

How Grace Handles Differences

Romans 14:1-15:6 | October 4, 2020

Contexts: Romans 13 instructs believers to love each other, and this section shows what love looks like in situations when believers disagree with each other on non-biblical issues.

6 principles to use when Christians disagree:

1. Acceptance (14:1-2)
2. Non-judgment (14:3-4)
3. Assurance (14:5-12)
4. Clear path (14:13-21)
5. Personal responsibility (14:22-23)
6. Corporate responsibility (15:1-6).

God's Word:

Discussion Questions:

1. Can you think of an example of someone who handled differences with another believer gracefully (either personal or biblical)?
2. Which of the six principles from this passage speak to you the most, and why?
3. How does this passage point us to Christ?



Questions for Parents to use with their children:

- 1. Have you ever passed judgment on someone on a non-biblical issue (to judge means to put yourself in the place of God to determine what is right or wrong)? Have you ever despised someone for what they have done?**
- 2. Read Romans 14:1-15:6 together.**
- 3. In your own words, briefly describe what appears to be going on.**
Answer: The Apostle Paul is addressing an issue between two groups of people who have opposing views on what should or should not be eaten, along with what days were more important than others.
- 4. How does Paul label the two parties involved in conflict? Also, describe each of them and their stance.**
Answer: The strong and the weak. With a clear conscience, the strong regard all food and drink as ritually clean. The weak, by conscience, are unable to give up their commitment to certain dietary laws and (perhaps) observance of the Sabbath.
- 5. What does Paul ultimately desire from each group?**
Answer: Mutual acceptance (verses 1-12) . However, he wants the strong to not despise, ridicule, or mock the weak (who by conscience feel they can only eat vegetables). He wants the weak to not pass judgement on the strong (those who feel the liberty to eat anything).
- 6. In verse 3, who accepts the strong (those who feel the liberty to eat anything)? Why is this important?**
Answer: God. If God accepts those who feel the liberty to eat anything, than we must be careful not to judge or reject what God has accepted.
- 7. Why do you think verses 7-8 and verse 13 are important to resolving some of the conflict taking place here in this passage?**
Answer: As a Christian, our life is not our own. We belong to the Lord and He ultimately is our judge. We must decide to not do things that would cause others to struggle in their relationship with the Lord. If what I am doing causes others to struggle, for their sake, I should not do it.
- 8. How does this passage point us to Jesus?**
Answer: Although Jesus was perfect, He sacrificed his life so that we could enjoy a relationship with His Father. He removed barriers or stumbling blocks for us.
- 9. How can we apply this passage to our lives as Christians?**
Answer: Do not judge other believers in matters of conscience. This passage seems to lend itself to how we should respond to other Christians regarding non-biblical matters.