

Disputable Matters?

Romans 14:1-9

"Do not pass judgment on disputable matters. Recognize that some standards of right conduct are unclear and that other matters really do not matter. In those areas, let the matter drop and get on with the things that do matter. Above all, accept the other believer for what he or she has to offer to the whole body of Christ. And do your own part too! Tell someone about Jesus. Certainly you have better things to do than to hunt out the speck in the eye of your fellow Christian while overlooking the plank in your own.

Francis Schaeffer used to talk about "the chasm." He said that we put it in the wrong place, dividing ourselves from other Christians. It shouldn't be there. True, there is a chasm between those who know Jesus Christ and those who do not, between Christians and the world, and it is a deep one. But that is where it lies, between Christians and the world, not between Christians and Christians. All who know Jesus Christ are on this side of the chasm, and we must stand with them for Christ's kingdom."
Boice

- I. God wants us to have a strong faith in all areas of the abundant life we've been given. He is very concerned with how we, as brothers and sisters in Christ, treat one another. Especially when there are disputable differences in how we worship, do church, dress, and live our lives. The strength of our faith and how we approach our differences, is tied directly to the strength and intimacy of our relationship with Jesus.

Rom. 14:1-6

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- A. It is important that we understand the difference between disputable matters (non-moral absolutes) and indisputable matters (moral absolutes). Where Scripture does not speak out it is not to be considered unclear per se, that is, prohibited by God.

Rom. 14:1

- B. God gives us liberty to determine in our own hearts what is acceptable before him and what isn't concerning disputable matters. This is an individual determination based on faith. It is not to be dictated by what others think is right or wrong according to their convictions. Those who have a mature faith understand that God accepts all of us with equal standing before him. We serve him alone!

Rom. 14:2-4

- C. God wants us to use our minds as objective thinkers and not our emotions when making determination on what is beneficial and constructive for our spiritual well-being and the spiritual well-being of others. We are to make sure that what we determine to be right in our mind, is based on thanksgiving to God.

Rom. 14:5-6

1 Cor. 10:23-24 *"Everything is permissible"—but not everything is beneficial. "Everything is permissible"—but not everything is constructive. Nobody should seek his own good, but the good of others.*

- II. Our motivation behind all our decisions concerning how we live our faith is to fall under the Lordship of Jesus Christ. We are to live with the understanding that we belong to him, and he alone is to determine how we live. Therefore, we must be very careful to make sure that what we allow in our lives concerning disputable matters falls under his Lordship.

Rom. 14:8-9

Gal. 6:14

Eph. 5:8-10 *For you were once darkness, but now you are light in the Lord. Live as children of light (for the fruit of the light consists in all goodness, righteousness and truth) and find out what pleases the Lord.*