

## I. Stop Judging - Romans 14:1-4

1. Two groups in the church are Paul's focus in these verses (**verse 1**)
  - weak and strong
  - compare 1 Cor. 8:7 - those who have weak consciences
  - food is not the issue Paul is concerned with the spiritual growth of believers
2. "Accept" the weak
  - Rea -very clear who is to do the "accepting" - the strong - some think themselves strong but stand in judgement on others who do not share their "everything is okay" mindset. If they truly are strong, their attitude should manifest that.
  - Rea -"accept" is put in opposition to "quarreling"
3. Food concerns is the surface issue (**verse 2**)
  - some felt some foods were wrong to eat - ate only vegetables
  - some felt they could eat everything (Peter was shown that all foods are edible - Acts 10:15)
  - some feel that they believed some of the meat they ate in the marketplace had been sacrificed to idols (Paul labels them as "weak")
4. The "strong" looked down on the vegetarians with "contempt" (**verse 3**)
  - Rea -judging shows these people not to actually have been "strong"
5. God has accepted those who eat meat (and not just vegetables)
- Rea 6. So... Paul has said the meat also people are to accept the vegetable eaters
  - Paul has also said that God has accepted these people
- Rea 7. Imagine that... "judging" in the local church - I've never heard of such...
8. Who are you to judge? (**Verse 4**)
  - Rea -so here Paul labels it "judging"
  - a servant is responsible to his own master and not to these who are "strong"
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
  1. There is ample room in the local church to look at another's faith and "judge"
  2. What attitude ought they to have had?
    - mercy?
    - "accepting?" - what (exactly) does "accepting" mean?
  3. It was causing a split in the local church - and "destroying" the faith of the "weak"
  4. We live in a very morally lax atmosphere... by clever arguments we make almost anything and everything okay - so much so, that there is no difference between the local church and the lost man

## II. Honor God - Romans 14:5-8

1. Moves from food to "special days" (**verse 5**)
  - Rea A. So the "weak" had issues with eating some foods
    - Had issues with what to do on special days
    - Together it sounds as if they were a bit legalistic
  - B. Probably refers to Jewish special days
    - whether to observe or not to observe special days
2. Paul moves quickly to solutions,... instead of grinding away at the problem
  - A. Let each be convinced in his own mind

- Rea B. Your writer said to Paul it was a matter of indifference - I don't think so. I think that Paul was simply pointing out that there was something bigger than these issues. If he were indifferent, would he have written such a large passage on this. If it didn't "matter" it would not have "tripped up" the church.
- C. It has to do with motives - "to the Lord" (**verse 6**)
- their goal was to honor the Lord
- Rea -some who "allow" certain practices are just morally lax... there is no effort at all to honor the Lord. Just saying.
- Rea D. Over and again I've heard Baptist praise the Mormons for having the morals to not drink caffeine. It's a matter of respect, even if we don't agree.
3. Another principle - we don't live to ourselves alone (**verse 7**)
- all our actions influence other people
- Rea -what happens if you drive not caring how you drive influences others? What about a person who smokes in a crowded room... his actions influence all of those around him. An underlying principle, you are responsible for how you impact others. You are the light of the world. How your witness impacts others is a part of your service to God.
- Rea -the major point though, is that each of us does not serve to honor others, but the Lord. So if someone is serving God, he will answer to God.
4. We belong to the Lord (**verse 8**)
- A. The Lord is our judge
  - B. The Lord is the recipient of our service - of whatever type
  - C. So, if you judge, you are taking the Lord's place
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
1. The "strong" were judging the weak
  2. Do they not have any concern about the weak?
  3. Do they not have anything else to do?? - a lot of people spend their lives judging other church members - a critical spirit is often a judgmental spirit
  4. Where does the spirit to "purify" others come from?

### III. Remove Obstacles - Romans 14:9-12

1. Jesus is Lord both of the living and the dead (**verse 9**)
- Rea -even living and dying are under His jurisdiction... not yours
2. Why do you judge your brothers? (**Verse 10**)
- you usurp the authority of God when you judge
- Rea -Judge not that you be not judged - Matthew 7:1-7
3. Each of us will stand before God's judgment seat
- Rea 4. By including the phrase "treat them with contempt" Paul makes their actions even stronger
5. **Verse 11** broadens this idea - every knee will bow
- a quote from Isaiah 45:23
  - bowing the knee is submitting to His authority
  - you will give an account (**verse 12**) - you will answer to God
- Rea **Ideas and Questions:**
1. These ideas are stated strongly in verse 20 - "destroy" not the work of God for meat
  2. Discuss in class how believers might keep from "judging"

3. We all lean toward judging... why is this so?
4. In the later verses of chapter 14 Paul instructs the “weaker” believers - so they did need to grow - but to judge them was wrong

Charles Ray - SS Lesson for May 24, 2020