

Do Not Judge One Another Week of November 14, 2021

Intro Discussion Question(s):

- *How have you grown in your study of God's Word this week?*
- *Have you ever been judged for something? How did it affect you? How did you respond?*

Read Bible Study Summary:

This study looks at the One Another Command to not judge one another. Paul gives a very detailed treatise on why we should not judge one another. Paul was probably in Corinth when he wrote this letter to the Roman Church and we see that he had some of the same concerns for both churches. A church with a judgemental spirit will become divided and will not accomplish its God-given purpose, mission or vision. Unfortunately, the world many times views the church as being filled with judgemental people. We should seek to change that perception by living out the one another commands and especially the one that says “do not judge one another!”

Main Scripture

- ***Read Romans 14:1-13***

How do Christians overcome being judgemental?

1. Don't Quarrel Over “Disputable Matters” (Rom. 14:1-3)

- Not every issue in the church is equally important. As brothers and sisters in Christ, we must be careful how we respond to issues with each other so we do not end up being legalistic, divisive, angry, and argumentative. Church matters can be categorized in one of three levels of importance:
 - a matter essential for salvation
 - a matter important to the faith and the church but not essential for salvation
 - a matter of indifference - debatable nonessentials / preferences.¹
- The particular issue in the text is part of the third category - a preference issue over the consumption of meat. The church of Rome consisted of newer believers (weak in faith) who had come out of Paganism and Judaism to follow Christ, each having their reasons to abstain from eating meat (Jews -

¹Tony Merida, *Christ-Centered Exposition* (Nashville, TN: B&H Publishing Group, 2021), 225.

Unclean meat; Pagans - guilt over meat offered to idols). These “weaker” ones did not believe that abstaining would obtain salvation, but rather that it would make you a better, more dynamic Christian. As a result, they were judging those who ate meat. The church also consisted of stronger believers who better understood their freedom in Christ on certain cultural and social practices. However, “strong” does not mean a stronger conscience, or that you can do whatever you want and judge those who don’t have the same view.

- **Read 1 Corinthians 8:6-9**

- *6 yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom all things came and for whom we live; and there is but one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom all things came and through whom we live. 7 But not everyone possesses this knowledge. Some people are still so accustomed to idols that when they eat sacrificial food they think of it as having been sacrificed to a god, and since their conscience is weak, it is defiled. 8 But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do. 9 Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak.*

- **Ask Questions**

- *Take a look again at the levels of importance for church matters listed above. What are some examples of issues for each level?*
- *What is the difference between defending and making judgements about issues essential to salvation as opposed to quarreling or judging others over matters of indifference?*
- *Have you ever been a part of a quarrel over a “disputable matter?” What happened and how did you resolve it? In your opinion, what is the godliest way to resolve an issue of this kind?*

2. Remember We Answer to the Lord (Rom. 14:4-12)

- **“For the Lord is able to make them stand (v. 4)”** - This verse is a very short parable. Paul states that unless a person is your servant, your employee, they don't answer to you. He quickly implies that the person you judge is actually a servant belonging to God, and you have no right to judge them. When we play judge and condemn someone, it then becomes important for us that our judgement be proven right. Instead of wanting the person to overcome their issue, we need them to fail in order to prove our judgement was right in the first place. How tragic. But, Paul says they will stand because God will help them to stand.
- **“We will all stand before God’s judgement seat (v. 10)”** When it comes to salvation, only God knows the condition of another person’s heart. And each person is accountable to him. It’s okay to inspect the fruit of those who desire to be spiritual leaders in your life. That is wisdom. However, “fruit inspector” is not a gift listed among any of the spiritual gifts in the Bible when it comes to relating to our brothers and sisters in Christ! We must never forget we are all sinners and struggle with something. We will all stand before him equally in need of the riches of His kindness, forbearance and patience!
- **Read James 4:10-12**
 - *10 Humble yourselves before the Lord, and he will lift you up. 11 Brothers and sisters, do not slander one another. Anyone who speaks against a brother or sister or judges them speaks against the law and judges it. When you judge the law, you are not keeping it, but sitting in judgment on it. 12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the one who is able to save and destroy. But you—who are you to judge your neighbor?*
- **Ask Questions**

- *As believers, we are supposed to sharpen each other and encourage one another to live holy lives. In what ways does this differ from judging someone?*
- *How does remembering that people are ultimately accountable to the Lord help you when you are tempted to judge someone?*

Closing

- **Ask Question** - *What is the greatest challenge you are facing right now? Is there some way our group can help you specifically?*
- Pray together over those requests.