

# Christian Maturity

## How to Handle Disagreement Romans 14

# Introduction – Christian Maturity

- "You have become a mature person when keeping a secret gives you more satisfaction than passing it along." Author: Unknown
- In the end it is important to remember that we cannot become what we need to be by remaining what we are. [Max Derree]
- It is easy to grow tall and stand with the other trees. The test for us is when strong winds of adversity come. Will our roots go deep enough then to keep us standing tall? [Marguerite Donaldson]
- Being a Christian is more than just an instantaneous conversion — it is a daily process whereby you grow to be more and more like Christ.- Billy Graham
- The more spiritually you grow, the more you realize just how much your thoughts are actually focused on yourself. Even the thoughts that formerly seemed good and acceptable all of the sudden look selfish. Only then do the words "look to Jesus" finally take on real meaning. Author: Anonymous

# Introduction - Disagreement

- Bible accounts, church history and our personal experiences bear witness that good and godly people have their disagreement
- Variances of opinion over minor matters must not be allowed to develop into divisions that create major problems and schisms in church.
- We must learn to disagree without being disagreeable if we have to serve the Lord together and glorify his name.
- Disagreement may not start a fight. But if it is not dealt carefully then it can lead to problems.
- Many Disagreements ignored takes bitter root and can destroy a persons spiritual sensitivity.
- A person whose spiritual sensitivity is lost becomes dead spiritually and can do anything to cover up and lead a double standard life.

# Examples of Disagreement in Bible

Few examples of Disagreement in Bible.

- Abraham & Lot Herdsmen
- Moses & Aaron/Miriam
- Disciples of Jesus
- Paul & Peter (Galatians 2:11)
- Paul & Barnabas

## Jesus Prayer for All Believers(John 17:20-26)

- **20 "My prayer is not for them alone. I pray also for those who will believe in me through their message, 21 that all of them may be one, Father, just as you are in me and I am in you. May they also be in us so that the world may believe that you have sent me. 22 I have given them the glory that you gave me, that they may be one as we are one: 23 I in them and you in me. May they be brought to complete unity to let the world know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me. 24 "Father, I want those you have given me to be with me where I am, and to see my glory, the glory you have given me because you loved me before the creation of the world. 25 "Righteous Father, though the world does not know you, I know you, and they know that you have sent me. 26 I have made you known to them, and will continue to make you known in order that the love you have for me may be in them and that I myself may be in them."**

# Background of Romans 14

- Roman assembly was not agreeing on matters like when to worship and what to eat. Many Jewish believers still held on to some of their traditional diets and holy days while the gentiles in assemblies enjoyed greater liberty in Christ.
- Paul did not give a list of rules or laws here. Laws can manufacture uniformity but they can never produce unity. Paul gave some principles, which can help us to strengthen our relationships when we find disagreeing.
- God's desire is that we should grow in unity.

# Question 1 ??-Hearts Attitude

**What is my hearts attitude toward my brother (Rom.14:1-4)**

- If we start with pride it will lead to judging and that will only create more disagreements and divisions.
- We must start with love and mutual esteem.
- Stronger believer must not despise weaker and weaker should not judge the stronger.
- An attitude of love and mutual acceptance is needed to pray together, talk over our differences and come to satisfactory conclusion.

# Question 2 ??-Know Facts

## **Do I really Know the facts(Rom. 14:5)**

- We make decisions on the basis of prejudice and personal opinion.
- But it should be on the basis of facts and biblical revelation.
- If your mind is already made up then there is no point in listening to your brother when he presents his side.
- A honest believer cannot be fully convinced until he has fully examined the matter from all sides.



# Question 3 ??-Please God or Myself

## **Am I seeking to please God or myself(Rom.14:6-9)**

- The idea of this verse is that we are Lord's and therefore we must live to please him.
- Church & all believers belong to Lord and we must be careful how we treat God's precious property.
- We can some times fool ourselves thinking that our will is really God's will.
- If we sincerely desire to please the Lord then we will not be afraid to listen to others and get another view of the matter.

# Question 4 ??-Account to God

## **Am I ready to give account to God(Rom.14:10-12)**

- Its easy to discuss a matter with a committee or another believer but what will I say when I face Jesus?
- We will have to remind ourselves that we I will not give an account of YOU but only MYSELF.
- At that accounting nothing will be hidden including our hearts motives.
- We need to behave in such a way that we will not be ashamed when this matter comes up as we stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

# Question 5 ??-Injuring Others

**Am I injuring others by my attitude or words(Rom.14:13-15)**

- What good is it to be right in thinking by wrong in words and attitudes?
- We cannot build up a church by tearing down a believer. This is not to suggest that we modify Bible truth just to please other people but it does urge us to “speak the truth in love”(Eph. 4:15)
- To grieve or to cause a brother to stumble is to act unlike Jesus Christ who died for that brother.

# Question 6 ??-Right Priorities

## **Do I have the right priorities (Rom.14:16-21)**

- Kingdom of God is not build on minor matters such as food and drink. But more important is the spiritual quality of our lives and our ministry- righteousness, peace, joy, the ministry of Spirit of God.
- The essential ingredient is not that we agree on everything, but that we promote the peace of God's people as we build up one another in the Lord.
- This does not mean "peace at any price" because Gods wisdom is "first pure, then peaceable" (James 3:17)
- We must not destroy God's work over some minor matter. We should not be like Pharisees who strain water so that they won't accidentally swallow a gnat, but they swallow a camel. (Matt. 23:24)

# Question 7 ??-Living by Faith

Am I really living by faith (Rom14:22-23)

- Do we have doubt about things we do?
- To live by faith is to have the word of God tell us what to do, and to have the witness of the spirit of God within.
- All believers are not at the same level of faith or knowledge. If God has brought me to a higher level than my brother then I must use it to pull him up and not knock him down.
- I cannot force him to grow in faith but I can encourage him by loving him and not trying to impose my faith on him.

# Conclusion-Disagreement

- Yes, Christians do have differences but those differences ought to be opportunities for building and not for battling.
- Let us not examine one another but let us examine our own heart and lives to make sure we are right with Lord.
- Then we will be able to pray together, talk together and make the right decision to the glory of God.