

- Week 21 -

Romans 14

Read verses 1-4

There is a quick transition here from our relationship to those outside of the church to those inside the church. He takes the same principles but makes a different application.

Paul frames this discussion of eating meat in terms of service to a master.

- Who is the master he defers to in verse 4? (The word translated as *master* here is translated as *lord* in 13:14 and later in the same verse.)
- The word translated as *servant* (*oiketās*) derives from the word *house* (*oikos*).

Read verses 5-9

- Why does Paul refer to “one day as better than another”? What day could he be speaking about?
- Paul revisits the idea of life and death in verses 7-9. This connects back to his arguments in chapters 6-8, but what big idea is he connecting it to? (see verse 9)

Read Verses 10-12

- What is Paul saying about our criteria for judging others? *What is the actual criteria by which we are to be judged?*

Read Verses 13-19

- Paul contrasts judgment with actively *not* placing stumbling blocks in others' way. *How do we establish lines to decide what is important enough to engage critically?*
- Why do you think Paul uses eating as his descriptive illustration in this passage?
- What principles does Paul establish in this passage that speak to our relationships with others on matters we might disagree on?
- How do the idea of verse 19 contrast with those expressed in verse 1?

Read Verses 20-23

- Paul deals with some difficult questions about faith and doubt in these verses. Consider this articulation of the principle:

It is better not to do something that might be permissible and save a relationship with another believer than to do something you believe is allowed and lose the relationship.

Does this address issues you struggle with in Christian relationships? How would it be applied to relationships closer than acquaintances, such as in leadership or in marriage?

- It is subtle, but Paul makes the point that we *should* pass judgment on one particular person in our relationships. Can you spot *who* we should be judging carefully?