

The Book of Romans

LESSON FOURTEEN

“How We Treat Our Brothers & Sisters In Christ”

Paul has spoken much in this letter about how we are to behave in our personal relationships. In chapter fourteen, he turns his focus specifically to how we are to treat our fellow believers in the family of God. We are all in different places of maturity when it comes to our relationship with Christ, and we all come from different backgrounds that have had an influence on how we react and behave. Paul emphasizes the importance of showing grace to one another and not judging each other with a critical spirit.

1. Looking at **Romans 14:1**, what instruction does Paul give to his readers in the first verse of this chapter?
2. Paul tells us in this verse to **receive** or to **welcome** those who are weak. We often think of those who are the most spiritually mature as those who live the strictest lifestyle, but we will see that Paul considers those who are trapped in legalism as the weaker rather than the stronger. He may be specifically referring to the Jewish believers who still felt obligated to observe all the Jewish customs and dietary laws. Looking again at **verse 1**, Paul tells us to welcome them but gives us a warning. Record again what he says in the second half of verse 1.
3. There may be a few things that are worthy of debate and would be considered essentials of Christian doctrine. But there are many, many more things that are non-essential issues that we should not argue about or break fellowship over. Paul gives an example of what he would call “disputable,” “doubtful” or what are under the category of opinion that we should not argue about. Record the example he gives in **verses 2 & 3**.

4. Can you think of some things that might fall under this same category? What examples might you give on what we should not argue or break fellowship over?

5. Paul puts us in our place in **Romans 14:4** by reminding us that it is NOT our place to judge others on disputable matters. Are there things we are called to judge? YES! We can judge works and behaviors clearly stated in God's Word as sin. When we see these sins in another brother or sister's life we are called to correct and restore. Record the following Scriptures that speak about this.

Galatians 6:1 -

James 5:19-20 -

Jude 1:22-23 -

6. Paul also made it clear in his letters to the churches that when it comes to essential doctrine, we need to judge what is being taught and we need to defend the purity of the Gospel. He had no problem calling out those who were engaged in false teaching. Peter and John were also unafraid to call out those teaching false doctrine and warning others to be aware. Look up and record these Scriptures below.

Galatians 2:4-5 -

Titus 1:10-11 -

Titus 1:16 -

2 Peter 2:1-2 – *(This whole chapter warns of the judgment of false teachers).*

1 John 4:1 -

7. Paul reminds us in **Romans 14:4** that our brothers and sisters in Christ are accountable to God as their Master, just as we are, and though we can discern actions and behavior clearly spelled out in God's Word as sin, we cannot judge someone's heart or their salvation. If they truly belong to Christ, what is the promise Paul gives at the end of that verse?

8. As we look at **verse 5**, Paul adds another example where we may differ in opinion. Write down that example below.

9. In these non-essential places where we may differ in opinion, what is the most important point that Paul makes at the end of **verse 5**?

J. Vernon McGee states, **“Paul says that whatever we do, we should be fully persuaded, convinced, and assured in our own mind that it is the right thing to do. A believer should do only those things to which he can give himself fully and without reserve. My friend, whatever you do for God, you should do with enthusiasm.”**

10. What did the Apostle John say concerning this in **1 John 3:19-21**?

11. In **verse 6**, Paul emphasizes the point that whatever we do, we should do unto the Lord, desiring to honor Him. Write down Paul's words in **verse 6**.

12. If what we do is with a desire to live in a way that honors God, we will have a clear conscience before Him. How does Paul sum up his argument in **verses 7-9**?

Adam Clarke comments, **“The apostle seems to intimate that in all the above cases each must endeavor to please God, for he is accountable to Him alone for his conduct in these indifferent things. God is our master, we must live to Him, as we live under His notice and by His bounty; and when we cease to live among men, we are still in His hand. Therefore, what we do, or what we leave undone, should be in reference to that eternity which is ever at hand.”**

13. What two questions does Paul ask his readers in **verse 10**?

14. Often, the one with a stricter viewpoint looks down on the one who embraces their liberty in Christ as an unspiritual, immature compromiser. The one embracing his freedom in Christ often looks at the other as an immature legalist. But what does Paul state at the end of **verse 10**?

15. What does **2 Corinthians 5:10** tell us?

16. The Judgement seat of Christ is not for non-believers. They will be judged at the Great White Throne Judgement. While we, as believers, do not have to stand before the Great White Throne Judgement, we all will stand before the Judgement Seat of Christ where the works we have done will either be burned up in the fire, or receive rewards. This judgement seat is concerned only with the works of the believer, not his salvation. Look up and record Paul's words in **1 Corinthians 3:13-15** concerning the judgement seat of Christ.

17. Our ultimate accountability is to Christ and Christ alone. Record what Paul says in **Romans 14:11-12**.

18. As we move into **verses 13-22**, Paul makes the point that while our accountability is to God, we are still called to consider how our actions and behaviors may impact a fellow believer. How does Paul express this in **verse 13**?

19. This is perhaps the greatest expression of the love of Christ that we can show to one another. Paul was in the camp of those embracing their freedom in Christ. Again, to be clear, we never have the freedom to engage in anything God's Word has clearly stated as sin, but there are many things that are "indifferent" or "gray areas" that we can have different opinions on. Can you think of some of those things that fall under that category?

20. In **verses 14 & 15**, Paul further explains the point he is making. What does he say?
21. Paul gives a very clear example of this in **1 Corinthians 8:10-12**. Read those verses and then record **1 Corinthians 8:12** below.
22. When we allow our “rights” and personal liberties to become more important than the welfare of another brother or sister in Christ, we have missed the point of what it means to put another’s needs above our own. This is the place where we become guilty of Paul’s statement in **Romans 14:16**. What does he tell us in **verses 16 & 17**?
23. Warren Wiersbe states in his commentary, **“If each believer would yield to the Spirit and major in a godly life, we would not have Christians fighting with each other over minor matters. Spiritual priorities are essential to harmony in the church.”**
- Having our priorities right is essential to acceptable service to God. Record Paul’s statement in **verse 18**.
24. We never want to be the stumbling block or hinderance to another person’s relationship with Christ. Two of my favorite verses on this subject are found in **Psalms 69:5-6**. Look up and record those two verses below.

25. In **Romans 14:19**, Paul tells us what our priority should be towards one another. Write down his words.

26. The following Scriptures capture the heart of Paul's point. Look them up and record them below.

1 Corinthians 8:9 -

1 Corinthians 10:23-24 -

Philippians 2:3-4 -

27. Paul reiterates his point in **Romans 14:20-21**. Summarize his point in your own words.

28. What concluding thought does Paul express concerning our personal convictions regarding these non-essential issues in **verse 22**?

29. **David Guzik** states, **“If you have [strong] faith, and feel liberty to partake of certain things, praise God! But have your strong faith before God, not before a brother who will stumble.”**

Does this mess with your idea of embracing certain freedoms in Christ? How does this challenge you? What examples can you give regarding these challenges?

30. As we come to our last verse in this chapter, Paul makes a very important point we need to heed when it comes to the things we allow or abstain from. Write down **verse 23** below.

David Guzik points out that, **“This is a wonderful check on our tendency to justify ourselves in the things we permit. If we are troubled by something, it likely isn’t of faith and likely is sin for us.”**

The **Bible Knowledge Commentary** has this to say: **“The principle is, ‘When in doubt, DON’T.’ The ‘strong’ Christian is wrong if he causes a weak brother to sin by doing something while doubting, and a weak brother who goes against what he doubts also sins.”**

31. What has been your greatest takeaway from your study of Romans 14?

This study was written and prepared by Shawn Van Hook, 2026