

**The Book of Romans**  
**14:1-12**  
**05/22/2019 Wednesday PM**

**Introduction**

- Last week we finished Chapter 13 as Paul taught how love fulfills God's requirements as to how we should live.
- Christians are called to obey the law of love, which supersedes all other laws. Basically, we love even when there is no legal obligation to do so. We are also not to harm, even if there is a "legal" act to do so.
- Paul has already established the equality of Jews and Gentiles in previous chapters as well as how we should relate to our enemies, the government, and even other believers.
- Now Paul turns his attention to bringing together the "weak" and "strong" believers in Chapter 14.

**Romans 14:1-12**

<sup>1</sup>Accept him whose faith is weak, without passing judgment on disputable matters. <sup>2</sup>One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. <sup>3</sup>The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him. <sup>4</sup>Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. <sup>5</sup>One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. <sup>6</sup>He who regards one day as special, does so to the Lord. He who eats meat, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. <sup>7</sup>For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. <sup>9</sup>For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. <sup>10</sup>You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. <sup>11</sup>It is written: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' " <sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- **Context:** Remember Paul is writing this letter from Corinth around 57AD to believers in Rome.
- The Roman church was very diverse with Jews and Gentiles coming from different cultures and also having different levels of spiritual maturity.
- This diversity of people meant that there would be a substantial amount of diversity of thought on certain subjects.
- The people of the Roman church were having to work out their distinctive character as Christians and the issues they had amongst them had to be resolved.
- The Corinthians church had a similar issue in **1 Corinthians 8-10**.
- **V.1** – Hear Paul says, “Accept him whose faith is weak...”
- The Greek word for “accept” here is *proslambanesthe* which means to “receive” or “welcome.”
- Believers in Rome came from a wide variety of backgrounds and spiritual maturity as mentioned before.
- What does it mean to have weak faith?
- We all have areas that we are strong in and weak in when it comes to our faith and Paul wanted to encourage the Roman church to accept those that may have weak faith.
- We can tell if we have a weak area of our faith if we must avoid certain activities, people, or places in order to protect our spiritual life. We all have an area or two that requires this avoidance.
- Paul goes on in this verse to say, “...without passing judgement on disputable matters.”
- They were to accept the person with weak faith **WITHOUT** passing judgement on **DISPUTABLE** matters.
- This does not say that we are to accept anyone who comes in regardless of their actions or beliefs.
- However, we are to recognize that not everyone believes the exact same way about every doctrine or belief.
- There are “disputable” matters that we all can agree to disagree on and still worship together in harmony.
- “Disputable matters” are doctrines that are not essential to salvation.
- **“Our principle should be: In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in everything, love.”**
- **V. 2** – Paul gives an example here of a dispute that was taking place in the early church. He says, “One man's faith allows him to eat everything, but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables.”
- Here Paul is using “faith” in the sense of a person's convictions about something.

- He says that “one man’s faith allows him to eat everything.” This is most likely referring to the issue around eating meat that was sacrificed to idols and other Jewish dietary laws.
- Paul in this section is referring to people that have no restriction on what they eat.
- The next part of the verse speaks of the other folks, “but another man, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables.”
- This person may be a Jewish convert to Christianity that still is concerned about the proper preparation of food according to the dietary laws or even a pagan idol worshipped that didn’t want to eat food sacrificed to idols.
- This person is referred to as “weak” in the faith because they might be badly shaken if they knowingly ate meat that had been used as part of a pagan ritual or was not prepared in the right way.
- **V.3** – Says, “The man who eats everything must not look down on him who does not, and the man who does not eat everything must not condemn the man who does, for God has accepted him.”
- When believers differ over disputable matters they should not look down on or condemn each other. God doesn’t.
- The Greek word here for “look down on” means “despise” or “reject with contempt.” Refer back to the principle.
- **V.4** – We must remember that God is the ultimate judge of everyone and if he “has accepted” the person, then who are we to “look down on” him/her?
- However, this verse is not saying that we cannot hold people accountable to God’s standards.
- **V.5** – “One man considers one day more sacred than another; another man considers every day alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.”
- There were disputes about sacred days in the early church as well, some believed you had to observe the Jewish Holy days and others did not. Paul says that “each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.”
- Believers can disagree on some points and can still be acceptable to God.
- **V.6** – This verse puts limits on what is acceptable and not acceptable.
- When it comes to differences of opinion between believers on matters of conscience, each believer should respond “to the Lord,” doing as their conscience dictates. So, whatever we do should be to glorify and honor God.
- **V. 7-8** – “<sup>7</sup>For none of us lives to himself alone and none of us dies to himself alone. <sup>8</sup>If we live, we live to the Lord; and if we die, we die to the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.”
- We must realize that things that we do affect those around us, we are not the only ones on the planet.
- Also, our entire lives are ultimately for Christ alone and we must act accordingly.
- **V.9** – “For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living.”
- Christ died to free us and to deliver us from judgement and because of His sacrifice, he alone is the true judge.
- **V.10** - “You, then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat.”
- Paul is asking these rhetorical questions to uncover why there is so much condemnation coming from the Christians that are in the Roman church and even elsewhere.
- We are called to confront one another in love, concern, and truth, but not in judgment.
- **V.11-12** – “<sup>11</sup>It is written: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will confess to God.' "<sup>12</sup>So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.”
- Here Paul is quoting from **Isiah 45:23** and is explaining that a time of judgement will come.
- On that day the entire world will bow their knee and every tongue will confess Jesus is Lord.
- At that point we will have stand individually before God, not as a group, but as an individual.
- In this passage Paul is not trying to stop Christians from helping each other by pointing out wrongdoing.
- He is seeking to help everyone understand that we are all different and that in instances where we disagree with each other on matters that do not affect salvation, we must accept one another anyway.
- If someone is wrong, God will deal with them accordingly. We are not judge and jury, seeking to condemn our fellow brothers and sisters. We should be seeking daily to help one another, not kick each other while down.

## Next Week’s Study

### Romans 14:13-23