

Loving Your Brother

Romans 14

Introduction: The Bible begins with the question, “Am I my brother’s keeper?” The rest of it is answering, “Yes!” Romans 14 shows us how to care for our brethren.

I. The Context

A. Romans 14

1. The situation: Some kept Jewish traditions
Not as worship but as life practices, Galatians 5:1-3
2. Who were the weak faith Christians?
They did not eat meat or wine, v. 2, 14 (unclean), 21
They act to glorify God, v 6
3. Who were the strong faith Christians?
They had greater knowledge, v. 14, different baggage
4. Paul’s directions
 1. Welcome one another, don’t argue, v. 1
 2. Recognize your brother is sincere, v. 6
 3. Prioritize souls over liberty, v. 19

B. 1 Corinthians 8

1. The situation: Eating meat used in Pagan worship
Not in worship, but in the marketplace
2. The Strong: know an idol is nothing, v. 4, 1 Cor. 10:25
3. The Weak: see it as worship to the idol, 6-7
4. Paul’s directions
 1. Don’t let liberty be a stumbling block
 2. What is not sin for you, may be for others

II. Applications

A. Everyone has influence, use it wisely

v. 7-9 None of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself.
1 Corinthians 8:9, 1 Corinthians 9:22

B. Don’t let the minority rule the church

Romans 14:1, 3

C. Christ has purchased souls, treat them well

Romans 14:3b, Romans 15:7

Be a person of love, Romans 13:8, 13:10, 14:15

D. Love for neighbor means love for God

Romans 14:4a, Romans 14:9-12, 1 Corinthians 4:3-5, 1 John 4:20

STRONG CONSCIENCE	STRONG CONSCIENCE	WEAK CONSCIENCE	WEAK CONSCIENCE
but carelessly crossing the line into lawlessness and immorality	but looking down on (despising) those with a weak conscience	but judging those with a strong conscience	but crossing the line into legalism
eats meat	eats meat	doesn’t eat meat	doesn’t eat meat
“I have freedom not only to eat meat but to go to parties at idol temples.” (cf. 1 Cor. 10:20–22)	“I have freedom to eat meat, and those who don’t are being unreasonable and are theologically in error.”	“It’s sinful to eat meat, and Christians who do so are being unfaithful to God.”	“You must follow the Old Testament dietary restrictions if you want to be a Christian.”
Heresy	Arrogance	Judgmentalism	Heresy

STRONG CONSCIENCE	STRONG CONSCIENCE	STRONG CONSCIENCE	STRONG CONSCIENCE	WEAK CONSCIENCE	WEAK CONSCIENCE	WEAK CONSCIENCE
but carelessly crossing the line into lawlessness and immorality	but looking down on those with a weaker conscience	fully persuaded, yet welcoming rather than looking down on those with a weaker conscience	but free to be flexible in disputable matters in order to (1) edify fellow believers and (2) advance the gospel	fully persuaded, yet welcoming rather than judging those with a stronger conscience	but judging those with a stronger conscience	but crossing the line into legalism
eats meat	eats meat	eats meat	flexible	doesn’t eat meat	doesn’t eat meat	doesn’t eat meat
“I have freedom not only to eat meat but to go to parties at idol temples.” (cf. 1 Cor. 10:20-22)	“I have freedom to eat meat, and those who don’t are being unreasonable and are in theological error.”	“I have freedom to eat meat for the glory of God, but I still welcome Christians who disagree.”	“I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.” (1 Cor. 9:22b) (The goal of every believer)	I abstain from eating meat for the glory of God, but I still welcome Christians who disagree.”	“It’s sinful to eat meat, and Christians who do so are being unfaithful to God.”	“You must follow the Old Testament dietary restrictions if you want to be a Christian.”
HERESY	ARROGANCE	LOVE	LOVE	LOVE	JUDG-MENTALISM	HERESY
Distorts the gospel by lawless subtraction	Diminishes the gospel	Reveals the gospel	Magnifies the gospel	Reveals the gospel	Diminishes the gospel	Distorts the gospel by legalistic addition