

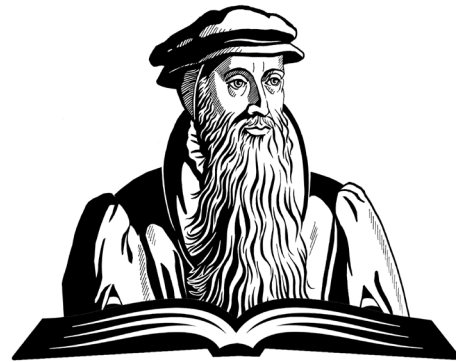
Study Guide for

THE LAW OF LOVE IN THE CHURCH

by Rev. A. T. Vergunst

Lecture 4

The King's Instructions for the Strong



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

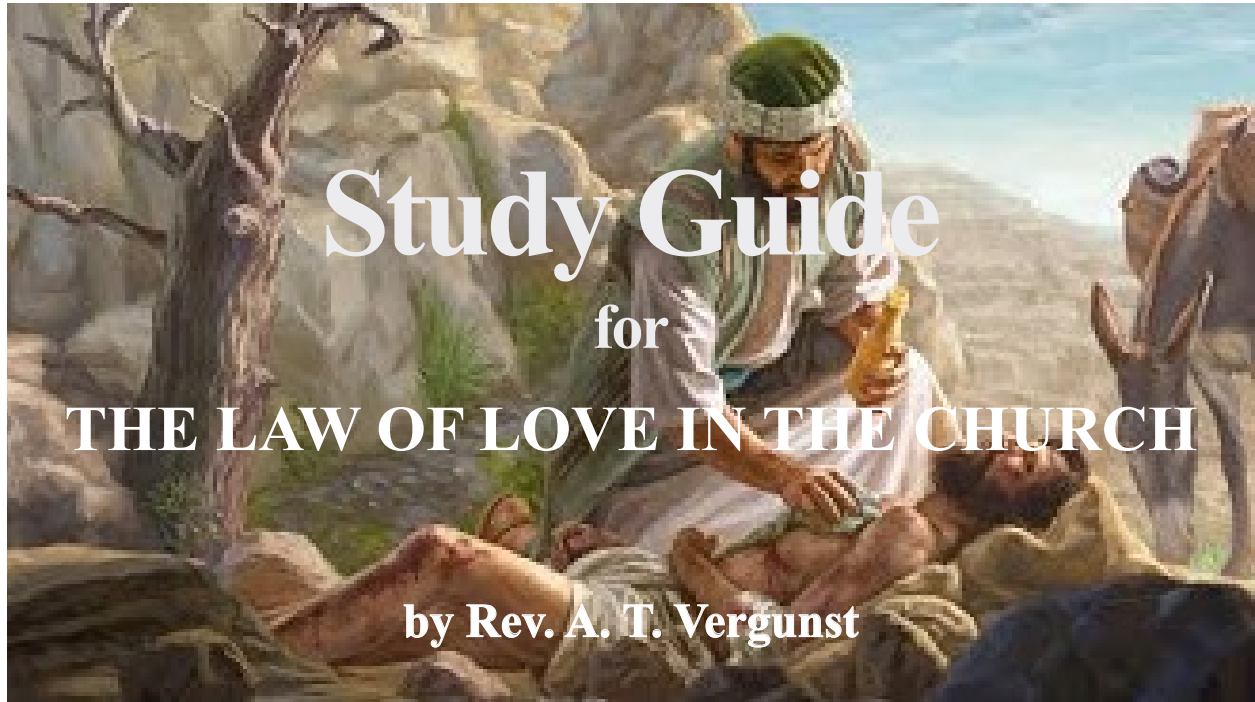
All rights reserved. No part of this publication may be reproduced in any form or by any means for profit, except in brief quotations for the purposes of review, comment, or scholarship, without written permission from the publisher, John Knox Institute, P.O. Box 19398, Kalamazoo, MI 49019-19398, USA.

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

Visit our website: www.johnknoxinstitute.org

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



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 first four principles.
2. More on the fifth principle: The strong in faith ought to bear the infirmities of the weak in the faith. This is the main thrust of God’s instructions on harmony in the church.
 - a. Main responsibility for harmony belongs to the strong in faith.
 - b. Defining “bear the infirmities” of the weak in faith.
 - c. Help them carry the load, or by help them get rid of the load.
 - d. Defining “edify.”
 - e. Ultimate goal is the weak become strong.
3. The call to love one another like Jesus loves—John 13:34–35.
 - a. Do not cause your brother to stumble. Love is more important than Christian liberty.
 - b. Focus on the Lord Jesus Christ who denied himself for the weak.
 - c. Follow after peace and edification.
 - d. What is not of faith is sin—Romans 14:23.
4. The Master calls us to avoid division and strife in the church.
 - a. Maintain the major matters of faith which are essential.
 - b. Do not be distracted by the minor matters which are nonessential.

Review Questions

1. What does the word “bear” mean in Romans 15:1? How does Galatians 6:2 teach a similar truth?

2. Why did Paul tell the strong in faith not to dispute and argue with the weak in faith?

3. What is the meaning of the word “edification”? What did Paul mean by the phrase “for his good to edification”?

4. What did Rev. Vergunst say is the heart of good Christian behavior? Do you remember the Bible passage?

5. Please give an example of how we can have loving consideration of our brothers and sisters in the church?

6. How did the Apostle Paul live out this loving consideration for others? Where did he learn this principle?

7. How does the Lord Jesus serve the spiritual needs of God's people, even those who are weak in faith? Please list some examples from the Bible.

8. The Apostle Paul commands us to be charitable to the weaker brother in matters of faith. Does this compromise Paul's views on Christian liberty? Please explain your answer.

9. Romans 14:20 says, "It is evil for that man who eateth with offense." How do we understand the "evil" spoken of here? What is eating with offence?

10. What are some of the nonessential minor matters in our lives today which can distract us from the more important major matters of the Christian religion?

Personal Applications

1. Rev. Vergunst reminds us that the heart of the Christian’s behavior is in the command of the Lord Jesus, in John 13:34–35, to “love one another; as I have loved you, that ye also love one another.” Does this command influence all your conduct and choices in life? Are you praying for more obedience to this command?

2. We have seen that the major matters of faith are important, but not at the cost of charity toward the weaker brother or sister. How does your local church body promote essential doctrines but also show consideration for weaker members? Are there areas of faith in which you might show more charity toward the weaker brother?
