

INTRODUCTION

See also (1 Cor. 8:8, 13; 9:22, 27; 10:23)

In (Rms. 14) are listed 10 principles for maintaining fellowship.

Christians are not immune from having differing viewpoints on a topic.

(v1) "... weak in faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations (passing judgment)"

This statement sets the agenda for the chapter.

"weak in faith" - a belief one holds as obligatory to his faith; however, is an opinion.

"receive ye" - carries the concept of fellowship.

(v2) "one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs"

As an illustration of the chapter, Paul places the belief of two Christians before the readers.

Which one is correct? Answer: both

The problem develops when one decides that it must be one or the other and binds it on others.

BIBLICAL PRINCIPLES SET FORTH:

1. (v3) "let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not"

Don't hold the other with contempt, nor ignore his view, nor brush it aside.

Don't harbor the attitude of "I'm all right and you are all wrong."

2. (v3-4) "let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth ... "

To "judge" means to condemn.

If your position promotes strife, consider that you may be judging in an area you should not.

"for God hath received him" - God has not made a law on this subject.

3. (v5) "let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind"

We can seldom see another's point of view exactly as he sees it.

If that view does not violate God's requirements, it's OK.

4. (v6-12) "... every one of us shall give account of himself to God" (v12)

"we are the Lord's" - no matter our opinion, and we are not our own master.

Concerning things of no matter, don't reject the brother who differs. (v10)

5. (v13-14) "judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block ... in his brother's way"

(1 Cor. 8:12-13)

The conscience does not determine right and wrong; it bears witness to being true to self.
Don't weaken another's conscience by making them tolerate what is wrong to them.

6. (v15) "walk charitably"

A loving walk with a brother will promote him to remain true to self.
Don't use your privileges to lead your brother to destruction.

7. (v16-18) "let not then your good be evil spoken of"

You do not need to give up your belief; however, don't flaunt it in front of the other.
The kingdom is not "eating and drinking ..."

When these spiritual goals are accepted, results are 1) Christ is served.
2) each is acceptable to God. 3) each would be approved of men.

8. (v19) "follow after the things which make for peace ... edify ..."

Don't emphasize and keep bringing up for discussion the "touchy" items wherein is disagreement
(Rms. 12:18) "If it be possible, as much as lieth in you, live peaceably with all men"
Don't follow things that gender strife and selfish gratification.

9. (v20-21) "For meat destroy not the work of God"

Don't tear down the congregation over the matter of food.
Exercise self-denial when it causes the brother to be "made weak."
(1 Cor. 10:28-33)

10. (v22-23) summary: keep your disruptive opinions to yourself.

Meaning: these principles do not give liberty to practice sinful activities.

Warning: our conscience may approve something that God does not.
"hast thou faith?" - be sure it is in harmony with God's word, and
don't violate your conviction in that.

CLOSE - constantly be a truth seeker and be in pursuit of that which is right.