



## "SUMMER IN ROME" WEEK 14 NOTES **SEPTEMBER 11**

### KEY THOUGHTS

- Unity is something that requires fighting for. We "drift away" from being unified in the church. Bitterness, disagreement, and friction have a natural gravitational pull. Just look outside the church in our culture to see!
- Romans 14:1-23 covers Paul's push for unity. This week and next we'll look at two major pushes.
- Some choices we make are right/wrong ones. (See Romans 13:13-14, right before this passage, on Paul's directive to us in those right/wrong choices.)
- And some choices are more gray area – we have personal choice here.
- How can I tell the difference?
  - Is Scripture clear on this specific issue?
  - Does Scripture clearly apply, even though this specific issue isn't found in Scripture?
  - If the answer to both these questions is "no", this is a personal choice issue.
- In Romans 14, Paul addresses the "personal choice" issues.
- v.1-2 – that issue is in regard to eating meat that has been sacrificed to idols. This is the same issue that Paul addressed in 1 Corinthians 8. His point was that believers had an option to either eat or not eat. It wasn't a right/wrong issue. "Weak" is identified as Christians whose conscience would bother them if they ate.
- v.3 – Paul condemned two different responses:
  - "judging" – those who didn't partake being judgmental of those who did
  - "regarding with contempt" – those who did partake mocking those who didn't
  - We should agree to disagree. This takes some maturity, but as followers of Jesus, we should be modeling this ability to the world around us!
- v.4 – who are we to judge one another. Context here is hugely important. This verse does NOT say we are not to comment or correct each other on right/wrong issues. This is only in regard to personal choice issues.
- v.5-6 – here Paul gives a deeper statement concerning our liberality. Each of those positions (partaking or not) can be done with absolute devotion to the Lord. Therefore, we are to view each other with that liberality, as equally devoted to the Lord, even if they disagree on a personal choice issue. How is that possible?
- v.7-12 – The real issue is who owns me?
- As we mentioned last week, all is summed up in one statement: LOVE ONE ANOTHER!

### SCRIPTURES

- Romans 13:13-14
- Romans 14:1-12

- 1 Corinthians 8:1-13
- Philippians 1:6

## PRACTICAL AND REFLECTION

- Can I separate the right/wrong choices from the personal choice ones?
- Do I look with judgment on those who participate, or with mocking at those who don't?
- Do I trust that the Holy Spirit will work things out in those who follow after Jesus?
- Philippians 1:6 – For I am confident of this very thing, that He who began a good work in you will complete it until the day of Christ Jesus.