

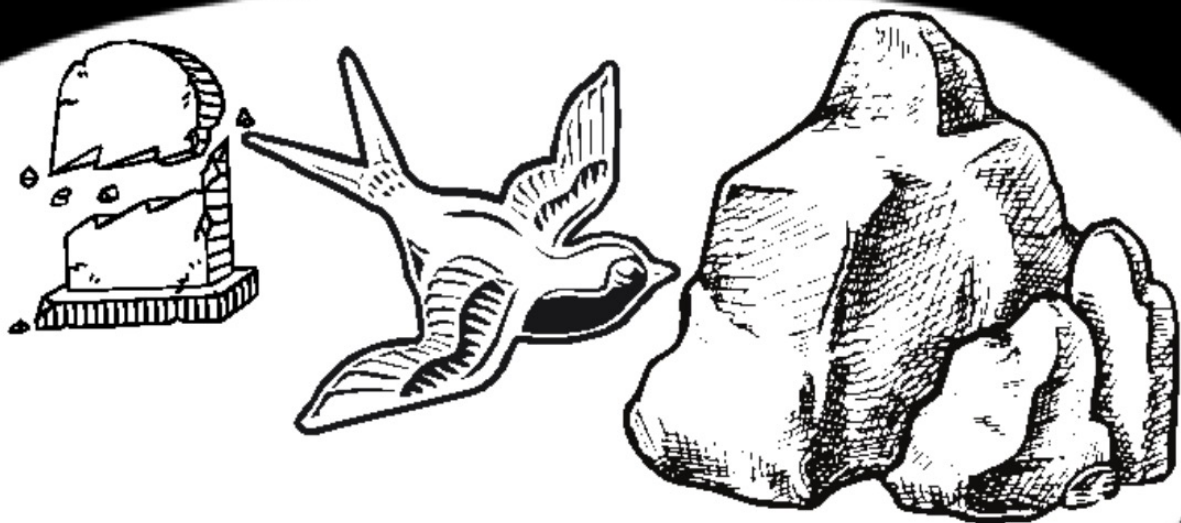




Romans



LIVING IN
COMMUNITY



**OBJECTS IN MIRROR ARE CLOSER
THAN THEY APPEAR**



Romans 14:1-23

¹ Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted them. ⁴ Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵ One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike.

Romans 14:1-23

Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. ⁶

Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for ourselves alone, and none of us dies for ourselves alone. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ For this very reason, Christ died and returned to life so that he might be the Lord of both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister?

Romans 14:1-23

Or why do you treat them with contempt? For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. ¹¹ It is written: " 'As surely as I live,' says the Lord, 'every knee will bow before me; every tongue will acknowledge God.' " ¹² So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God. ¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. ¹⁴ I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean.

Romans 14:1-23

¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what you know is good be spoken of as evil. ¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval. ¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food.

Romans 14:1-23

All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. ²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall. ²² So whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who does not condemn himself by what he approves. ²³ But whoever has doubts is condemned if they eat, because their eating is not from faith; and everything that does not come from faith is sin.

BIG QUESTIONS

#1 - What are we talking about (and not talking about)?

#2 - Why would God *seemingly* be okay with such an uncontrolled, flexible approach to Christian community?

#3 - How does Christ become more precious on account of this teaching?

BIG QUESTIONS

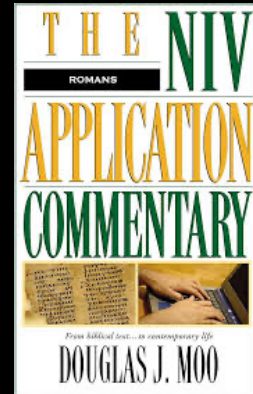
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The core of the dispute has to do with observance of the Jewish law. The weak were those – mainly Jewish Christians – who could not bring themselves to abandon the requirements of the law they had observed all their lives. They could not, as Christians, simply ignore the food laws, Sabbath observance, and so on. The strong, by contrast, felt no need to observe these laws.

Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, The NIV Application Commentary. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000). 447.



#1 – What are we talking about?

Romans 14:2, 5, 1

² One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables...

⁵ One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike.

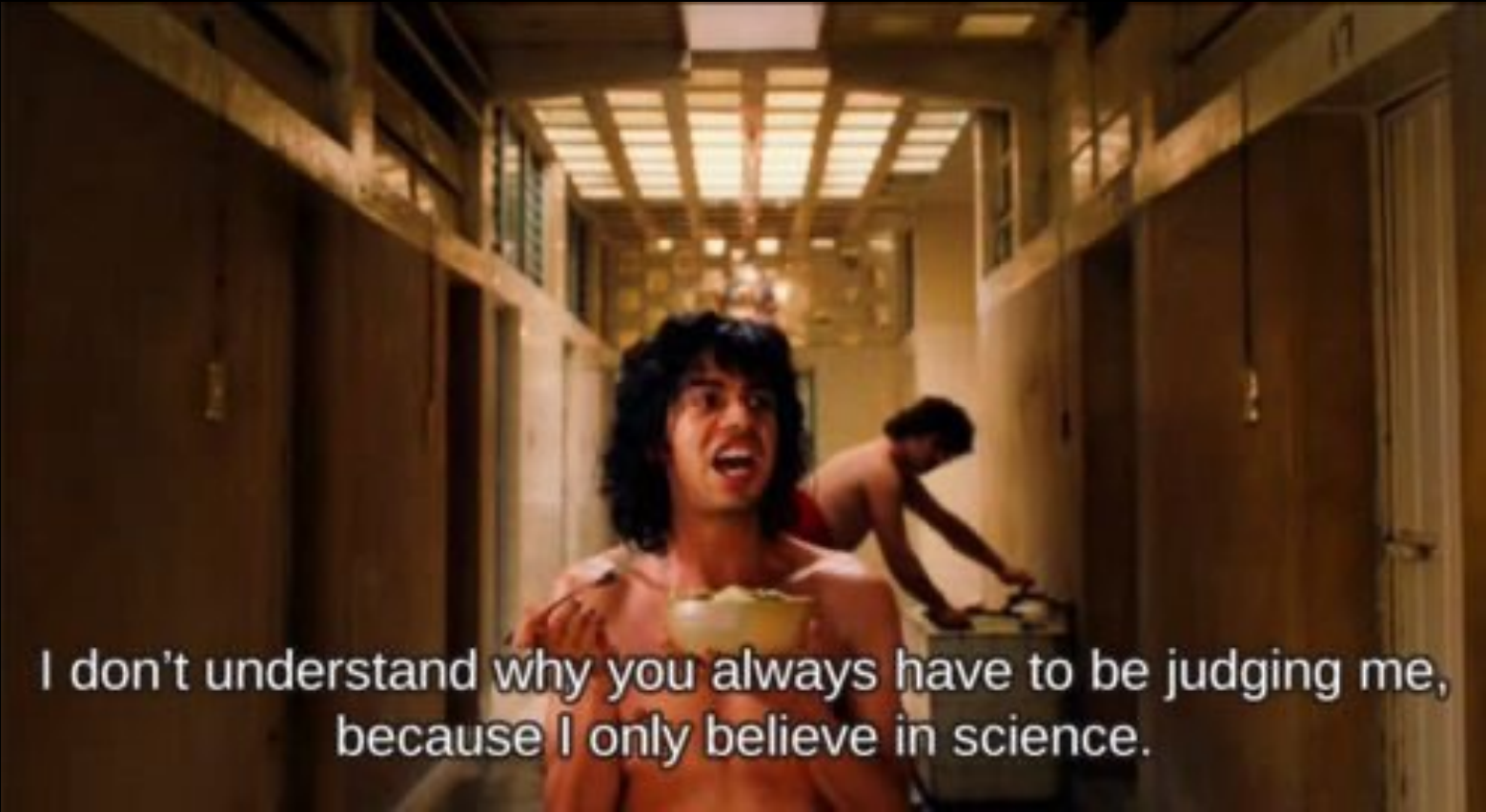
[so] ¹ accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters.

Done!

#1 – What are we talking about? Part 2

Romans 14:3, 10, 13

³ The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does...¹⁰ You, then, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or why do you treat them with contempt?...¹³ Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another.



I don't understand why you always have to be judging me,
because I only believe in science.

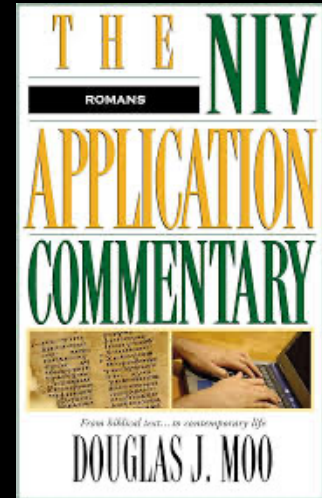
#1 – What are we talking about? Part 3

Romans 14:15, 20

¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died...²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food.

“Destroy” [used here], applied to the church, probably means “ruin” – disputes over food bring disunity, mutual distrust, and, eventually, the break-up of a congregation.

Douglas J. Moo, *Romans*, The NIV Application Commentary. (Grand Rapids, MI: Zondervan Publishing House, 2000). 461.



Take personal preference.

Demand communal precedence.

The result is (often) belligerence.

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#1 - What are we talking about (and not talking about)?

#2 - Why would God *seemingly* be okay with such an uncontrolled, flexible approach to Christian community?

#3 - How does Christ become more precious on account of this teaching?





Lord Business is fixated on being in control, and cannot stand anything that even slightly deviates from his idea of perfection. He created walls between each section of the LEGO world to keep all the pieces in what he believed to be their rightful places and prevent them from mingling with each other in any way not allowed by his "instructions". However, he eventually found that unsatisfactory and developed a plan to use the "Kragle" (actually Krazy Glue) to forever seal every piece in place, creating a "perfect" but immobile world.

#2 – So, God's okay with uncontrolled community?

What am I free to do?

Romans 14:6, 8

⁶ Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God... ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. So, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

#2 – So, God's okay with uncontrolled community?

What does love call for?

Romans 14:13, 15, 19

¹³ Make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister...¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died...¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

A Christian is a most free lord of all,
subject to none.

A Christian is a most dutiful servant of all,
subject to all.

~ Martin Luther, *On The Freedom of a Christian Man*,
"Von der Freiheit eines Christenmenschen"



BIG QUESTIONS

#1 - What are we talking about (and not talking about)?

#2 - Why would God *seemingly* be okay with such an uncontrolled, flexible approach to Christian community?

#3 - How does Christ become more precious on account of this teaching?

#3 – How does Christ become more precious on account of this teaching?

Romans 14:17

¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

#3 – How does Christ become more precious on account of this teaching?

Colossians 2:16–17

¹⁶ Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day. ¹⁷ These are a shadow of the things that were to come; the reality, however, is found in Christ.







How does our response clarify the Gospel message?

As a church, is it our aim to put no stumbling block
in the path of faith except Christ?

In the name of Christ, might we show a better way
than quarreling (i.e. belligerence) over disputable matters?

Is Christ your treasure because he forgives
not only the big and ugly,
but also the the small and petty?