

NOTES ON ROMANS 14

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INTRODUCTION TO ROMANS 14

1. Romans 14 is discussing matters of indifference to God.

(1) In God's word we find:

1. Things commanded -- Acts 2:38

2. Things prohibited -- Gal.5 : 19 - 21

3. Things permitted, but not required -- things indifferent to God -- things innocent in themselves -- I Cor. 8:8

2. Those who practice the things in Romans 14 are not condemned by God.

(1) The man of weak faith who had honest scruples was not condemned by God; he was to be received and welcomed by the brethren -- Romans 14:1

(2) The man who believed that he may eat all things -- God had welcomed or received him -- Rom. 14:3

(3) The eater must not despise or hold in contempt the non-eater -- Rom. 14:3

(4) The non-eater was not to judge or criticize the eater, for God has welcomed or received him -- Rom 14:3

(5) The fellowship of saints or Christians is not to be broken for unessential and indifferent matters.

3. The practices under consideration in this chapter are:

(1) "CLEAN" -- Rom. 14:14

(2) "GOOD" -- Rom. 14:16

(3) "PURE" -- Rom. 14:20

(4) It is a wresting of the scriptures to teach that sinful doctrine or practice could be included in this chapter.

4. The second point of difference included -- esteeming of special days -- Rom. 14:5

(1) This is individual action NOT church action.

(2) The church observes only the first day of the week -- Acts 20:7

(3) The church cannot observe special days -- Gal. 4: 10 - 11

(4) The special day is not wrong for the individual if:

1. It did not violate any commands

2. One did not try to bind his "day" on others.

3. And, the person was "fully assured" or "convinced" in his own mind about keeping the "day".

4. God does not care if we place emphasis in some way, for some reason, on particular days as long as they are NOT religious observance.

1. We may celebrate the Fourth of July with flags, parades and fireworks.

I. THERE ARE CLEAR OBJECTIVES IN ROMANS 14

1. The major point of the chapter is to promote peace, harmony, kindness, consideration, and love among Christians -- Rom. 14:19
2. This peace should be paramount because the kingdom of God is more important than personal opinions -- Rom. 14:17
 - (1) Food and drink are not characteristics of the kingdom -- Rom. 14:17
 - (2) Food and drink are things that pertain to one's physical welfare as an individual in the personal liberties of everyday life -- I Cor. 8:8
 - (3) They are not a part of those spiritual principles which make up the kingdom of God -- Rom. 14:17
 - (4) Things that have to do with the work of the kingdom, the worship and personal righteousness cannot be classed with Romans 14.

II. THE CONTEXT DOES NOT CONCERN UNACCEPTABLE PRACTICES

1. Paul said the individual who esteems a day or eats meat is acceptable, and the man who does not is acceptable -- Rom. 14: 1 - 6; 15:7
2. Before a thing can come under this chapter it must be acceptable to God.
 - (1) Marriage and divorce for any cause is NOT acceptable to God -- Matt. 19:9
 - (2) Instrumental music in worship is NOT acceptable to God -- Col. 3: 16; Eph. 5:19; I Cor. 4:6
 - (3) Immodesty and mixed swimming is NOT acceptable to God -- I Tim. 2:9; Matt. 5:28
 - (4) Institutionalism is NOT acceptable to God -- Acts 14:23
 - (5) Homosexuality is NOT acceptable to God -- I Cor. 6:9; I Tim. 1:10; Rom . 1: 24, 26 - 27
 - (6) These things are matters of Doctrine -- they pertain to the righteousness of the Kingdom; one who practices these things is not to be received -- II John 9 - 10

III. Why Romans 14 does not include moral and doctrinal differences:

1. The TEXT does not allow it.
 - (1) Romans 14 is NOT dealing with doctrinal matters.
 - (2) Romans 14 is a chapter dealing with the treatment of a brother over matters of indifference to God.
 - (3) By "Indifference" I mean things about which God does not care-- either way is right -- I Cor. 8:8; Rom. 1:1, 3; 15:7
 - (4) Before a thing can come under this chapter it must be acceptable to God -- Rom. 1:1, 3; Rom. 14:14, 16, 20
 1. Marriage and divorce for any cause is not acceptable to God -- Matt. 19:9
 2. Instrumental music in worship is not acceptable to God -- Col. 3:16; Eph. 5:19
2. The CONTEXT does not allow it:
 - (1) Romans 14 is located between passages that deal with the "works of darkness" (Rom 13: 11 - 14) and the admonition to "mark" false teachers (Rom. 16: 17 - 18).
 - (2) Do you think the Apostle Paul would just teach the opposite of this in Romans 14?

(3) The teaching of other passages does not allow it:

1. We cannot have fellowship with those practicing the works of the flesh -- I Cor. 5: 1 - 11; Eph. 5:11
2. We cannot have fellowship with those who teach false doctrine -- II John 9 - 11; Tit. 3:10

IV. THE CONTEXT OF ROMANS 14 CLEARLY DOES NOT COVER:

1. Unacceptable practices -- Rom. 14: 5 - 6, 14
2. Does not concern matters other than personal choice.
3. The context does not concern congregational matters.
 - (1) These are things not of the Kingdom -- Rom. 14:17
 - (2) Nothing is said in this context about congregational work or worship.
4. It all has to do with INDIVIDUAL PERSONAL MATTERS of indifference to God.
5. Differences discussed here are not matters which make up the kingdom -- Rom. 14: 16 - 17
6. These liberties of differing opinions must not cause disruption among brethren -- Rom. 14: 1; 15:7
 - (1) Fellowship should be maintained in these cases.
 - (2) One must not, by his example, "put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" --Rom. 14: 13
 - (3) A man should never insist on exercising his rights or liberties if harm comes to a brother by his doing so -- Rom. 14: 15 - 16

V. THREE PRINCIPLES CHRISTIANS MUST FOLLOW IN DEALING WITH EACH OTHER IN THINGS OF INDIFFERENCE.

1. We must not judge one another's practices in the realm of things of indifference to God -- Rom. 14: 10 -13
2. We must not put a "stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way" -- Rom. 14:13
 - (1) We must not injure those whom Christ has died to save -- Rom. 14:15, 21
 - (2) The Christian has higher enjoyment than those of selfish indulgences -- Rom. 14:17
 - (3) The Christian is to "please his neighbor for his good, to build him up" -- Rom. 15:2
 - (4) The example of Christ is an example of self-denial -- Rom. 15:3
3. The Christian must be helpful to other Christians
 - (1) There is to be "mutual up building" -- Rom. 14:19; 15:2

VI. ROMANS 14 SHOULD NOT BE USED:

1. To JUSTIFY ERROR of any kind.
2. To JUSTIFY a CHILD OF GOD who teaches error.
3. To "doctor up" unscriptural practices of liberal brethren in order TO BROADEN THE FIELD OF FELLOWSHIP.
4. To JUSTIFY DIGRESSION from doctrinal truth.
5. To JUSTIFY THE FELLOWSHIPING OF DENOMINATIONS.