

Romans 14:2

Who is Weak

1. 14:1 - Doubtful Disputations

- a. "Doubtful disputations" wound the conscience, weaken the faith, and cause the will to sin.
- b. "doubtful" because of who you are disputing not what you are disputing - Rom 14:14, 23
- c. Don't dispute with the doubtful person (not confident, clear, settled, stablished, i.e. weak)
- d. The church ought to be where we strengthen and grow in the faith ∴ receive the weak
- e. Who is the weaker brother? Why is he weak? What do we do about it?

2. 14:2 - Strong and Weak in the Faith

- a. Paul identifies who is weak and writes this letter to strengthen/support them.
- b. "*for one believeth that he may eat all things*" = strong in the faith - 1 Cor 8:4-8
- c. "*another, who is weak...*" = weak in the faith, not being convicted about → 1 Tim 4:3-5
- d. Abraham was not "weak in faith" because he was "fully persuaded" - Rom 4:19-21, 14:5
- e. Weakness here is not sincerity or IQ, but ability to stand in truth w/clear conscience 1Ti 3:9
- f. Weakness seen in following an 'expert', depending on rules, religious tradition.
- g. Strength shown by Biblical conviction, ability to discern, spiritual understanding, faithful.
- h. Strength is not boldness, boasting, stubbornness, selfish, loud, age, feelings, charm, status.
- i. Paul's instruction to the strong is to be strong in charity as well as faith.

3. Weak Have Conscience of God's Law

- a. The main example in this chapter of receiving the weak concerns food, why?
- b. "*eateth herbs*" not about nutrition, diet, health, or vegan/vegetarian, but the law. Gal 4:9
- c. Jews had a long list from God about what not to eat - Lev 11:4-8, 10-12, 13-20, 29-31
- d. Peter and the remnant also resisted eating them - Acts 10:13-17, 15:28-29, Gal 2:12-13
- e. An issue everywhere Paul ministered where Jews and Gentiles existed - Col 2:17
- f. Weak Jews or Gentiles could be "emboldened to" commit sin - 1 Cor 8:9-13, 2 Cor 6:14-16
- g. This is not preference for food, but concerns obeying God in their conscience - 1 Tim 4:1-2

4. Weak and Wrong are Different

- a. Weak in the faith and wrong about the faith are different problems.
- b. Weak in the faith is not fleshly, entertaining sin, wickedness - See 1 Cor 5:1-2, Eph 5:3,7
- c. Weak in the faith are afraid to do wrong, those that are wrong are convinced of error.
- d. The weak often follow wrong teachings (being unsettled), but the wrong teach them!
- e. Weak need patience, edification, truth in love, and support to grow in faith/strength.
- f. The wrong in faith and flesh need rebuked, corrected, or avoided. Titus 3:10-11
- g. The weak are not wrongdoing, they are weak in faith/liberty/grace/understanding.
- h. If you are weak, you can keep growing; if you are wrong you cannot. (Until you repent.)

5. Weakness Need Not Be Permanent

- a. Weakness is normal if you are new, need to study more, lack prayer, a functioning church.
- b. It is no insult to be weak, just as it should be no insult to the gym to be overweight.
- c. Become as weak (in behavior), to gain them (w/understanding) - 1 Cor 9:22
- d. We all start out weak, and we all are continuing to grow stronger (milk and meat)
- e. To grow, you need to know where you are weak. Paul not afraid to point it out - 1Cor 3:1-3