

Romans – Chapter 14

Summary of Chapter 13

- We submit to the governing authorities because God has given them authority.
- Loving our neighbour is a summary of the whole law of Moses.
- We need to wake up and stop living in darkness.
- We should make no provision for the flesh because we now walk according to the Spirit

Chapter 14: Living In Harmony, Welcoming One Another

Highlight: **“One Another”**

Don't Quarrel Over Opinions (1-4)

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let 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. ⁴Who 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.

The “*One who is weak*” seems to refer to Jewish Christians who were still cautious about what they were allowed to eat because of Mosaic food laws or meat offered to idols. The ‘strong’ refers to Gentiles and Jews who understood that all food was clean. Paul considered himself to be *strong* (15:1). Paul commands both sides not to ‘*despise*’ or ‘*pass judgement*’ on the other.

This section begins (14:1) and ends (15:7) with a call to *welcome* (or *receive* or *accept*) one another? How does this relate to the rest of the letter?

Living and Dying to the Lord (5-9)

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.

What does it mean to ‘live to the Lord’?

- Romans 6:11-12
- Galatians 2:20
- 2 Corinthians 5:15
- 1 Peter 4:1-2

Why Judge Another? (10-12)

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.

Why does the knowledge of judgement day change the way we think about passing judgement on others?

Building Up or Tearing Down? (13-19)

¹³ Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. ¹⁴ I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. ¹⁵ For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for building up one another.

Instead of passing judgement on fellow Christians, what are we to do instead?

Has there been a time in your life when you have chosen to walk in love rather than grieve a brother or sister (even when there may have been nothing *wrong* about an action)?

Destroying the Work of God (20-23)

²⁰ Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. ²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. ²² The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. ²³ But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

What would cause a person to ‘have doubts’ about whether or not something was permissible?

The Example of Christ (15:1-7)

¹We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. ² Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up. ³ For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “*The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.*” ⁴ For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope. ⁵ May the God of endurance and encouragement grant you to live in such harmony with one another, in accord with Christ Jesus, ⁶ that together you may with one voice glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ. ⁷ Therefore welcome one another as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.

Why does Paul point us towards the example of Christ here? Why is the example of Jesus relevant to the eating of food?

Questions

What were the four commands about one another?

1. Let us not _____ on one another (14:13)
2. Let us pursue what makes for _____ and for _____ one another (14:19)
3. Live in such _____ with one another (15:5)
4. Therefore _____ one another (15:7)

How would we summarise this chapter?

What can I apply from what I have learnt? How does this chapter change my choices and behaviour?

What is something I can pray for based on this text?