

Our Spiritual Conduct Towards One Another

Today we will discuss how we are to view and treat one another. The subject in Rom 14 is the relationship between a novice Christian and a knowledgeable / spiritually mature Christian. Paul will describe the 2 Believers and give us 3 commands to guide our conduct in the church.

Rom 14:1-4

- **The one who is weak** (astheneo P/A/Ptc) – sick, powerless, incapable, needy – one who has less spiritual strength than another; less understanding & application of spiritual life

Rom 15:1 – adunatos – w/out power

- **in the faith** – not less faith; less understanding of THE faith – body of doctrine/truth
- **Receive** – (proslambano P/A/Imp) – pros – face / face; lambano – take, receive – embrace, accept – extend fellowship; take to yourselves
- **w/out judging** – (diakrisis) – to evaluate, discriminate – make a judgement
- **his opinions** – (dialogismos) – thoughts, deliberations, doubts, reasoning, bounce between 2 views of a matter
 - Vs 1 Paul addresses a problem: – Believers rejecting those who know less doctrine than they
 - Knowledge and freedom become the basis of self righteous comparisons among Believers
 - 1st command – embrace those less mature than yourself
- **one believes to eat all things** – The knowledgeable Believer who understands that spirituality is in the soul and not in the body – 1Tim 4:1-5; 1Cor 8:4-13
- **weak believer eats herbs** 1Cor 8:7
 - men/de – sets up a contrast – on the one hand – on the other
 - men - Believers who understand the issue of food / drink related to spirituality
 - de - Believer who is superstitious – works of the body as a means of spiritual life
- **one eating** – do not despise – (exoutheneo P/A/Imp) contempt, devalue, disdain, reject, look down upon; Lk 18:9 – trust in self as +R and look down on others; Lk 23:11 – treat with contempt; Act 4:11 – reject Christ
- **one not eating** – do not judge – (krino P/A/Imp) – to criticize, to attribute sins to another; Mt 7:1 – Judge not – be judged; Jn 3:17 – condemn; Jn 8:15 – according to flesh
 - 2nd command – do not look down on those who have not gained your maturity
 - 3^d command – do not judge / criticize those who you think are sinning
 - Believer with knowledge looks down and the believer w/out judges
- **Who are you to judge?** Rhetorical – you have no right to judge
- **servant** – Both believers are servants of the Master
- **stands or falls before his own master** – Not to you or me
- **Stand he will!** (histemi F/A/I) – He will be made to stand
- **Lord is able** to make him stand
 - Paul makes an application – who are you to judge?
 - We are servants of the Lord – don't answer to one another for what we eat

Principles

1. What one eats or drinks does not impact the Believer's relationship with God.

1Cor 8:4-8 – Food does not bring us closer to God – no better or worse

1Tim 4:3-4 – All food is good and to be received with thanksgiving.

Mat 15:17-18 – Food / drink do not defile – what comes from the heart defiles

1Sam 16:7 – Man looks on the outward – God looks on the heart

- The material world of food and drink cannot change the heart of man
- Relationship with God is based on what is in and comes from the heart.
- A self indulgent, addicted heart is what connects food/drink to sin

2. One Believer operates on right thinking and one operates on wrong thinking.

Believer / eats – understands the proper role of the material world in bel's life

- Knowledge / faith of the word has freed him / her from superstition

Believer / not eat – legalistic & superstitious – material, tangible things matter to God

- Legalistic – physical acts / works form the basis of relationship – shall nots
- Superstitious – physical acts / works sway the opinion of God – superficial

3. What is the proper response toward legalistic Believers that judge your freedoms?

Rom 15:1-2 – bear with - bastazo – carry; please him for edification

- OM response is to judge his thinking and reject him for his immaturity
- Paul says to accept him – embrace him – w/out judging his thinking.
- Accept him in spite of his immaturity and his judgment of your life.

4. In matters of spiritual disputes, relationships are more important than truth.

1Cor 8:1-3 – knowledge puffs up but love builds up – when we emphasize knowledge, we over love, we show that we know nothing – relationship with God

- Knowledge of truth is a means to an end, but not an end in itself – arrogant
- Knowledge of truth is a means to develop unconditional love for God/others
- Unconditional love is built from 1st receiving love from God – supply

5. Each believer is commanded to live out the maturity they have attained.

Phil 3:15-16 – Believers disagree on matters – God will reveal it – live out what you have

- Each Believer has to live according to what they believe today – now
- God loves every Believer regardless of their knowledge and maturity
- The mature must carry and edify those with less power – not look down on them