

Romans 14:1-15:13

‘When Christians disagree’

Introduction

§ *why* are Christians so divided?

§ *how* does this passage fit in the letter?

§ *what* was the situation in Rome?

‘WEAK’

Jewish
Christians

Conscience about diet and diary

‘STRONG’

Gentile
Christians

Grasped freedom in Christ

judging

Welcome one another (14:1-12)

§ *past* - every Christian has been welcomed by God (v1-3)

§ *present* - every Christian is a servant of the Lord (v4-9)

§ *future* - every Christian will stand before God (v10-12)

Love one another (14:13-23)

§ to go against conscience is sinful

§ my freedom might lead someone to do this

§ so out of love I should restrict the exercise of my freedom

Live in harmony (15:1-13)

§ the key to harmony

§ the significance of harmony

‘Unity in essentials,
liberty in non-essentials,
charity in all things’

Peter Meiderlin (c.1620)

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1. Baptism: baptise only adult believers or infants as well? And by immersion or sprinkling?
 2. Lord's Supper: how formal or informal should it be? How often should we celebrate it? Is it purely a memorial, or does Christ meet with us in a special way through it?
 3. Church government: episcopal, presbyterian, or congregationalist?

4. Liturgy: serviced with liturgy or without, formal or informal? Set prayers or extempore?
5. Praise: contemporay songs and instruments, or psalms / hymns and organ?
6. Charismata: are any gifts not available for today?
7. Women's ministry: which ministries are open to women? How does male headship apply on the ground?
8. Ecumenism: what level of involvement is appropriate with non-evangelical churches?
9. Old Testament prophecy: how are we to understand its fulfilment, especially with regard to Israel?
10. Sanctification: what degree of holiness is possible for the people of God on earth?
11. The state: what shld be the relations between church and state?
12. Mission: are mission and evangelism synonymous? What is the place of social action?
13. Eschatology: how should we understand what will happen in the end-times?
(Tribulation, rapture, millenium)
14. Alcohol: can you be godly and drink alcohol?
15. Cultural engagement: how far should Christians engage with contemporary culture? Is it appropriate to go to the cinema and theatre and read novels? Where should the lines be drawn?
16. The environment: to what extent does the mandate to care for the creation still apply and is still a priority? Must Christians be committed to recycling?
17. Life in the Spirit: what does the Spirit-filled life look like? And how do you get there?
18. Bible translation: is there one superior Bible translation all Christians should use?
(eg.KJV)
19. Predestination: has God predestined people to be saved or is it our free choice to believe?
20. Sacred space: is a church building a sacred space or are all places now the same?

21. Church year: should Christians observe the church year, celebrating Christmas and Easter and giving things up for Lent?
22. The Sabbath: is Sunday a special day on which only certain activities are appropriate?
23. Education: should you send Christian children to state schools, private schools, Christian schools, or home schools?
24. Child rearing: what form should discipline take? Should children have a set bedtime? How should you toilet-train? How many children should you have?
25. Evangelistic courses: Alpha or Christianity Explored?
26. Standard of living: what standard of living is appropriate for a Christian? How much should you spend on a car, on going out for a meal, on holidays, on Christian giving?
27. Divorce and remarriage: is it ever okay for Christians to divorce and remarry?
28. War: is it ever right for Christians to take up arms, or should you be pacifist?
29. Evolution: is evolution a process God used or did he create the world in six 24-hour days?
30. Capital punishment: is it ever right to take the life of another person?