

1. Dealing With Differences

A. Point of Clarification

1. Not about picking and choosing what parts of Scripture we want to obey
2. About personal interpretations and individual convictions not directly addressed in Scripture
 - a. Often referred to as "gray areas"

B. Preamble - Command to Love

1. The word love appears 5 time from 8-10
2. "Love does no wrong to a neighbor" (10)

C. Principle - Conscience

1. The Strong

a. Meat eaters

- i. Have a clear conscience & pure motives because:

- 1) Matt. 15:11, 15-20
- 2) Mark 7:6-23
- 3) Luke 11:39-41
- 4) Acts 10:9-16
- 5) 1 Tim. 4:3-5
- 6) Titus 1:15
- 7) V. 14

2. The Weak

a. Vegetarians

- i. Have a clear conscience & pure motives because:
 - 1) They believe that such behavior is what God desires and it is meant as an act of worship

3. Conscience is the key

- a. If it's gray for you, it's wrong for you (22-23)

D. Problem & Promise - Condemnation

1. An Issue for Both Sides (3 & 10)

- a. Strong
 - i. Condemn the weak as legalists
- b. Weak
 - i. Condemn the strong as liberals

2. God is the one who judges (11-12)

- a. Harkens back to verse 4
- b. God will judge everyone according to their works and their motivations

E. Prescription - Conscious Concern

1. Stop judging (13a)

2. Do not cause the weak to stumble (13b)

- a. The onus is on the strong (15:1)
 - i. Don't destroy a person's walk over something insignificant (15,17-21)
 - ii. Don't allow the things you freely enjoy to be condemned as evil because you are being unsympathetic to the weakness of a brother/sister (16)

3. Christ is the ultimate example of this (15:3)

F. Prayer - Continued Unity

1. Endurance for the strong to bear the weak
2. Encouragement for the weak to become strong
3. Agreement to not judge & be divided or divisive
4. For the purpose of glorifying God thru unity
5. Because Christ has died to unite us