



# Romans

**Right With God**

# Respect Everyone

Romans 14:1-9

**Lesson Forty-Three**

*Mission Arlington/Mission Metroplex Curriculum*

# Romans

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Lesson Forty-Three

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### Respect Everyone

Paul speaks to an unusual subject in the first verses of this chapter. Read Romans 14:1-4. He says that those who are weak should be fully accepted. What he is talking about here is the person who is still living by laws that prohibited people to eat certain things. They are not physically weak, they are just not yet strong enough to live spiritually in the freedom of Christ.\* The Jewish law and some of the food laws of other religions were pretty specific about what you could eat. Paul says that if a person wants to be that “safe,” protected by obedience to the letter of the law, let them.

He gives an example: Some were refusing to eat meat. Obviously there were vegetarians in those days. He was saying that if Christians truly respect and love one another, it will be impossible for one Christian to judge another Christian because of what they eat. Though Paul doesn't say it in so many words, we hear him telling the church at Rome, eating meat and ignoring the limitations of the food laws in the Old Testament is all okay. Just don't judge Christian brothers and sisters by the way you believe certain things.

In Galatians 5:1, Paul said, “It was for freedom that Christ set us free.” Does Paul mean that we are free to do anything we want to do? Absolutely not! He has already told the Romans that sin is serious. Actually, he said that if you sin you die...that is, if you don't have forgiveness of God which is promised to all those who say, “Jesus is Lord.” God's grace, he said, saves us from what sin does to all sinners.

Read Romans 14:5, 6. It seems that Paul may have been answering a question that the Roman church had sent him. He speaks about two things: food and special days. With the mix of Jewish Christians and persons who had become Christians from other religious backgrounds, we can see that there were many “old rules” from their former religions. In addition to the food thing, some must have been arguing about what days were holy.

There would have been, in the church, strong opinions about what God expected of His people. There could even have been two quarrelling groups developing. Paul tells them that there is a rule to apply here. No one has the right to find fault with the servant of someone else. We are all God's servants. It is right that any fault-finding should be left up to God. After all, it is God's judgment that counts when humans leave this earth.

At the end of verse four, Paul says that those who ultimately stand, that is are found “not guilty,” are that way because God helps them. Standing strong, for the Christian, is using our freedom to live up to God's expectations as we know them, and depending on Him for help in doing that.

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### Lesson Forty-Two

The key phrase in these last verses is “to the Lord.” Every thing that a Christian does should be done to the Lord...for His glory. Whether a person is “weak” or “strong,” as Paul has listed them, the important thing is that the person live their life expecting God to be with him or her. God’s approval is more important than that of anyone else.

The Roman church, as we have said, had both Jews and Gentiles in it. It could be that the argument was about the day of worship. From the beginning, the Jews had celebrated Saturday as the Lord’s Day. Christians began celebrating Sunday, the first day of the week as the Lord’s Day, because it was on that day Jesus rose from the dead.

Paul’s conclusion: do what you are fully convinced in your own mind you should do, and don’t tell everyone else that they have to do it just like you do. And remember, our mind should be like the mind of Christ, and everything we do must fit into what God has revealed to us in the Bible.

**Scripture Memory: “Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls, and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”**

**Romans 14:4**

\*Underlined statements in this Teacher’s Guide appear in the Student Worksheet with blanks to be filled in by the student during the lesson. Words in the Student Worksheet may not appear exactly as printed in the Teacher’s Guide.

#### **For the Teacher:**

**Lesson Goal: To encourage students to be accepting of varied beliefs, so long as they don’t harm their witness or disagree with Scripture.**

1. Paul affirms that the strong does not necessarily stand on slippery ground when enjoying his freedom in Christ. This assurance is grounded not so much on the discretion of the strong as on the power of Christ to sustain him. Denny said, “The Apostle is confident that Christina liberty, through the grace and power of Christ, will prove a triumphant moral success.” Everett Harrison
2. T. R. Grover quotes a Cambridge staying, “Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might—bur remember that someone thinks differently.” We would do well to remember that in a great many matters, it is a duty to have our own convictions, but it is an equal duty to allow others to have theirs without regarding them as sinners and outcasts.
3. “For instance, a person who has been around for a while might well be convinced that he can eat anything on the table, while another, with a different background, might assume all Christians should be vegetarians and eat accordingly. But since both are guests at Christ’s table, wouldn’t it be terribly rude if they fell to criticizing what the other ate or didn’t eat? God, after all, invited them both to the table. Do you have any business crossing people off the guest list or interfering with God’s welcome? If there are corrections to be made or manners to be learned, God can handle that without your help...What matters in all this is that if you keep a holy day, keep it for God’s sake; if you eat meat, eat it to the glory of God and thank God for prime rib; if you’re a vegetarian, eat vegetables to the glory of God and thank God for the broccoli.” Romans 14:2-4, 6—*The Message*
4. For specifics of the Jewish food laws, see Leviticus, chapter eleven.
5. In his letter to Timothy, Paul addressed the freedom issue, referring to: “men who forbid marriage and advocate abstaining from foods which God has created to be gratefully shared by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing is to be rejected if it is received with gratitude.” 1 Timothy 4:3, 4.

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### *Student Worksheet*

#### Pay Your Debts

=They are not physically \_\_\_\_\_, they are just not yet strong enough to live \_\_\_\_\_ in the \_\_\_\_\_ of Christ.

=He was saying that if Christians truly \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ one another, it will be impossible for one Christian to \_\_\_\_\_ another Christian because of what they \_\_\_\_\_.

=Does Paul mean that we are free to do \_\_\_\_\_ we want to do? Absolutely \_\_\_\_\_!

=No one has the right to find fault with the servant of someone else. We are all God's \_\_\_\_\_.

=Standing strong, for the Christian, is using our \_\_\_\_\_ to live up to God's expectations as we know them, and \_\_\_\_\_ on \_\_\_\_\_ for help in doing that.

=God's \_\_\_\_\_ is more important than that of \_\_\_\_\_ else.

=Paul's conclusion: do what you are fully convinced in your own \_\_\_\_\_ that you should do, and don't tell everyone else that they have to \_\_\_\_\_ it just like \_\_\_\_\_ do.

**Scripture Memory: "Love does no harm to its neighbor. Therefore love is the fulfillment of the law." Romans 13:10**

#### **A Roman Road to Salvation:**

**Romans 3:23** "For all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God." Everyone is a sinner and needs salvation.

**Romans 6:23a** "For the wages of sin is death." The law of God is unchangeable. If someone sins the penalty must be paid, the payment is death.

**Romans 5:8** "But God demonstrates His own love for us in this: While we were still sinners Christ died for us." God loves us so much, according to John 3:16, that He sent His Son, Jesus, to die for our sins.

**Romans 6:23b** "But the gift of God is eternal life in Christ Jesus our Lord." The penalty for sin is spiritual death, but God, through the death of Jesus on the cross, took the penalty for the sins of all people, and now everyone can have eternal life. See also, II Corinthians 5:21

**Romans 10:9, 10** "That if you confess with your mouth, 'Jesus is Lord,' and believe in your heart that God raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For it is with your heart that you believe and are justified, and it is with your mouth that you confess and are saved." To personally receive the gift of God, eternal life in Christ Jesus, you trust God to be what He says He is. Believing that "God raised Him (Jesus) from the dead" is to accept all that the Bible says about God and His Son, Jesus. Then you speak (confess) the words, "Jesus is Lord," as a statement of faith. Believing "with your heart" means that you believe with your mind and with everything that you are.

**Romans 10:13** "Everyone who calls on the name of the Lord will be saved." You have the promise of God Himself that if you do what Romans 10:9, 10 says, you will become God's child and have eternal life.

**Romans 12:1, 2** "I urge you brothers, in view of God's mercy, to offer your bodies as living sacrifices, holy and pleasing to God—this is your spiritual act of worship. Do not conform any longer to the pattern of this world, but be transformed by the renewing of your mind. Then you will be able to test and approve what God's will is—His good, pleasing and perfect will." Becoming a Christian is a life-long act of faith and worship.