

EITC—next week

Navigating Differences (Rom 14:1-15:7)

I. Gospel of the Righteousness of God

Jesus is the explanation of the Person & Work of the Father

Jn 1:18 No one has ever seen God; [Jesus] has made him known..

NT epistles are the explanation of the Person & Work of Christ

Eph 3:8 To me, ... this **grace** was given, to **preach** to the Gentiles the **un-searchable riches of Christ**, **9** ... the **plan of the mystery hidden for ages** in God...

Christians (the Church) are the explanation of the Gospel.

2Cor 3.2-3 (MSSG) ... Your very lives are a **letter that anyone can read** by just looking at you....

A. *Rom 1-11 Theology of Salvation*

(*Rom 9-11 The Israel Issue*)

B. *Rom 12-16 Transformation: Full Devotion*

C. *Rom 12-15 Transformational Love in all Relations*

Engagement precedes influence. Pray. Think. Vote.

II. Differences

A. *Weak & Strong*

Ro 14:1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. **2** One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables.

Ro 15:1 **1** We who are strong have an **obligation** to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. **2** Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.

B. *Jew & Gentile*

Ro 15:8 For I tell you that Christ became a servant to **the circum-cised** to show God's truthfulness, in order to confirm the **promises** given to the patriarchs, **9** and in order that the Gentiles might glorify God for his mercy. As it is written,

“Therefore I will praise you among the Gentiles, (*Ps 18:49*)
and sing praise to your name.”

III. Convictions

A. Diet and Days

Specific issues – quarrelling over whether Christians should, eat **meat** (14:2, 6, 21); observe special religious **days** (14:5–6); and, possibly, drink **wine** (14:21; *cf.* v 17—not clear whether this was a real issue or whether Paul simply cites it as an example)

MINORS: Cultural differences ... Cards, dancing, sports, hair styles, clothing...

UFC video testimony

14:2 One person **believes** he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. “should we eat meat?”

14:6 he one who **observes the day**, observes it **in honor of the Lord**. The one who **eats**, eats **in honor of the Lord**, since he **gives thanks** to God, while the one who **abstains**, abstains **in honor of the Lord** and **gives thanks** to God.

MAJORS: LOVE, KINGDOM of God

14:17 For the kingdom of God is **not** a matter of eating and drinking **but** of righteousness and peace and joy **in the Holy Spirit**.

14:21 It is **good not to** eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

B. Temptations

1. To quarrel over opinions.
2. To despise the scruples (*hesitations, doubts. Diligence, attentiveness*) of others
3. To judge those who feel more free than we do.

IV. Solutions: Skillful self-evaluation (חָכְמָה *hokma*) in Love's Warfare

1. Am I Fully Convinced (1-5)

14:5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. *Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.*

- We tend to hold opinions. Convictions tend to hold us.
- **Welcome** “the weak” (legalistic), don’t quarrel over opinions.
- **Do not judge** “those who eat” with more liberty.
- **Who am I** to judge? The Lord is able to make us stand!
- **Be FULLY convinced** of your convictions.

2. Am I Acting in Honor of the Lord (6-9)

14:6 The one who **observes** the day, ... **eats**, ... **abstains**, ... in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For ***none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.*** 8 ... we are the Lord’s. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be **Lord both** of the dead and of the living.

3. Will it Stand the Test at the Judgment? (10-12)

14:10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For *we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;* 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” 12 So then *each of us will give an account of himself* to God.

- We will all appear before the Bema of Christ. (2Cor 5:10)
- We will all give an account of what and why we acted.
- We will be rewarded for what we have done
- Our works will be revealed by fire.

4. Am I Causing Others to Stumble? (13-21)

14:13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide **never** to put a **stumbling block** or **hindrance** in the way of a brother. 14 I know and am **persuaded** in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. 15 For **if your brother is grieved** by what you eat, you are **no longer walking in love**. By what you eat, **do not destroy the one for whom Christ died**. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 *For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.* 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then let us **pursue what makes for peace** and for mutual upbuilding. 20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but **it is wrong** for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 **It is good** not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

5. Am I Acting from Faith? (22-23)

22 The faith that you have, *keep between yourself and God*. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For *whatever does not proceed from faith is sin*.

6. Am I Selfishly Pleasing Myself or Serving Others? (15:1-7)

15:1 **We** who are **strong** have an **obligation** to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. 2 Let **each** of us **please his neighbor for his good, to build him up**. 3 For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, “The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.” 4 For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through **endurance** and through the **encouragement** of the Scriptures we might have **hope**.

V. Prayer and Promise!

- 15:5 May the **God of endurance** and **encouragement** grant you to live **in** such **harmony** with one another, **in accord** with Christ Jesus, **6** that **together** (one heart, mind) you may with **one voice** glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.
- 7 Therefore **welcome one another** as Christ has welcomed you, for the glory of God.
- 15:13 May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.
- Acts 4:29 And **now**, Lord, **look** upon their threats and **grant** to your servants to **continue to speak your word with all boldness**, **30** while you stretch out your hand to heal, and signs and wonders are performed through the name of your holy servant Jesus.”
- 30 And when they had prayed, ***the place in which they were gathered together was shaken***, and they were ***all filled with the Holy Spirit*** and continued to speak the word of God with ***boldness***.

PRAYER — **BOLDNESS** w **MERCY** **POWER** w **LOVE**