

Romans 14

Disputable Matters

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It is so good to be back with you guys! There are so many things I like about Hope Church:

- Pastor Ryan, a man of humility.
- Great worship... - XA Students!
- It might sound crazy, but I really like the relaxed chairs and sofas!
- I can feel the "community" here

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Today I am going to share what I think is an important part of being a community. We are going to look at *Romans 14* -

This is the largest treatment of how to deal with areas of disagreement in the church.

TITLE: *Accept one another despite disputable matters.*

[Prayer]

Let's read the first 6 verses of Romans 14

1 **Accept** the one whose faith is weak, **without quarreling** over **disputable matters**.

2 One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, **eats only vegetables**.

3 The one who eats everything
must not treat with contempt
the one who does not eat all things,
and the one who does not eat everything
must not judge the one who does, for God
has accepted them.

4 **Who are you to judge** someone else's
servant?

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What is Paul talking about here?

eating meat sacred/spiritual days

From the time Paul is in Galatia,
until the last days of his life,
Paul is hounded by Pharisees who
had become Christians.

These men were called Judaizers.
They believed that Gentiles who
become followers of Jesus should
obey the law of Moses.

Paul was against this idea.

His full argument against this is in
the letter to the *Galatians*, BUT

He speaks directly to this issue of
eating meat sacrificed to idols,
drinking wine and
worship on the Sabbath
in *Romans* and *1 Corinthians*.

5 One person considers
one day more sacred than another;
another considers every day the same.
Each of them should **be fully convinced in
their own mind**.

6 Whoever regards **one day as special**
does so to the Lord.

Whoever **eats meat** *does so to the Lord*,
for they **give thanks to God**;

and **whoever abstains** *does so to the Lord*
and **gives thanks to God**.

Romans 14 is unique because Paul
refers to these issues as **disputable**.

So Paul says these issues are matters of personal opinion...

NOT directly sinful on either side of the discussion.

In verses 7-9 Paul makes it clear that Jesus died for ALL of us and we are ALL to live for Him.

Now, let's see how Paul urges us to deal with these disagreements....

vs 10-13

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10 You, then, **why do you judge** your fellow Christian? Why do you **treat them with**

contempt? We will all stand before God's judgment seat...

12 each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.

13 So **stop passing judgment** on one another [ἀλλήλους].

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This entire chapter is about allelous, "one another"

In my opinion, THIS is one of THE MOST challenging aspects of living for Jesus.

It's the "one another" verses:

"love one another"

"serve one another"

"submit to one another"

"confess your sins to one another"

"forgive one another"

"be kind" to one another "

One another [ἀλλήλους] is used over 40 times commanding us in the NT letters.

If you read *Romans* 14 carefully you will see that Paul says

"do not judge one another" 4 times.

Paul is more concerned with how we treat each other than he is about matters of conscience.

[13 min]

For the last 5-6 years I have been speaking about this issue.

I read some of my fellow Christians on social media...openly judging their fellow Christians...calling their faith into question.

One fellow Christian,

[a former XA student of mine]

Presents himself as a prophet...
as if he knows the heart of others.

This guy, and many others, need to read *Romans* 14.

IF the biblical text does not clearly support an issue - Paul says in verse 22,

...whatever you believe about these things
keep between yourself and God.

In his treatise titled *On the Liberty of a Christian* Martin Luther famously wrote:

"A Christian is a most free lord of all, subject to none...A Christian is a most dutiful servant of all, subject to all."

Paul goes on to urge all of us not to be a stumbling block.

So if you think a fellow Christian would be bothered by something you might say or do...

Just abstain in that moment.

Remember what many of our mothers taught us:

"If you can't say something nice..."

Then in v14 Paul says,

14 I am convinced, **being fully persuaded** in the Lord Jesus...**nothing is unclean in itself.**

But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean.

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19 Let us make every effort to do what leads to peace and mutual edification.

20 Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food.

[your personal convictions...are personal.
Keep it between you and God,
do not judge (meaning do not tell someone
who has a different view that they are not
saved.)]

Discuss...disagree...but do not judge
their faith.

The LORD will handle judgement.

QUESTIONS?