

WEEK 29 | ROMANS 14:1-23

ROMANS | THE GOSPEL OF GOD'S POWER

OTHER HELPFUL PASSAGES.

The following passages may be helpful to you as you consider this text.

- 2 Corinthians 13:11
- Colossians 3:14-15
- Galatians 5:13

THEMES.

The overarching theme of Romans is the gospel—salvation through Jesus Christ. That is important to remember and keep in front of your group, because the letter is a theological masterpiece. But as with any work of art, each brush stroke's true beauty is best seen when the piece as a whole is realized. To that end, we will deal with many sub-themes, but remember that each one weaves together to give the “fullest, plainest and grandest statement of the gospel in the New Testament.”¹

1. Gospel-transformed people are marked by compassion for and unity with one another.
2. Gospel-transformed people are marked by humility about non-essential issues.
3. Gospel-transformed people recognize that Christ is Lord of all—“If we live, we live for the lord,” (v. 8).

QUESTIONS.

Feel free use any, all, or none of these questions as you facilitate your group. Their purpose is to be an aid to you as you consider how to teach the implications of the week's Scriptures.

1. Did the Holy Spirit use last week's passage or sermon to convict, challenge, or encourage you in any way? Did he use it to confirm or answer a prayer in any way? If you're willing, share with the group.
2. What thoughts do you think Paul is trying to provoke in verse 4 when he asks, “Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another?”
3. What are some matters of indifference/opinion in the church today? How have you seen those matters treated in churches before? How might we strive to seek unity through love, instead of division?

Note: Theologian Michael Bird gives 3 tiers of importance for issues that might cause division in the church: (1) matters essential for salvation (person of Christ, way of salvation etc.), (2) matters that are important to the faith and church though not essential for salvation (mode of baptism, spiritual gifts etc.), and (3) matters of indifference/opinion (dietary restrictions, church music, alcohol).

4. How has God's gift of a conscience protected you from and guided you through difficulty? How do you discern the Spirit's prompting from tradition, others' attitudes, etc.?
5. Have you ever been shown love and respect by someone despite your differing beliefs? Share with the group and describe how it made you feel?

PRAY TO CLOSE.

¹ John R. W. Stott, *The Message of Romans: God's good news for the world.* (Leicester, England; Downers Grove, IL: Inter-Varsity Press, 1994), 19.