

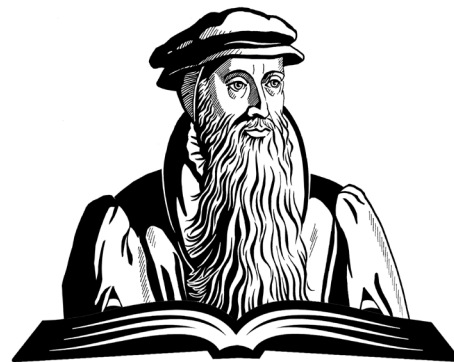
# Study Guide for THE LAW OF LOVE IN THE CHURCH

by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

---

*Lecture 2*  
**Three Principles for Harmony**

---



**The John Knox Institute**  
of Higher Education

*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

**John Knox Institute of Higher Education**

*Entrusting our Reformed Inheritance to the Church Worldwide*

© 2021 by John Knox Institute of Higher Education

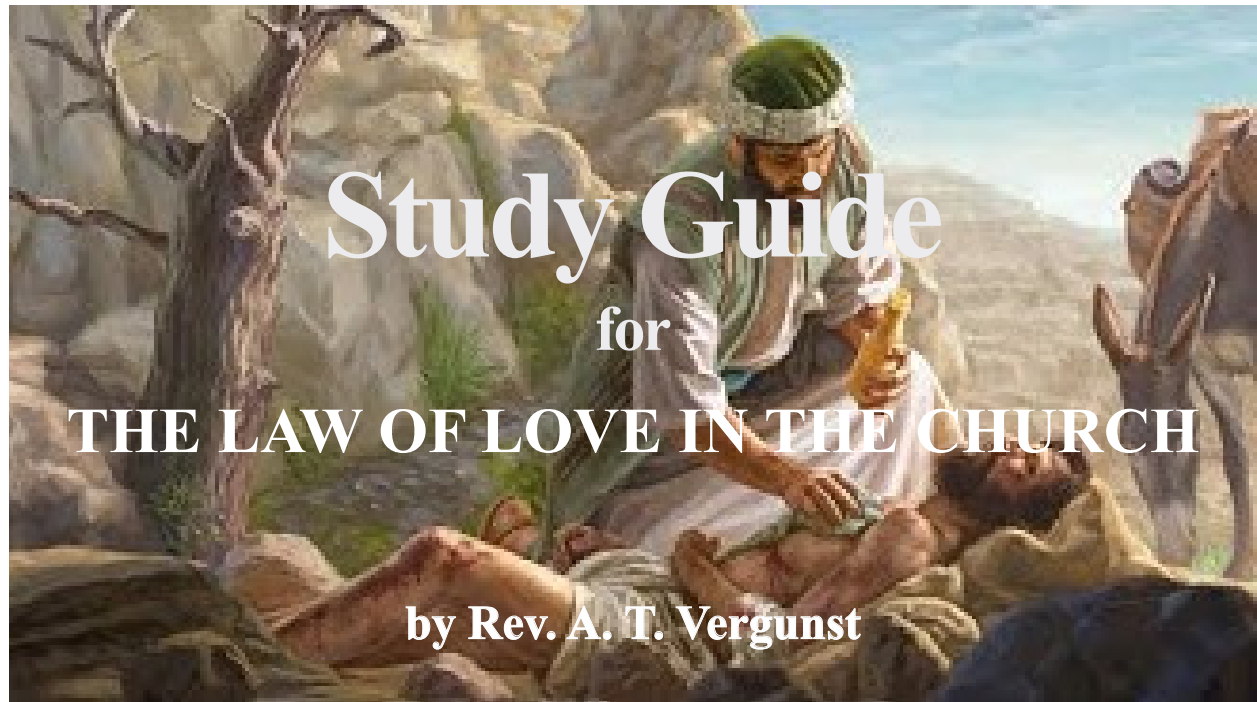
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

Unless otherwise indicated, all Scripture quotations are from the Authorized King James Version.

Visit our website: [www.johnknoxinstitute.org](http://www.johnknoxinstitute.org)

Rev. A. T. Vergunst is minister of the Gospel at the Reformed Congregation of Carterton, New Zealand, a congregation of the Reformed Congregations of New Zealand.

[www.rcnz.org](http://www.rcnz.org)



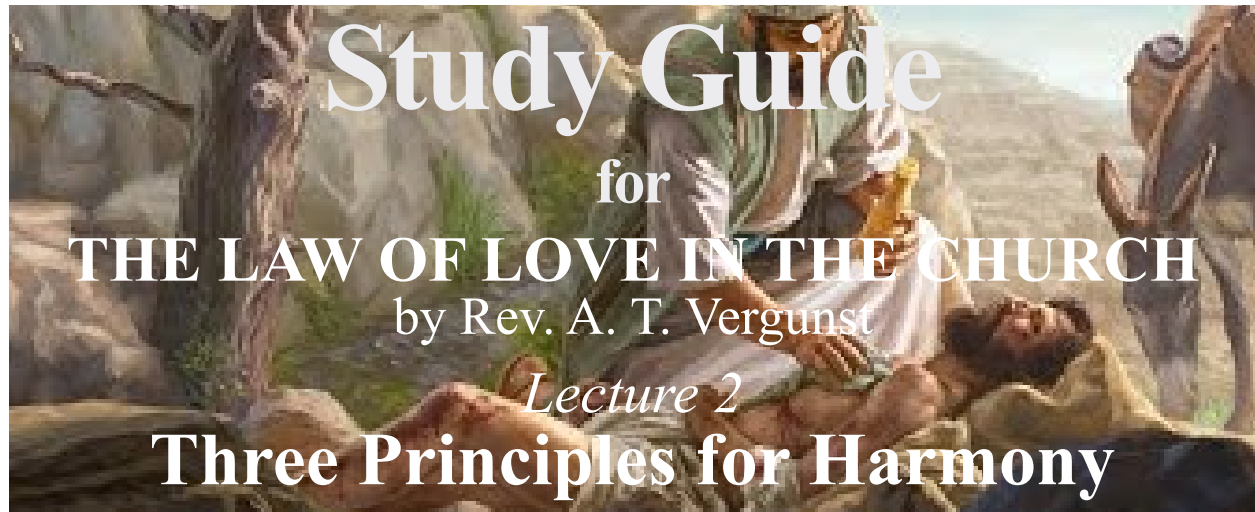
# Study Guide

for

## THE LAW OF LOVE IN THE CHURCH

by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

1. Introduction
2. Three Principles for Harmony
3. The Strong and the Weak in the Faith
4. The King's Instructions for the Strong
5. The King's Instructions for the Weak
6. Conclusion and Exhortation



**Scripture Text**

*“For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy ghost. For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.”—Romans 14:17–19*

*“Beloved, if our heart condemn us not, then have we confidence toward God.”  
—1 John 3:21*

**Key Points**

1. First principle: Believers don’t think alike about issues that are unessential to the Christian faith.
  - a. Examples given of the churches in Rome and Corinth.
  - b. Unessential matters defined and explained.
  - c. Essential matters in the Christian faith defined and explained.
2. Second principle: Matters of Christian liberty have the potential to strain harmonious relationships among believers.
  - a. Exhortations by the Apostle Paul in Romans 14.
  - b. Requires wisdom in church administration.
  - c. Satan knows how to use Christian liberty to create divisions in the church.
  - d. Do not confuse minor matters in faith and practice with major matters essential to Christian faith and practice.
3. Third principle: Focus on the major truths of the gospel.
  - a. This is what unites us.
  - b. Freedom must be allowed in matters that Scripture does not define.

*Review Questions*

1. What disharmony did the church in Rome face, according to Romans chapter 14? What was the problem at the church in Corinth?

---

---

---

---

2. How do we define “unessential matters”?

---

---

---

3. What are the exhortations of the Apostle Paul in Romans 15?

---

---

---

---

4. Please explain why Christian liberty on unessential matters requires wise church leadership.

---

---

---

---

5. How does Satan use matters of Christian liberty to divide Christians and cause disunity in the church?

---

---

---

---

6. What’s the best way to overcome Satan’s strategy to cause disunity over unessential matters?

---

---

---

---

---

7. Rev. Vergunst says, “Avoiding disunity and disharmony about differences can be best accomplished by focusing on what unites us.” What is it that unites us?

---

---

---

---

8. Do Christians have freedom in matters that are undefined in God’s Word? What would be some examples of that?

---

---

---

---

9. What does Jesus teach us about major and minor matters?

---

---

---

---

10. According to Rev. Vergunst, what are the “great privileges of the gospel?”

---

---

---

---

**Personal Applications**

1. Have you ever experienced confusion about the difference between essential matters and unessential matters in the church? Please give some examples of this. Did this lecture help you to see the difference now?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Rev. Vergunst teaches that focusing on what unites us rather than our differences helps avoid conflict and division in the church. What are those Christian essential matters that unite us? How can we better focus on that?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---