



Romans 14: 1-23

The Weak and the Strong

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Romans 14:1-6

¹ *Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.* ² *One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables.* ³ *The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them.* ⁴ *Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.* ⁵ *One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind.* ⁶ *Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.*

There was some disagreements within the Roman church over

- Food
- Sacred days

Cultural Context

- Roman church made up of Jewish and Gentile Christians
- Jews had many dietary & ceremonial restrictions but not the Gentiles.

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Who is Paul addressing in Vs. 1?

Who are the "faith is weak"?

Is "faith is weak" about spiritual maturity?

What does "be fully convinced in their own mind" describe?

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The “disputable matters” in this context

- Food Laws
- Observing Special Days

Are these essential doctrinal issues?

Paul is talking about non-essential religious issues that we decide according to the conviction of our faith. This is commonly known as **Christian Liberty**.

Disputable Matters

- Not a salvation issue
- Not clearly commanded or forbidden in Scripture
- A matter of conscience
- Capable of being done “for the Lord” (Rom 14:6)
- Not inherently sinful



Non-Disputable Matters

- Clear sin
 - False teaching
 - Moral compromise
 - Anything Scripture directly commands or forbids
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Notice that Paul's focus is not on the subjects being disputed, but rather the behaviors of those quarreling.

- Contempt—a feeling of intense dislike for someone or something regarded as unworthy of respect or approval.
- Judging or being judgmental—Usually carries a connotation of harshness.

This is a very strong warning of how things can spiral down even among Christians.

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Instead of

- Quarreling
- Treating others with contempt
- Judging

They are to accept each other because God has accepted them.

Regardless of your conviction, live by it.

Why Do You
Think Conscience
Issues Are Often
More Emotionally
Charged Than
Doctrinal Issues?

Subjective



Accepting One Another





With A Transformed Mind Comes New Attitudes—Humility Not Judgmental

Romans 12:3

³ For by the grace given me I say to every one of you: Do not think of yourself more highly than you ought, but rather think of yourself with sober judgment, in accordance with the faith God has distributed to each of you.

Romans 14:7-12

⁷ For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. **So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.** 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.**

¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹ It is written:

“As surely as I live,’ says the Lord,
‘every knee will bow before me;
every tongue will acknowledge God.’”

¹² So then, **each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.**

- Do not judge one another for only God can judge before we belong to Him
- Christ die for people with different convictions
- We all have to give an account of our actions to God

Romans 14:13-18

¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. ¹⁴ I am convinced, being **fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself.** But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean. ¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ **For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit,** ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.

Besides not judging one another, Paul cautioned us not to be a stumbling block for others.

Paul tells us clearly what is important in God's kingdom:

- Righteousness
- Peace
- Joy

What Is Important In The Kingdom Of God

Righteousness
Before God

Peace
Towards
Others

Joy
For Ourselves

All With The Help Of The Holy Spirit



Pleasing To God And Approved By Men

According To Paul,
What Is More
Important – Being
Right Or Perceiving
Unity? Why?



With A Transformed Mind Comes New Attitudes—Love Over Liberty

Romans 12:9-13

⁹ Love must be sincere. Hate what is evil; cling to what is good. ¹⁰ Be devoted to one another in love. Honor one another above yourselves. ¹¹ Never be lacking in zeal, but keep your spiritual fervor, serving the Lord. ¹² Be joyful in hope, patient in affliction, faithful in prayer. ¹³ Share with the Lord's people who are in need. Practice hospitality.

Romans 13:8

⁸ Let no debt remain outstanding, except the continuing debt to love one another, for whoever loves others has fulfilled the law.

The Big Picture of Romans 12-14

Chapter	Focus	Key Theme
Romans 12	Church Relationship	Love & Humility
Romans 13	Authorities and Society	Love & Submission
Romans 14	Disputable Matters	Love & Restraint

Romans 12:1-2

Therefore, I urge you, brothers and sisters, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as a living sacrifice, holy and pleasing to God—this is your true and proper worship. ² Do not conform to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—his good, pleasing and perfect will.



Human Nature and Romans 14:1

Romans 14:1

¹ Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.

Human nature tells us that in an argument we will often regard ourselves as those stronger in faith even though Paul is not talking about Spiritual maturity here. And the result is we become judgement or have contempt for other.

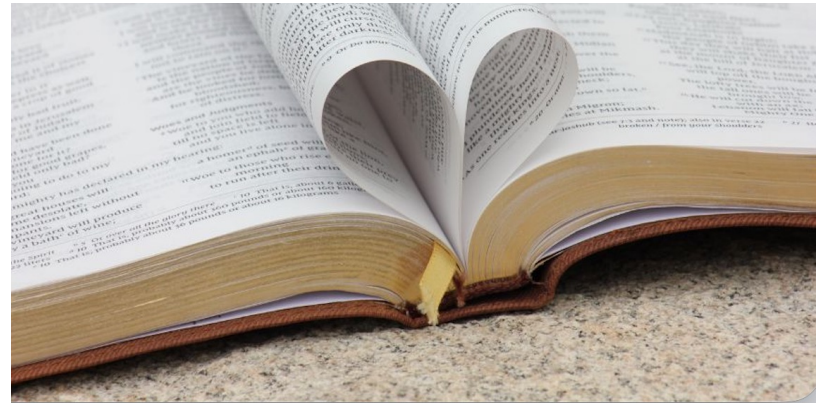
Culture Verses Biblical

In Asian culture, we highly value harmony. How is biblical unity different from just “keeping peace”?

Do we sometimes confuse:

- Cultural preference
- Personal conviction
- Biblical command

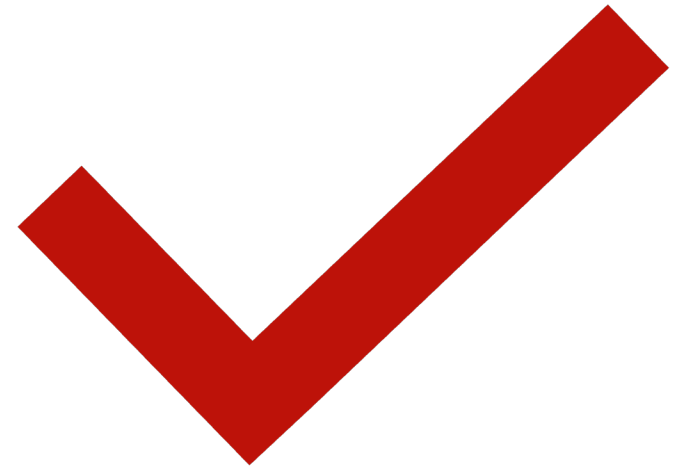
How can we tell the difference?



Attitude Check

Sometimes, our job, season in life, and experience affect how we think or feel about different topics. But ask yourself:

- How do I feel when having a discussion and people disagree with me?
- Do I feel overly emotional? Or do I maintain a cool head and be respectful?
- How do I feel about others who don't see eye to eye with me?



Is It OK To Disagree With Others On Non-Essential Doctrinal Matters

**Absolutely—What
Matters Is How You
Handle The Disagreement**



The Ultimate
Spiritual Maturity
Is Love

