

THE GOOD NEWS OF THE GOSPEL

Romans 14

Lesson 17

FIRST DAY: Review and Overview

1. What ministered to you most from your lesson in Romans 13 about *redeeming the time*?

2. Often, because we want to feel more spiritual than others, we judge and criticize. It is very easy, because of our human nature, to add our own personal convictions to our Christian walk. When we place our personal convictions on other people, it invariably leads us away from love, grace, and unity in the body of Christ. In fact, such expectations often cause divisions, pride, comparisons, and legalism to fester. In Romans 14 Paul used the practical examples of diets and days to identify what the Christian's attitude and practices are to be. Believers must be careful not to use their personal limitations or liberties to judge or stumble another believer. Instead, every believer should focus on pleasing God and showing love to others. From each of the following divisions cite at least one way to promote an attitude of love among believers:
 - a. Romans 14:1-6

 - b. Romans 14:7-13

 - c. Romans 14:14-18

 - d. Romans 14:19-23

3. God promises you His righteousness, peace, and joy in the Spirit. Ask Him to fill you to overflowing so that you may be an example of His love.

*The kingdom of God is not eating and drinking,
but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*
Romans 14:17

SECOND DAY: Read Romans 14:1–6

1. In Romans 14 Paul continued to address our relationships with other believers. In Romans 14:1 he turned to matters of personal conviction. He declared, *Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong* (NLT). Record the example Paul gave of this in Romans 14:2.
 - a. Paul was referring to sensitive issues in the early church, particularly between Jewish and Gentile believers (not eating certain kinds of meat for spiritual reasons). Use 1 Corinthians 8:4, 7 to explain one such issue.
2. From Romans 14:3 note and comment on the proper response toward the believer who:
 - a. *Eats* all things
 - b. *Does not eat*
 - (1) From Romans 14:3b briefly explain why we should respond in this way.
3. According to Romans 14:4, why are we not in a place to *judge* another believer's personal convictions?
 - a. Link this with Matthew 7:1–2 and 1 Corinthians 4:3–5 and share your thoughts.
4. In referring to those who esteem certain days above others (Romans 14:5a), Paul touched on another area of personal conviction. Record his conclusion. Romans 14:5b
5. Romans 14:6 (NLT) says, *Those who worship the Lord on a special day do it to honor Him. Those who eat any kind of food do so to honor the Lord, since they give thanks to God before eating. And those who refuse to eat certain foods also want to please the Lord and give thanks to God.* What does this reveal concerning the main point for personal conviction?
 - a. Connect this principle with 1 Corinthians 10:31 and Colossians 3:17. What do you see?
6. From your study today summarize the overarching attitude you are to have toward other believers.

THIRD DAY: Read Romans 14:7-13

1. Read Romans 14:7-9 (NLT) and answer the questions that follow. *For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Christ died and rose again for this very purpose – to be Lord both of the living and of the dead.*
 - a. What is the purpose of the believer's:
 - (1) Life
 - (2) Death
 - b. To whom do we *belong* as believers?
 - c. What does this convey about our lives?
2. In Romans 14:10 Paul challenged those who *judge* and *show contempt* for other believers based on issues of personal conviction. He stated that we will *all stand before the judgment seat of Christ*. This *judgment seat* is known as the *Bema Seat*. This *seat* is where the Olympian athletes received their rewards after finishing their races. How does this reality challenge your attitude toward believers?
 - a. Paul quoted Isaiah 45:23 in Romans 14:11. What fundamental truth was he emphasizing?
3. According to Romans 14:12, to whom is *each of us* ultimately accountable?
 - a. How might this perspective influence you in terms of:
 - (1) Your personal conduct
 - (2) Your relationships with other believers
4. From Romans 14:13 note and comment on what believers are:
 - a. *Not* to do anymore
 - b. To *resolve* to do
5. From your lesson today, what is to be the motive behind our behavior toward one another?

FOURTH DAY: Read Romans 14:14-18

1. After establishing Jesus Christ as the ultimate judge, Paul revealed the effect our Christian liberty has on other believers. From Romans 14:14a answer the following questions:
 - a. By whom was Paul *convinced*?
 - b. What was Paul *convinced* of?
 - c. Connect this with Peter's experience in Acts 10:10-15 and share your thoughts.
2. Paul declared in Romans 14:14a that in Christ, no food is *unclean of itself*. Paul then acknowledged in Romans 14:14b (NLT), *But if someone believes it is wrong, then for that person it is wrong*. Why is this important to acknowledge?
 - a. Therefore, if a Christian *brother* is *grieved* by our liberty in eating certain foods, what are we *no longer* doing? Romans 14:15a
 - b. Observe Paul's warning in Romans 14:15b. Link this with 1 Corinthians 8:8-12 and share your thoughts.
 - c. Use 1 Corinthians 8:13 to describe the proper way to deal with this issue.
3. What caution did Paul give concerning Christian liberty in Romans 14:16?
 - a. Why is this an important warning?
4. According to Romans 14:17, rather than limitations or liberties, what is the *kingdom of God* about?
 - a. How does this speak to you about what your focus should be?
5. According to Romans 14:18, *he who serves Christ in these things is _____ to God and _____ by men*.
 - a. How does this inspire you?

FIFTH DAY: Read Romans 14:19–23

1. The Roman church was in danger of becoming overly occupied with their liberties and limitations. In light of this, use Romans 14:19 to note and comment on *things* believers are to *pursue* instead:
 - a. *The things which*
 - b. *The things by which*
 - (1) Why are these pursuits beneficial to the body of Christ?
2. Read Romans 14:20 (NLT) and answer the following questions. *Don't tear apart the work of God over what you eat. Remember, all foods are acceptable, but it is wrong to eat something if it makes another person stumble:*
 - a. What is the possible danger of exercising our liberties without regard to other believers?
Romans 14:20a
 - b. When does exercising Christian liberty become *wrong*? Romans 14:20b
3. From Romans 14:21, in your own words, write out the basic principle Paul was promoting.
4. Romans 14:22 (HCSB), *Do you have a conviction? Keep it to yourself before God. The man who does not condemn himself by what he approves is blessed.* Why is it important to weigh all your liberties and limitations before God?
5. According to Romans 14:23, why should the person who has *doubts* about his liberties abstain from those liberties?
 - a. Paul's point was: that whatever cannot be done from a clear conscience is *sin*. Link this with James 4:17 and share your thoughts.
6. Connect what you've studied today with Galatians 5:13. What should the believer's attitude be toward his liberties?

SIXTH DAY: Review

1. From your study this week, write your first response to some of the key phrases used in Romans 14:
 - a. *Doubtful things*
 - b. *His own master*
 - c. *Fully convinced*
 - d. *Live or die*
 - e. *Judgment seat of Christ*
 - f. *Stumbling block*
 - g. *Walking in love*
 - h. *Do not destroy*
 - i. *Kingdom of God*
 - j. *Acceptable to God*
 - k. *Let us pursue*
 - l. *Whatever is not from faith*

*Therefore let us pursue the things which make for peace
and the things by which one may edify another.*
Romans 14:19