



It's No Matter of Opinion
Romans 14:1-12

Main Idea: Since all give an account to God, leave matters of opinion to the Lord.

Since God is Lord, do everything to honor him; don't argue over matters of opinion (1-9).

- *Matters of opinion are things outside the commands and instructions in the Word (2-3, 5a).*
- *Matters of opinion should be held with a clear conviction before the Lord (5b).*
- *Matters of opinion should be observed to honor the Lord with a grateful heart (6-8).*
- *Matters of opinion ultimately are judged by the Lord, whose grace is enough (4, 9).*

Flowing out of the command for God's church to love one another, the Lord gave clear instructions on how to love one another when it comes to one of the most common ways that we fail to love each other. What is the thing that often causes disagreements, arguments, and judgment in the church? Often it's related to "matters of opinion." It's important to define what the word "opinions" means in verse 1, and thankfully, the Lord provided us some examples that make that definition easy and sure. Matters of opinion are things outside the commands and instructions in the Word. In other words, eating only vegetables or eating vegetables and meat is a matter of opinion. It's not an explicit command or an instructed practice for the church. Likewise, observing certain holidays or ignoring those days is a matter of opinion. It's not an explicit command or an instructed practice for the church. The Lord provided two, clear instructions for matters of opinion: (1) Matters of opinion should be held with a clear conviction before the Lord, and (2) matters of opinion should be observed to honor the Lord with a grateful heart. In other words, in those areas of freedom the Lord gives us in our lives, we need to still live and make decisions by faith! We need to have a clear conscience about what we do, and to do that, we need to make sure our heart's desire is to honor the Lord in all we do, remembering that he is the one who gives us life to do whatever we do! Ultimately, matters of opinion are judged by the Lord, whose grace is enough. God's grace in Christ is enough to keep us from falling and to hold us up to stand before him in Christ. So since God is Lord, do everything to honor him; don't argue over matters of opinion.

1. The Lord provided two examples of matters of opinion (dietary choices and observance of holidays). Are these examples still relevant today? If so, how? What are some other examples that you can think of in our context today?
2. From the other examples, how do we determine if it's a matter of opinion or not? How do you use God's Word to make that determination?
3. In these matters in your life, are you fully convinced before the Lord on what you are doing? If not, why not? How do we get to a place of conviction and clear conscience on what we believe and practice when it comes to matters of opinion?
4. Are you doing everything you do to honor the Lord? Are you doing everything with a grateful heart, knowing that you can only do anything because of the Lord? How do these things protect us from sin?
5. According to these verses, how can anyone stand before the Lord?



Since God is Judge, confess him as Lord; don't take his place as the Judge (10-12).

- *Passing judgment is declaring the final verdict, and this only belongs to the Lord (10, 12).*
- *Every person will stand before the Lord, confessing the reality of who God is (11).*
- *Each person is accountable for themselves before the Lord (10, 12).*

The two, rhetorical questions get to the heart of the lack of love in arguing over matters of opinion. First, there's the problem of passing judgment. To pass judgment is to declare the final verdict, and the problem with doing this is basic: This only belongs to the Lord. Second, there's the problem of despising your brother. To despise is the opposite of love. Ultimately, these things are wrong because the final verdict belongs to the Lord. The reality is that every person will stand before the Lord, confessing the reality of who God is, and each person is accountable for themselves before the Lord. So in matters of opinion, which don't involve the clear commands and instructions of the Word, leave the final verdict to the Lord, knowing that he is Lord of all and that all stand accountable to him in the end. Since God is Judge, confess him as Lord; don't take his place as the Judge. This is good counsel from the Lord, and it should beg the question of "where do you stand before the Judge?"

1. Consider the two, rhetorical questions in verse 10. Have you ever done either of these? If so, when, and how? Are you struggling with either of these right now?
2. Why do you think the Lord emphasized (through repetition) the fact that everyone is responsible – gives an account – for themselves before the Lord? Why is it important to remember this? Why is it important to remind and to share this truth with others?
3. In verse 11, what is the truth of the confession that everyone will make? What does the Bible say about those who make this confession in this life on earth? What does the Bible say about those who only make this confession after death when they stand before the Lord? What do the answers to the last two questions reveal about the importance of doing this in your life here on earth?
4. Where do you stand before the Judge? Do you know someone who isn't ready to stand before the Lord? How can you share this lesson with them this coming week in order to call them to repent and to believe in Jesus?