

ROMANS CHAPTER 14

Versus 1-12 To the strong and the weak brother – accept one another, not

for the purpose of passing judgment.

Stronger – more instructed, liberty of conscience, freer

Weaker – less instruction

vs. 1 A stronger believer is told to accept (receive) a weaker believer. The key word is “accept”! Accept them, not for the purpose of judging their convictions of conscience, but for the purpose of receiving an equal brother in Christ.

vs. 2-3 One man (strong) has faith (clear conscience) that he may eat (drink) anything.

The weak believer has a conscience problem with eating (drinking) certain foods.

Mark 7:14-23; Acts 10:9-16; 1 Tim 4:3-5.

His weakness may be the result of lack of knowledge or it may be the result of biblical teaching not affecting his conscience.

The attitude and approach of both brothers is commanded. The one who eats is not to feel contempt toward the one who can't eat with a clear conscience and the one who does not eat is not to judge the one who does eat.

NOTE: The weaker the Christian, the more they restrict themselves, the more judgmental they become toward those who don't abstain.

The one who drinks doesn't often think about it.

The one who does not drink thinks about it every time.

They see someone who claims to be their equal drink.

Why stress that God has accepted the stronger brother?

Because it is much more difficult for a weak-minded believer to believe that God has approved of a man who lives a life of fewer restrictions than it is for the stronger to bring along the weaker.

The stronger doesn't question the salvation of the weaker as easily as the weaker does the stronger.

Areas of application:

1. drinking wine;
2. drinking alcohol;
3. dancing;
4. mixed swimming;
5. women who wear pants to church/elsewhere;
6. music;
7. coat and tie to church;
8. etc.

- vs. 4 Who does any believer think he is?
Since when has God set anyone of us as judge over another?
The phrase "servant of another" is significant. It is the word for "house servant".
Christ is head over God's house, and all believers are servant's of Christ. No one has been called to judge the servant of Christ, in fact, we will all stand before Him for judgment ourselves. Christ's focus is not our judgment, but rather our "standing".
- vs. 5 Another example strengthens Paul's teaching here.
One man sees Sunday as a "Sabbath Day" (weak), while another sees no distinction of days (strong).
- NOTE AGAIN: The weak can't; the strong can.
Sabbath observance is not an issue "unless" salvation is Connected with it. In that case, correction is necessary.
Gal. 4:9-12; Col. 2:16-23
- vs. 6 Each believer, having a conviction, and living under that conviction, is doing it for the Lord (vs. 9 – this personal relationship with each believer is the very reason that Christ died and lives again.)
- vs. 7-8 This is the way we should live. A clear conscience before God is the focus, not liberty.

- vs. 9 Purpose statement:
Why did Jesus die?
Why did He come?
Why did He do it? We all answer to Him!
- vs. 10-12 When we focus on the “real” judgment, the judgment of others pales.
- a. judgment seat of God vs. 10
 - b. judgment seat of Christ 2 Cor. 5:10
 - c. the Father has given all judgment to the Son John 5:22
 - d. the Son is a perfect judge Heb. 2:14, 17
 - e. the result of His judgment vs. 11; Phil. 2:10-11
- So then, each one shall give account of himself to God. This is where our focus needs to stay!
- NOTE: The above teaching is expanded and amplified in 1 Cor. 8 and 1 Cor. 10:23-33
- vs. 13 Therefore – application for the above truth:
- a. stop judging one another;
 - b. make your focus the coming judgment, remembering how important “Love your neighbor as yourself” is to that judgment.
- Focus on your own actions and not that of your neighbor. Concentrate on the affect you are having on them rather than that which they are having on you.
- vs. 14 Paul knows – knowledge comes first – and is convinced – his knowledge has made its way into his conscience. Both are required for true Christian liberty. Distinction of meats, distinction of days, focus on outward things, is entirely gone. It is only to those whose lack of knowledge or weakness of conscience makes such things unclean.
- vs. 15 If Christ so loved the ones we are in contact with, that He died for them, how wrong is it for your or me not to submit to the smallest self-denial for their welfare?
- vs. 16 Therefore, don’t let your superior knowledge become the basis for another’s fall. We must live with the weaker in mind.

Remember: Someone who is free may eat or not eat.
Someone who is not free is only free to not eat.
Therefore, the weak set the rules.

- vs. 17 The kingdom of God is not external actions, but rather, it is walking by the Spirit. Rom. 8:12-17
- vs. 18 Those who live out their lives through the power of the Spirit are both acceptable to God and men.
 a. God – John 12:26;
 b. Men – We say that the world hates Christians, and it is true, they do. They despise religious professors.
- vs. 19 So then – pursue (follow hard after; press toward the mark) Phil. 3:14; 2 Tim. 2:2
- vs. 20 The work of God in the life of another –
 1 Cor. 9:19-27; 10:24,33
 All things (food) are indeed clean, but to him that eats and violates another man’s conscience, his eating has become sin.
- vs. 21. Your brother’s conscience (not your own) rules your actions. Be careful not to cause your brother to stumble over that which you are allowed.
- vs. 22 The conscience is of extreme importance! Both ours and that of others. Happy is the man who violates neither.
- vs. 23 It is more a matter of conscience than a matter of law. That which violates our conscience does so because it is outside of faith.
 Any action done while lacking faith (clear conscience) is sin.