



PART 51

UNITY FOR THE WEAK & STRONG

ROMANS 14:1-12

¹ As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³ Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. ⁸ For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. ⁹ For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; ¹¹ for it is written,

“As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.”

¹² So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

There Are: “Disputable Matters”

Romans 14:1, *Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters (NIV).*

✳ **Disputable Matters** | Means a matter of Christian conscience. The Scriptures sometimes leave room for interpretation on various issues. A *non-disputable matter* is core to the Gospel and/or clearly revealed in Scripture.

DISPUTABLE ISSUES FOR CHRISTIANS IN ROME

- ✳ **Religious Diets** | For those coming from a Jewish background, there were rules about which foods were clean and unclean. These rules dealt with food preparation, storage, and overall diet. Additionally, some foods were first sold for pagan worship in pagan temples and then sold on the market. New believers couldn't always be sure where the meat was sourced, so some believers had no desire for meat at all. This was a major issue in the NT. (See also: Acts 10, 15, 1 Corinthians 8-10, [the rest of] Romans 14, Galatians 2:11-21)
- ✳ **Religious Days** | The Jewish calendar observed several feasts, special days, and religious holidays.
- ✳ **Religious Weak & Strong** | The 'weak in conscience' needed to grow more confident in faith and liberty in Christ. The 'strong in conscience' needed to be sensitive to the weak. **Both** needed to stop judging.

Romans 14:2-3, *One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.*

Romans 14:5, *One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.*

There Are: Reasons To Dispute Disputing

1. GOD HAS WELCOMED US.

Romans 14:2, *Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.*

2. GOD HELPS US & MAKES US STAND.

Romans 14:3-4, *Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.*

3. CHRIST IS A LIVING AND REIGNING.

Romans 14:9, *For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.*

4. GOD WILL JUDGE.

Romans 14:10, *Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.*

There Are: Directions For Not Disputing

1. BE WELCOMING

Romans 15:7, *Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.*

2. BE HUMBLE

Proverbs 13:12, *When pride comes, then comes disgrace, but with humility comes wisdom.*

Romans 14:4a, *Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another?*

- ✳ **You're not always right!** | "Believing that you're always right is about as helpful to the church as it is to your marriage." – Randy Alcorn

3. BE CONVINCED

Romans 14:5b-6, *Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind. The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God.*

Romans 14:8, *For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.*

- ✳ **Grow Deep Roots in Truth!** | Being humble does **not** equal being apathetically indifferent.
- ✳ **A Living Sacrifice!** | "In all of life and even at the hour of death the believer's aim is to please the Lord, to bring praise and honor to his name. Even at death believers resign themselves to God's will, and endeavor to please him in the way they die." – Thomas Schreiner

4. BE READY

Romans 14:12, *So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.*

Philippians 3:14, *I press on toward the goal for the prize of the upward call of God in Christ Jesus.*