

Romans – Let’s Do This!
65- “Have Convictions But Pursue Love”
Romans 14:1 – 15:7

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As long as the church has been made up of sinners saved by grace, there’s been a huge need for all those sinners to figure out how to get along and to love each other, especially when they differed in values and choices! Turn to **Romans 14:1-15:7** to read what the Bible says about this topic.

I. You Should Obey without Question All Clear Commands in the Bible

God’s Word has clearly spoken in so many areas and our obedience to His Word is one of the indicators that we’re truly born again.

I John 5:2-3 “By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome.”

It’s joy and delight to follow God’s ways and to submit to God’s Word wherever He’s clearly spoken.

Psalms 119:32 “I run in the path of your commands, for you have set my heart free.”

Paul’s concerned with how we love each other, even when we don’t all have the same convictions about every little thing.

II. You Should Establish in Faith with Biblical Principles All Your Personal Convictions

Study, pray, talk through things with Christians you respect, wrestle with and dig into God’s Word, but make sure your convictions are based on a biblical theology and not your own personal “me-ology.”

When you come to a firm conviction on a subject, hold on to that conviction with a hand of humility and a heart of love. God calls us to adopt a mindset of humility that acknowledges: we just might be wrong and God could actually lead other believers to choose differently.

III. You Should be Fully Convinced in Your Own Mind Yet Refuse to Despise, Destroy or Condemn Those Who Choose Differently

A. Do the Hard Work of Cultivating Strong Convictions

Despite the danger that different strong convictions could lead to conflict between believers, Paul does not say the answer is to water down your convictions, let it go, and then coast along being indecisive.

Romans 14:5 “One person esteems one day above another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind.”

Romans 14:23 “But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not eat from faith; for whatever is not from faith is sin.”

B. But Then Don't Sin Against Others Who Choose Differently

Romans 14:3 “Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats, for God has received him.”

1. Weaker Christians should not JUDGE those who are convinced of greater freedoms
2. Stronger Christians should not DESPISE weaker Christians
3. Paul actually places the bigger burden on stronger Christians as he WARNS them about the serious danger of DESTROYING another brother

Romans 14:15 “Yet if your brother is grieved because of your food, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy with your food the one for whom Christ died.”

IV. You Should be Driven by Love for Others and the Glory of God Rather than Proving a Point or Promoting a Cause

A. After You're Convinced of What You Should Do – Assume that Those Doing Differently Love God Just as Much as You Do

Romans 14:6 “He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for He gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God.”

B. Let Love Limit and Temper Your Freedoms so that Whenever Liberty Collides with Love You're Quick to Choose Love

Read **Galatians 5:1-6; 12-15**.

V. You Should See How Paul Undergirds these Little Issues with Great Big Theological Truths!

A. He brings it back to Jesus

Romans 15:1-3 “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification. For even Christ did not please Himself; but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached You fell on Me.’”

The strong should do more than just tolerate the weak; they should gladly help by laying aside anything that would hurt their faith.

B. He Frames Up Our Little Squabbles in Light of Big Theological Truths that Apply to All of Us without Exception

Paul's solution for us destroying each other over small things is to get the really BIG things front and center again.

1. Our Biggest Problem's Been Solved

Romans 14:3 "Let not him who eats despise him who does not eat, and let not him who does not eat judge him who eats; for God has received him."

2. We're All Going to Stand Before the Same Judge

Romans 14:10-13 "¹⁰But why do you judge your brother? Or why do you show contempt for your brother? For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. ¹¹For it is written: *As I live, says the LORD, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God.* ¹²So then each of us shall give account of himself to God. ¹³Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather resolve this, not to put a stumbling block or a cause to fall in our brother's way."

3. Our Greatest Hope is Not in Our External List of Do's and Don'ts But the Internal Work of God Who Promised to Finish What He Started in Each of Us

Romans 14:4b "... Indeed, he will be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand."

There's always a temptation to unite around non-essentials rather than the Gospel. Fight hard not to let that happen! That's when the power of the Gospel shines the most!