God praised and supplicated to give victory

"Be exalted O God above the heavens and your glory above all the earth. That your beloved may be delivered save with your right hand and answer us."

The problem of God's people elevating their personal religious opinions to the level of God's laws is an age old problem that the prophets and apostles regularly dealt with. Year after year the Lord sent prophets to his people to correct them but they rejected the admonition. The words of the prophets were so opposed to the people's personal will and opinions that they persecuted and even killed them (see 2 Kings 17:13ff; Jeremiah 2:30; Luke 11:47; Acts 7:52 and 1 Thessalonians 2:15). Overcoming the temptation to view one's personal judgments and opinions as law for everyone is an observable problem in the church. The Roman Christians, like many today, had these issues from both sides of the table (i.e., strong and weak).

Paul admonished the erring Jewish Roman Christians to stop taking their own opinions and making them into the law of God at Romans 10:3. Jesus addressed this issue with his immediate disciples. After partaking of the Passover Feast, Jesus washes the disciples' feet and then begins a lengthy dialogue with them to ease their anxiety about the coming events of his crucifixion. Jesus warns the disciples that the world would hate them because they represent truth (John 15:18ff). Jesus goes on to say, "2 they shall put you out of the synagogues: yes, the hour comes, that whosoever kills you shall think that he offers service unto God. 3 And these things will they do, because they have not known the Father, nor me" (John 16:2-3). Jesus uses the Greek word dokeo translated "think" meaning "to think, suppose, imagine, to have or form an opinion or to seem good" (LS 207-208). The opinionated thinking, on the part of the Jews, was not right though they believed it was. Some are so willing to fight about the legitimacy of their opinions that they divide churches and ruin relationships...
Pressing opinions is not a small issue. The word of God tells us that most people do this (see Matthew 22:1-14 compared to Revelation 19:6-9). Solomon said, "A wrathful man stirs up contention; But he that is slow to anger appears wise" (Proverbs 15:18). Romans 14 challenges us all to make a distinction between our opinions about liberties and God's laws.

Those who seek to impose their preconceived ideas of religion, their personal opinions, or convictions on others as though these things were truths are setting themselves up as gods and they will surely fall (2 Thessalonians 2:3-7). We must all come to see that it is God alone that dictates right, wrong, and what constitutes a liberty. Isaiah writes, "Ye shall know that I am the Lord your God, dwelling in the midst of your midst..." (Isaiah 45:22). The meek comply with God's laws yet many are too stuck on their prideful selves to make the distinction between divine law and authorized liberties. Just because someone thinks and believes something does not make it the truth (see Matthew 23:23 and Acts 26:9). Jeremiah said, "O Lord, I know that the way of man is not in himself; it is not in man that walks to direct his steps" (Jeremiah 10:23). Though man may have strong opinions about religious matters those strong opinions do not constitute truth. Man will not be judge by his own conscience, personal opinions, or convictions but rather by the Laws of God (John 12:48). The only time conscience is used as one's judge is in areas of indifferences or liberties (see Romans 14:23). God's laws must occupy the highest place of respect and reverence in our minds. Those who do not do this are subject to elevating self opinions and convictions over and above God's laws (see Jeremiah 5:22-24 and 6:15). The scriptures teach us to "silence" our fleshly religious opinions and follow God's laws (see Deuteronomy 27:9; Isaiah 41:1; Habakkuk 2:18-20; Zephaniah 1:7; Zechariah 2:13; Matthew 17:5-8 and Acts 3:22-23) (20b). Romans 14 demands that both strong and weak identify liberties and practice them according to one's personal conscience in the matter. Let no man judge another in liberties! The moment I judge you on my opinions about liberties is the moment I set myself up as a divine lawgiver and this is the height of error. Practicing liberties is fine with God. Not practicing liberties is fine with God. Judging others over liberties is not fine with God. Paul writes, "Let us not therefore judge one another any more" (Romans 14:13). If I am not to judge you in areas of liberty I must, if identified as weak, identify and distinguish liberties from law.

John C Robertson

Local News
Welcome to all Our Visitors. It is our prayer that you will be edified by our worship service today. If you have any questions regarding what we teach or practice please be our friend and talk with us.

Rita York's eye surgery went well this past Thursday. She will have to go back in two weeks to get the left eye done. Please keep Rita in your daily prayers.

School starts back this week. Please keep all of our college students, high school age, Junior high age, and elementary age children in your prayers as they continue their education.

Stella Davidson remains under home hospice care and continues to do well even though she is confined to a wheel chair. Stella is now living with her daughter.

Psalms 82
"1 God has taken his place in the divine council; in the midst of the gods he holds judgment: 2 How long will you judge unjustly and show partiality to the wicked? Selah 3 Give justice to the weak and the fatherless; maintain the right of the afflicted and the destitute. 4 Rescue the weak and the needy; deliver them from the hand of the wicked. 5 They have neither knowledge nor understanding, they walk about in darkness; all the foundations of the earth are shaken. 6 I said, You are gods, sons of the Most High, all of you; 7 nevertheless, like men you shall die, and fall like any prince. 8 Arise, O God, judge the earth; for you shall inherit all the nations!"