

## **“To Eat or Not to Eat – That is *not* the Question”**

*Romans 14:1-12*

*“You then, why do you judge your brother? Or why do you look down on your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat.” (14:10)*

Paul’s last verse in ch. 13 – “. . . clothe yourselves with the Lord Jesus Christ . . .” - spills over into ch. 14, only here it can apply to how we treat each other. God does not give us a command for every possible issue that believers deal with. We call these ‘grey areas’; things that the Bible does not specifically treat. Paul deals with some ‘grey areas’ that the Romans church were having trouble over. Sometimes we get caught up in these issues and for some they become a ‘test of fellowship’ or even salvation! Paul says we need to stop judging one another like this because God is judge and we’ll stand before God for our judgmental attitudes.

### **“Divisive Issues or Godly Example?” (14:1-3)**

*Paul begins this section without really introducing it – an issue that was causing problems in the church. What was happening?*

**14:1** “Accept him whose faith is \_\_\_\_\_, without passing \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ matters.”

*What does Paul mean by ‘strong’ and ‘weak’ faith’?*

*“Accept” means to bring along side. Whose job is that?*

*While we’re not given all the details what is one of the disputable matters?*

**14:2** “One man’s faith allows him to \_\_\_\_\_ everything, but another man, whose faith is weak eats only \_\_\_\_\_.”

*While the primary issue was eating meat sacrificed to idols Here the issue may have also included something else. Look at vv.14-15 and Acts 10:9-15 for another issue.*

**What issues today do people saved out of a religious background struggle with that those saved out of a non-religious background may not? [and vice versa]**

*For Paul the real issue isn’t meat or days. What is the issue?*

**14:3** “The man who eats everything must not \_\_\_\_\_ on him who does not and the one who does not eat everything must not \_\_\_\_\_ the man who does for \_\_\_\_\_ has accepted him.”

**The same word ‘accept is used in v.1 and v.3. What essentially is Paul asking the ‘strong’ brother to do?**

How does Eph. 4:32-5:2 challenge us to do the same?

**Eph. 4:31** "Get \_\_\_\_\_ of all bitterness, rage and anger, brawling and slander, along with every form of malice.

**4:32** "Be \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ to one another forgiving one another just as in \_\_\_\_\_ God has forgiven you.

**5:1-2** "Be \_\_\_\_\_ of God, therefore as dearly \_\_\_\_\_ children and live a life of \_\_\_\_\_ just as Christ loved us and gave Himself up for us as a fragrant offering and sacrifice to God."

### **"Leave it With the Master" (14:4-9)**

Paul rebukes our condemning attitudes because why?

**14:4** "Who are you to judge \_\_\_\_\_ servant? To his own master he stands or falls. And he will stand, for the \_\_\_\_\_ is able to make him stand."

So then how do we deal with 'grey areas'? What's Paul say?

**14:5** "One man considers one day more \_\_\_\_\_ than another; another man considers \_\_\_\_\_ day alike. Each one should be fully \_\_\_\_\_ in his own mind."

What criteria should we use to determine if something is okay to do or not?

**14:6** "He who regards one day as special does so to the \_\_\_\_\_ he who eats meat, eats to the \_\_\_\_\_, for he gives \_\_\_\_\_ to God; and he who abstains does so to the Lord and gives \_\_\_\_\_ to God."

How does Paul emphasize this in the next two verses?

**14:7** "For none of us \_\_\_\_\_ to himself alone and none of us \_\_\_\_\_ to himself alone.

**14:8** "If we live we live to the \_\_\_\_\_; and if we die we die to the \_\_\_\_\_. So whether we live or die we die to the \_\_\_\_\_."

**\*When we were saved we agreed to make Jesus Lord of our life. We rejected Satan and sin by choosing Jesus. How does Paul assure of us of our salvation here?**

Because this is so crucial for the believer Paul reaffirms what we owe Jesus.

**14:9** "For this very reason Christ died and \_\_\_\_\_ to life so that he might be the Lord of both the \_\_\_\_\_ and the \_\_\_\_\_."

### **"Not our Job" (14:10-12)**

If we are alive Jesus is our Master. When we die Jesus continues to be our Master and Lord. How does Paul use this truth to rebuke our judgmental attitudes?

**14:10** "You then why do you \_\_\_\_\_ your brother? Or why do you look \_\_\_\_\_ on your brother? For we will all stand before God's \_\_\_\_\_ seat."

**\*The NIV's 'look down' is a very strong term in the original Greek. It means 'despise' or 'condemn'. How does that affect the passage?**

*There are two passages where Paul gives us more info on the believer's judgment before Christ. How does Paul use these passages?*

**2 Cor. 5:9-11**

**1 Cor. 3:10-15**

*Paul uses an Old Testament passage to back up what he said about judgment. In the Isaiah 45:22-23 passage Isaiah used it in a little different motivation. What was it?*

**Isaiah 45:22-23**

*Once again Paul reminds us of our accountability to God.*

**14:12** "So then \_\_\_\_\_ of us will give an \_\_\_\_\_ of himself to God."

- **Imagine that day was tomorrow! On your own make a list of any condemning thoughts, words and attitudes God could call you up on. Ask forgiveness. Ask for grace to change.**

[The Bible verses quoted are from the NIV 1984 edition © International Bible Society]

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