

# Study Guide for

## THE LAW OF LOVE IN THE CHURCH

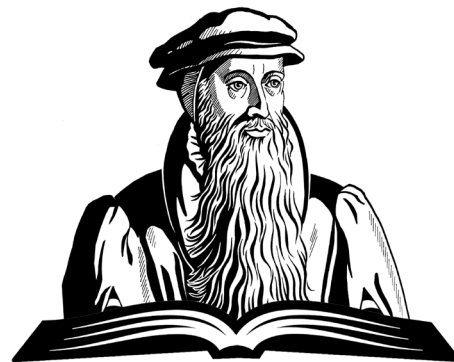
by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

---

### *Lecture 3*

## **The Strong and the Weak in the Faith**

---



**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

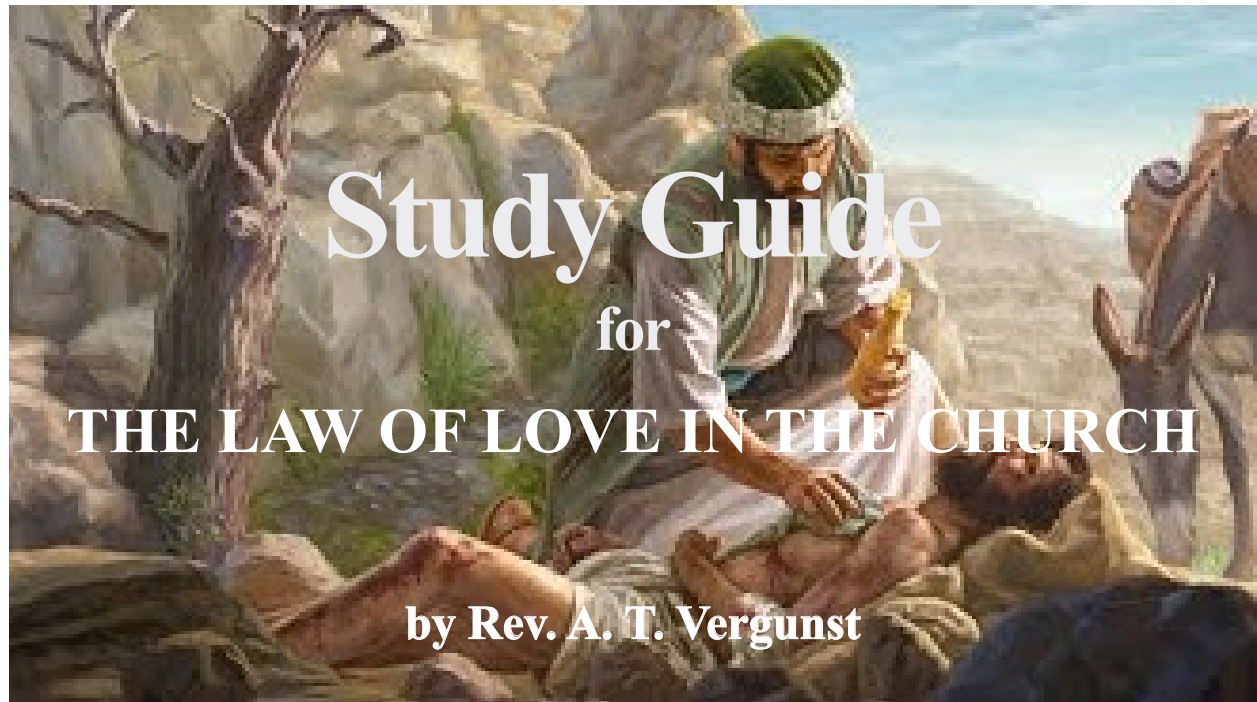
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

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)



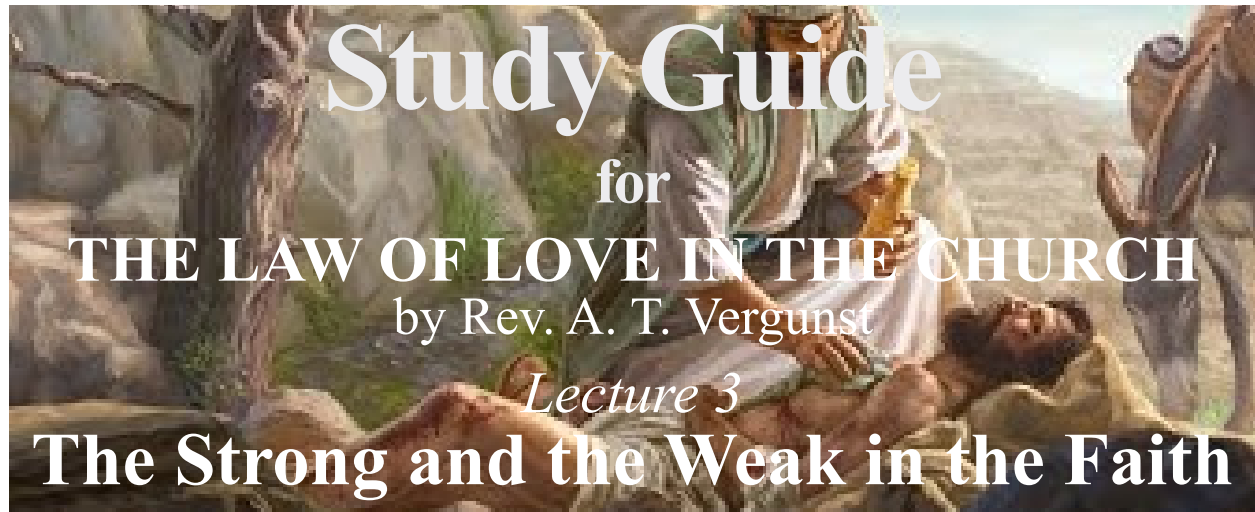
# Study Guide

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**

*"We then that are strong ought to bear the infirmities of the weak, and not to please ourselves."  
Romans 15:1*

**Key Points**

1. Review of the three principles.
2. Fourth principle: Believers in the church do not all have the same level of spiritual maturity.
  - a. "Weak in the faith" defined.
  - b. Weak in faith versus weak in *the* faith.
  - c. "Strong in the faith" defined.
  - d. Church leaders need to study this subject.
3. Fifth principle: The strong in faith ought to bear the infirmities of the weak in the faith. This is the heart of God's instructions on how to handle matters of Christian liberty.
4. Paul's instructions to the strong in faith.
  - a. Receive the weak in faith.
  - b. Avoid disputes and debates with them.
  - c. Do not despise them.
  - d. Respect must be shown on both sides.
  - e. Both weak and strong must honor God, doing his will.
5. Augustine: "In things necessary, unity; in things indifferent, liberty; but in all things, charity."

*Review Questions*

1. What does it mean to be weak in the faith?

---

---

---

2. Give some examples of people in the church who might be weak in faith. Does mean that they are not true believers? Please explain.

---

---

---

---

3. What does it mean to be strong in the faith? What is Paul's example?

---

---

---

---

4. What is the will of God about how the strong in faith should walk with the weak in faith?

---

---

---

5. "Him that is weak in the faith receive." What does Paul mean by "receive" in this passage?

---

---

---

---

6. How should the strong in faith have Christian fellowship with the weak in faith? Should the strong argue and dispute with them?

---

---

---

---

---

7. In what ways can the strong in faith despise the weak in faith?

---

---

---

---

8. What instruction did the Apostle Paul give to both the weak and the strong in faith? On which point are the strong and weak in faith united?

---

---

---

---

9. What does Paul the Apostle mean when he writes, "Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"?

---

---

---

---

10. Rev. Vergunst quoted Augustine of Hippo on this same subject. Do you remember the quote?

---

---

---

---

---

*Personal Applications*

1. This lecture teaches us much about how the strong are to behave towards those who are weak in the faith. How does that behavior reflect the heart of the Lord Jesus Christ? Was Jesus kind and patient with the weak in faith? What did you learn in this lecture about this subject?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

2. Meditate on the quote from Augustine, “In things necessary, unity; in things indifferent, liberty; but in all things, charity.” Augustine lived in the fifth century. Can you think of examples in the history of the church where this principle was exercised?

---

---

---

---

---

---

---

---