could save as many as possible. He died for the Pharisees who thought they knew God better than He did; He died for the immoral-the sinful woman, the prodigal, and the thief; Beloved, He died for you and for me. Let us, then, also die to ourselves that we may live for our brothers and sisters and thus live to God. This is the mind of our Lord Jesus Christ. Amen.