

## **When Christians Disagree**

### **Romans 14:1-23**

#### **Introduction:**

- A. Over the years many congregations have experienced conflict over various disagreements. These disagreements have sometimes lead to church splits or even worse, someone turning and walking away from the Lord altogether.
- B. How should Christians handle conflict and disagreements with their fellow Christians?

#### **Prioritize Unity Over Personal Preferences**

- A. We are to welcome those who have opinions that differ from ours because God has welcomed them into His family (vs. 1-3).
- B. While we are allowed to have differences of opinions in matters that are not about truth, we must never get lost in disputing over those matters of opinion.
- C. The Bible speaks clearly about unity (I Cor. 1:10; Eph. 4:1-3; Jn. 17:20-23).

#### **Treat Those Whose Opinions are Different with Love and Respect**

- A. We are not to despise or pass judgment on our fellow Christians (vs. 3-4).
- B. Paul places responsibility on both, those who are strong and those who are weak.
  - 1. The strong people do not need to look down on those who might be considered weak in faith (v. 3). Instead, they need to support the weak (Rom. 15:1) and be careful not to cause their brother to stumble and sin (vs. 13, 20-21).
  - 2. The weak people do not need to pass judgment on the strong (v. 3). Instead they need to grow in their faith and not remain weak (Heb. 5:12-14; 2 Pet. 3:18).
- C. We are to love others, even those who we may disagree with (Rom. 13:8-10).

#### **Seek Peace and Build Others Up**

- A. We need to pursue what makes for peace (v. 13; 19-21; Rom. 12:18; 15:2).
- B. We must guard against becoming a stumbling block and tearing down the faith of our brothers and sisters in Christ (v. 13).
- C. In the end, we are not the judge (vs. 4, 10-12). So instead of being so quick to judge, perhaps we would do well to seek peace and look for ways to encourage our fellow Christians (Eph. 4:29; I Thess. 5:11).

#### **Conclusion:**

- A. Disagreements and some conflict will surely come at some point. When they do, may we remember the words of Paul and how we should conduct ourselves.
- B. May we be a body of believers who love and respect our fellow Christians.