

# SERMON NOTES

By Pastor John Paul Miller

## *In The Grip of God's Grace*

The Epistle of Paul the Apostle to the Romans

### **Romans 14:1-12 - "When Christians Disagree"**

Romans 14:1-12, "Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him. Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand. One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living. But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."

Psalms 133:1, *"Behold, how good and how pleasant it is for brethren to dwell together in unity!"*

The sad truth is from the time of the church's' birth, on the day of Pentecost to our present time, the brethren have not always dwelt together in unity.

Almost every local church mentioned in the New Testament had divisions and disagreements to contend with:

- The Corinthians had multiple issues
- The Galatians Saints were biting and devouring one another.
- The Church in Philippi has two women who didn't get along: Euodias & Syntyche – Philipians 4:2, *"I beseech Euodias, and beseech Syntyche, that they be of the same mind in the Lord."*

Also, the Church of Rome had its problems too!

Ray Stedman – "In the fourteenth chapter of Romans Paul discusses the favorite indoor sport of Christians; trying to change each other."

Paul's instruction on this topic runs from Romans 14:1-15:7

Romans 14:1, *"Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations."*

Romans 15:7, *"Wherefore receive ye one another, as Christ also received us to the glory of God."*

It reminds me of the short poem someone wrote: ***"To dwell above with saints we love, oh, that will be glory! To dwell below with saints we know, oh, that's another story!"***

Paul is teaching us what it means to walk according to love (Romans 14:15)

Romans 14:15, *"Nevertheless But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died."*

What was the problem in Rome?

The problem in Rome concerned the relationship between two groups, one group Paul calls 'the weak' and the other he calls 'the strong' (Romans 15:1).

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

Who were they? – In the historical setting here, the Jews (newly saved) were the weak (lots of baggage from the past – In the context of this passage it was diet & days) and the Gentiles the strong.

What was the problem? – diet (strict dietary laws) & days (for worship)

Not for salvation but for sanctification.

Romans 14:1, *"Him that is weak in the faith..."*

Weak in that they haven't grown in their liberty in Christ. They haven't firmly come to understand, to have their intellect enlightened, to be convinced having that conviction based upon the scripture that all meats are okay. It doesn't matter what you eat, or what day you worship to God.

They were legalistic – Their spirituality was based on what they don't do instead of what they do.

There were also the 'Libertines' (aka - Antinomians – 'without law' the lawless - the idea that members of a particular religious group are under no obligation to obey the laws of ethics or morality as presented by religious authorities) - Those who are free in Christ and who go to the extreme by sinning and thinking 'grace will abound' – it's okay to do what I want.

The Bible teaches that we should be walking in liberty in Christ controlled by love.

Paul lays down a Positive Principle (vs. 1)

Paul talks to the 'strong in faith'.

He tells them to do two things (regarding the 'weak in the faith'):

1. Receive Him (that is weak?) – what not to do

It means to welcome warmth, to show kindness; its accepting without correcting (vs. 3 – despise)

We can't change them.

2. Don't debate, or quarrel with them over doubtful matters (vs. 1)

Today, people in the church , turn the church into a 'debating chamber'.

Over gray areas:

- theater
- cosmetics
- alcohol
- smoking (C.H. Spurgeon smoked!)
- card playing
- dancing
- fashion
- jewelry – wearing rings
- Music
- Bible translations
- Mode of Baptism

***Believe as I believe,  
No more, no less;  
That I am right,  
And no one else, confess;  
Feel as I feel,  
Think only as I think; Eat what I eat,  
And drink but what I drink;  
Look as I look,  
Do always as I do;  
Then, and only then,  
Will I fellowship with you.***

That is not to be our attitude – rather, we are to accept him whose faith is weak without passing judgment on disputable matters.

Four Reasons why we should welcome the weak and not despise nor condemn them:

1. Because God has received him (vs. 2-3)

Romans 14:2-3, *“For one believeth (the strong) that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs. Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.”*

(vs. 2) Notice what Jesus said about food (Peter – Acts 10, 11)

Don't despise, don't judge – they are not essentials!

It's unloving

The key: *“for God hath received him.”*

2. Because God will help him stand (vs. 4)

Romans 14:4, *“Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.”*

'Stand' is to straighten out, or strengthen

It's not your job – you can't force maturity.

J.B. Phillips Translation of this verse – “God is well able to transform men into servants who are satisfactory.”

3. Because Jesus Christ in Lord (vs. 5-9)

Romans 14:5-9, *“One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks. For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.”*

Now its days!

Ways we function:

1. I feel,
2. I think,
3. I know (based upon scripture)

Paul's point – **God sees their hearts** (it's done to the Lord), we can't, so give them the benefit of the doubt.

#### 4. Because we will all give an account to God (vs. 10-12)

*Romans 14:10-12, "But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God."*

Notice verse 10, he's your brother!

Don't play God

*In Matthew 7:1-5, Jesus said, "Judge not, that ye be not judged. For with what judgment ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete, it shall be measured to you again. And why beholdest thou the mote that is in thy brother's eye, but considerest not the beam that is in thine own eye? Or how wilt thou say to thy brother, Let me pull out the mote out of thine eye; and, behold, a beam is in thine own eye? Thou hypocrite, first cast out the beam out of thine own eye; and then shalt thou see clearly to cast out the mote out of thy brother's eye."*

What will we be held accountable for?

1. every word we have spoken – Matthew 12:36-37
2. the talents that have been given to us – Matthew 25:26
3. for the treasure – Matthew 6:1`9-21
4. the time – Ephesians 5:16

What are we to do then?

1. stop judging your brother – receive him, don't despise him
2. take inventory of your own actions and behavior
3. get busy building up others in the body of Christ

*1 Corinthians 8:9, "But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak."*