

Romans 14

1. What does it mean to you that the Body of Christ is to one?

Look at Psalm 133:1; Gal. 5:25; Eph 4:1-3. Why do you think the Lord places such value in unity?

What would this unity look like?

What is our individual responsibility in maintaining this unity?

Are we able to reach this unity on our own? Please explain.

Are disagreements necessarily a sign of disunity? Please explain.

What do you believe are the main causes of disagreements in the Body of Christ?

How are Christians to handle disagreements when they arise?

2. Is there a difference between someone with weak faith or one who is weak in the faith? Please explain.

Can you remember a time when you weak in your faith? If so, who or what helped you strengthen your faith?

Why is it important for us to accept those whose faith is weak?

Paul says that we are to resist passing judgment on disputable matters (some versions read "opinions"). What do you think are some "disputable matters" we face today?

What is the danger of passing judgement on these issues?

3. In verses 2-3, Paul addresses one of these issues facing the church in Rome: food. Paraphrase Paul's argument.

How does his reasoning apply to us?

What does verse 4 mean to you? Again, how are we to apply this truth?

Remembering that Paul is addressing Jews and Gentiles. God commanded the Jews to keep the feasts; therefore, these were very special days to them, but this was not so for the Gentiles. Do you think the Gentile church should observe the feasts, such as Passover and Feast of Tabernacles? Please explain.

Should Christians participate in Halloween? Please explain.

The church in Rome was dealing with the same issues concerning "special days." What advice does Paul give in verses 5-6?

4. What is the implication of verse 6 for us?

Read Colossians 3:17. How does this verse mirror Paul's words to the Romans?

What does Paul mean when he says in verse 7 that none of us lives to himself or herself?

For whom, then, are we to live?

How would this help remove arguments and disunity from the church?

What does it mean to you to "live to the Lord"?

What are some other objects or persons for which people can live?

Many people will say that their children are the most important people in their lives and they live for them. How do you think Paul would respond to that statement?

How would you explain verse 8 to a new Christian?

5. How would you answer the question, "Why did Jesus die on the cross?"

What does it mean that Christ is Lord of the living and the dead? (See Matthew 12:28-27.)

What is the implication of this truth?

6. Read carefully verses 10-13. Why were the "brothers" Paul mentioned?

Why were the Jews judging their brothers?

Why might the Gentiles look down on their Jewish brothers?

According to Paul's recent statements about Christ, why is such behavior so displeasing to God and so disruptive to the church?

Do we still have problems with this area today? Please explain.

Verse 11 is often quoted by itself. Paul gives it as a response to verse 10. Why does Paul quote this verse here?

When quoted, this verse is often used to refer to unbelievers that they will eventually bow their knees to God. While that is true, Paul quotes it to Jews and Gentile believers. Therefore, what is the message for the church?

What is involved when kneeling before the Christ?

If you and an "enemy" were both kneeling before Jesus, how would that affect the relationship between you both?

7. What does it mean to give an account of ourselves?

What do you think will be involved when we have to give an account of ourselves before God?

Notice, Paul says we will give an account of ourselves and not of someone else. What does this mean?

Read Matthew 6:14-15. How do these verses relate to Paul's statement that we will all have to give an account of ourselves?

8. The word "therefore" is used to denote a "logical consequence" to what has come before. Note, it is a logical, not emotional, consequence. Briefly restate Paul's reasoning in the last few verses.

Therefore, because of those points, what does Paul say should be the consequence?

If we pass judgment on another, what will be the consequences for us?

These are *God's* words to the church as given by Paul. Why, then, do we still have problems with this judgmental attitude?

What is a stumbling block?

Are all stumbling blocks sin? Please explain.

What are some stumbling blocks that we can put in our brothers' or sisters' way?

Has the Lord ever placed in on your heart that your actions, attitude, or words were a stumbling block to other believers? If so and if you feel comfortable sharing, how did you respond?

Paul gives us an example of such a stumbling block in verses 14-15. Why was food such a divisive topic between Jews and *Gentiles*?

9. Can you give an example of how something that is good could be considered evil?

Paul states that it is our responsibility if someone sees our "good" as "evil." Do you agree?

When we pray the Lord's Prayer, we ask for *God's* kingdom to come so His will, will be done on earth just as it is in Heaven. How would define the Kingdom of *God*?

Sometimes, we can describe something by telling what it is not. Paul does that in verse 17. What is the Kingdom of *God* not? What does this tell us about *God's* Kingdom?

How does Paul describe what the kingdom is?

Paul adds the phrase "in the Holy Spirit" at the end of his statement. Why?

10. Do you always make every effort to love in peace with others? Please explain.

Is Paul saying that as Christians we are to let others "walk over us?" Please explain.

How are to apply verse 19 to our lives?

If we took this one verse to heart, how do you think it would change our world?

How could one "destroy" the Kingdom of God for the sake of food? For the sake of music? Of clothing?

Read what Jesus said in Mark 10:41-45. What is Jesus saying to you? To His church?

11. In verse 23 Paul states that we are to treat those who have doubts carefully. Why?

Can you remember a time when you had doubts about the faith and about living that faith?

Suppose that Phil is a mature Christian who has been tithing for many years. He has seen the truth of God's statement that we will be blessed if we tithe. Phil becomes friends with Sue and Sam, a couple who are new to the church. They know the Bible says to tithe, but they are having a difficult time making that decision. How could Phil's tithing become a stumbling block to Sue and Sam?

If you were Phil, how would address this situation?

12. In this chapter, Paul clearly tells us that we are to make others a priority. Does this mean we are to ignore our needs? Please explain.