



Sermon Discussion Guide

April 12, 2026 | Romans 14:13-23 | Jerrod

SUMMARY

Big Idea: Prioritize Your Fellow Believer Over Your Freedom

In this section of Romans, Paul is addressing 3rd-tier issues of division in the church and he writes to bring unity, fellowship, and peace between believers. If the emphasis last week was on what **not to do**, this week focuses more on what **to do**. Keeping with the language of the “stronger” and “weaker”, Paul calls both parties to gospel-fueled love. The stronger believer may be right, but must choose to never be a stumbling block to another believer, thereby voluntarily laying aside their liberty, to serve the spiritual benefit of others. For both parties, the goal is the building up of one another, for the glory of God. Christians can arrive at different conclusions on open-handed issues and the gospel gives grounds to walk in genuine disagreement without compromising convictions or violating someone else’s conscience. (The chart referenced in the sermon about the conscience is on page 2)

DISCUSSION QUESTIONS

Read Romans 14:13-23

Head & Heart

1. What is Paul’s main point in these verses? How do you know?
2. What kinds of disputes does Paul NOT have in mind? (closed-handed, 1st or 2nd tier issues)
 - a. What are these? See the points of our Statement of Faith.
 - b. Why is division on these actually necessary and good? (distinguish truth from error)
3. What kinds of disputes does Paul have in mind? (open-handed, 3rd-tier)
4. What does Paul give as guidance for navigating these variances of opinions?
 - a. How does the gospel motivate this?

Hands (Apply)

5. Where in your relationships right now is God asking you to lay aside your liberty because of how it impacts someone else? What makes this hard?
6. Where are you tempted to label someone else’s genuine struggle as just their personal preference so that you do not have to adjust your behavior?
7. In practice, what is more important to you: protecting your right to do something or protecting the peace and growth of others? How would you test that claim? How would you know what you actually prioritize?
8. Are you experiencing any tension with another believer over matters of conscience? In light of this passage, what is one step you could take toward them?

Paul's solution to love							
Strong Consc.	Strong Consc.	Strong Consc.	Strong Consc.	Weak Consc.	Weak Consc.	Weak Consc.	Weak Consc.
sinful in lawlessness and immorality	“despising” those with a weak consc.	fully persuaded, yet welcoming over “despsing”	free to be flexible in order to 1.) edify & 2.) adv. gospel	fully persuaded, yet welcoming over “judging”	“judging” those with a strong consc.	sinful 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”	“I have freedom to eat meat, and those who don't are theo. incorrect”	“I have the freedom to eat meat but still welcome Xians who disagree”	“I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some”	“I abstain from eating but still welcome Xians who disagree”	“It's sinful to eat meat, and Xians who do so are being unfaithful to God”	“You must follow the Old Testament dietary code if you want to be a Xian.”	
Heresy	Arrogance	Love	Love	Love	Judgmentalism	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	
The goal of every mature believer							