

ROMANS

THE GRACE OF GOD: A JOURNEY OF DISCOVERY IN THE BOOK OF ROMANS

The Weak and The Strong

• Romans 14 : 1 - 15 : 13 •

Week 24

DEVOTION

As Christians, it can be easy to slip into a mindset of judgment. We may look at others who do not share our faith, lifestyle, or conviction and think, "I'm saved; I'm going to heaven, you're not, so you are going to hell." While it may sound spiritually sound to us, that attitude often stems from pride more than love.

The early church struggled with similar issues - disagreements over food, sacred days, and religious practices. Paul, in this section of Romans, addressed these tensions by urging believers to accept one another without passing judgment, especially on disputable matters. Some ate everything, others abstained; some honored special days, others did not. Yet Paul didn't choose sides. Instead, he called both groups to humility, peace, and mutual edification.

Very often, we measure others through a legalistic Christian lens - judging how they dress, what they eat, what music they play, how they worship, or what culture they come from. We act as though our perspective is the only valid one and silently become spiritual critics rather than compassionate witnesses.

If we look at the life of Jesus, we see something radically different. Jesus spent time with those the religious elite rejected namely the tax collectors, sinners, the sick, the outcast. He didn't compromise His holiness, but He also didn't withhold grace. He met people where they were, offering mercy before judgment, and love before correction. His message was redemption, not rejection.

Likewise, Paul reminds us: "Who are you to judge someone else's servant?" (Romans 14:4). The Christian life is not about proving that we are right, or that our ways are the best. Instead, it's about showing that Christ is a loving saviour no matter what, who constantly invites people into a living relationship with Him. He leads with love because real change doesn't begin in shame but begins in grace.

Let's move from a posture of criticism to one of compassion. Let's stop using our faith as a measuring stick and start using it as a bridge. When we lead with grace and trust, just as Jesus did, we reflect the very heart of the gospel.

Monday

Read Colossians 2:16; 1 Corinthians 8:9

Responding to Differences in Personal Convictions: Paul urges believers not to pass judgment on others over disputable matters such as food or special days. Unity and acceptance within the body of Christ are more important than uniformity in personal preferences.

1. What helps us stay united even when we don't see eye to eye on disputable matters? (Romans 14:1)
2. Can you share a time when you had to choose understanding over judgment in a church or small group? (Romans 14:4)
3. How can we balance our personal freedom in Christ with love for others in our community? (Romans 14:13)

Tuesday

Read 1 Corinthians 10:31; Titus 1:15

Living by a Faithful Conscience: Paul teaches that each must be fully convinced in their own mind and act in faith. If we go against our conscience, even in things that are morally neutral, it becomes sin for us.

1. Have you ever struggled to act in line with your conscience? What did you learn? (Romans 14:5)
2. In what ways can we respect someone else's convictions even if we disagree? (Romans 14:6)
3. How can we avoid turning personal preferences into spiritual requirements? (Romans 14:22-23)

Wednesday

Read 1 Corinthians 10:23-24; Ephesians 4:1-3

Pursuing Peace and Building One Another Up : Paul challenges us to value people over preferences. Even if something is technically "clean," if it harms a fellow believer's faith or conscience, love should guide our actions over liberty.

1. Can you think of a time when giving up your "right" helped strengthen your relationship with someone in the church? (Romans 14:15)
2. What practical steps can we take to keep peace at the center of our faith community? (Romans 14:19)
3. How do we know when to let go of a personal preference for the sake of someone else's faith? (Romans 14:21)

Thursday

Read Philippians 2:3-5; John 13:14-15

Following Christ's Example of Selfless Love: Paul points to Christ as our example—He did not please Himself but bore our burdens. Believers are called to imitate this attitude, especially when dealing with those who are weaker in faith.

1. What stands out to you about how Jesus served others selflessly? (Romans 15:3)
2. How can we reflect Christ's love in situations where we're tempted to focus on ourselves? (Romans 15:1-2)
3. Where is God calling you to 'bear with the weak' in your current relationships? (Romans 15:7)

Friday

Read John 17:20-21;; Ephesians 4: 12-13

Reflecting God's Glory Through Unity: Paul ends with a powerful vision of Jew and Gentile worshiping together in harmony. Our unity not only strengthens the church but also serves as a witness to the world of God's mercy and truth.

1. What do you think others see when Christians live in harmony despite their differences? (Romans 15:5-6)
2. How can we be intentional about promoting unity in our local church or small group? (Romans 15:7)
3. How does welcoming others as Christ welcomed us shape our witness to the world? (Romans 15:9-12)