Our Fragile Fellowship

Romans 14

Serving Christ In THESE THINGS
Fellowship

Like Fine China
John 13:34-35

34 "A new commandment I give to you, that you love one another; as I have loved you, that you also love one another.

35 "By this all will know that you are My disciples, if you have love for one another."
Matthew 22:37-38

Jesus said to him, "You shall love the LORD your God with all your heart, with all your soul, and with all your mind." 'This is the first and great commandment. "And the second is like it: 'You shall love your neighbor as yourself.'"
Romans 12-15

**What Love Does**

12:1-8  Love Must Be Always **Sacrificial & Serving**

12:9-21  Love Must Be Always **Genuine**

13:1-8  Love Must Be Always **Submissive**

13:8-14  Love Must Be Always **Universal**

14:1 – 15:13  Love Must Be Always **Patient / Tolerant**
The Main Thing

“The enemy of the best is the good”

If Only Choose One

**WHY ARE YOU HERE TONIGHT?**

1. To feel blessed and help others? (takers)
2. To praise and glorify God? (givers)
The Melting Pot Church at Rome

“All roads lead to Rome”

- New Christians ................................................. Old Christians
- Life-long Jews (traditions) ...................... Converted Gentiles
- Masters ............................................................. Slaves
- Males (patriarchal) ........................................ Females (2nd Class)
- Blacks (Africa) ... Tans (Middle East) ... Whites (Europe)
- Dozens Languages / Cultures

Rome
There is neither Jew nor Greek, there is neither slave nor free, there is neither male nor female; for you are all one in Christ Jesus.

“By this all will know you are My disciples, if you have love for one another” (Jn 13:35)
What Romans 14 is **NOT** Teaching

• **Doctrinal Matters**
  
  *2 John 1:9*  
  “Whoever transgresses and does not abide in the doctrine of Christ does not have God. He who abides in the doctrine of Christ has both the Father and the Son.”  
  *(cf. 2 Pet. 2:1)*

• **Sinful Matters**
  
  *Ephesians 5:11-12*  
  “And have no fellowship with the unfruitful works of darkness, but rather expose them. For it is shameful even to speak of those things which are done by them in secret.”  
  *(cf. Gal. 5:19-21)*
What Romans 14 IS Teaching
(Paul’s Chiasm)

A) Vs 5  Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.
B) Vs 13 ...not to put a stumbling block ... in our brother's way.
C) Vs 14 I know ... that there is nothing unclean of itself
D) Vs 15 Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died
E) Vs 16 ...do not let your good be spoken of as evil
F) Vs 17 kingdom is ...righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

F) Vs 19 let us pursue the things which make for peace
E) Vs 20 ...but it is evil for the man who eats with offense.
D) Vs 20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food
C) Vs 20 ... All things indeed are pure (clean)
B) Vs 21 ...nor do anything by which your brother stumbles
A) Vs 22 Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God.
The **Main Thing** About Rom. 14

**Real Life Scenario**

- Seventh Day Adventist (Sabbath Keeper)
- Working on Saturday sinful
- Converted to Christ (N.T. silent on Sabbath)
- Head vs Heart
Romans 14:1-12

*Jews vs Gentiles*

- **DIET**
  Romans 14:1-4

- **DAYS**
  Romans 14:5-12

The Main Thing?
Romans 14:1-12

Each Man (weak or strong) Answers Only To God

V.3 “God has received him” (carnivore / vegetarian)
V.4 “God is able to make him stand” (God is judge)
V.8 “Whether live or die, we are Lord’s (live to God)
V.9 “For this end Christ died…” (save each man)
V.10 “We stand before Judg’t seat of Christ (not man)
V.12 “Each of us shall give account to God (not man)
Romans 14:1-12

Room For Growth

36 A.D. – Paul “the weak”
   (Pharisee / Kosher food / feast days)
60 A.D. – Paul “the strong”
   (I became all things to all men to save some)

36 A.D. – Peter “the weak”
   (Act 10 / Gal. 2 “I have never eaten unclean”)
60 A.D. – Peter “the strong”
   (I Pt 2:17 “Honor all. Love the brotherhood”)
Romans 14:1-12

Room For Growth

2018 A.D. – milk drinker convert “the weak”
(out of the world)
2038 A.D. – meat eater “the strong”
(2x Sun., Wed, Meetings, homes, etc)

2018 A.D. – milk drinker “the weak”
(out of religious error)
2038 A.D. – meat eater “the strong”
(Christmas, Easter, Baby dedication, premill.)
Romans 14:13-23

Principles To Live By

• Don’t Judge A Brother’s Personal Conscience (vs 13)

“Therefore let us NOT *judge* one another anymore, but rather *resolve* this, NOT to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother’s way”

• Grk. KRINO “pronounce opinion, render a verdict”

• “No-Judging-Zone” (personal conscience)
• “Judging Zone” (clear room of all possible obstacles)
Romans 14:13-23

Principles To Live By

• Don’t Judge A Brother’s Personal Conscience (vs 13)

• **Don’t Walk Selfishly, but Sacrificially (vs 14-15)**

  “Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died”

• Gentiles must be patient with Jews

• Strain fellowship by selfish demands (“destroy!”)
Romans 14:13-23

Principles To Live By

• Don’t Judge A Brother’s Personal Conscience (vs 13)
• Don’t Walk Selfishly, but Sacrificial Love (vs 14-15)
• Don’t Let Your Good Be Spoken of as Evil (vs 16-19)

“He who serves Christ in THESE THINGS (conscience) is acceptable to God and approved by men.”

• How does the rest of the church see me?
  A) Selfish? Good becomes evil
  B) Sacrificial? Peace, edification (right, peace, joy)
“Do Not Destroy **The Work of God** for the sake of food !”

“Do you have faith *(personal conscience on non-sinful matter)*, have it to yourself before God”
Romans 14

Caution: Under Construction

You Are God’s Work

“I’m not finished with you yet”
The New Hope Church
(Minnesota)

• All walks of life *(poverty – middle class – wealthy)*
• All kinds of cultures *(“red & yellow, black & white”)*
• All countries *(Africa – Asia – S. A. – C.A. – Mex)*
• All journeys of faith *(prison – denom. – atheist – dysfunctional fam. – nuclear fam.)*
• All levels of maturity *(special needs – babes /milk – grown (meat)*
The Plant City Church (Florida)

- All walks of life (?)
- All kinds of cultures (?)
- All countries (?)
- All journeys of faith (?)
- All levels of maturity (?)

"Go into all the world and preach the gospel to every creature"
Our Fragile Fellowship

• The price of success
• The tension of growth

“till we all come to the unity of the faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ”

Ephesians 4:13