

**Lesson 15:**  
**The Righteousness of God in Practice in Daily Life:**  
**“Receiving” those who are different from you**  
**Romans 14:1 – 15:13**

***Romans 14:1-13: “Receive one who is weak in the faith...”***

1. As a practical principle of the changes in the life of one who has become a living sacrifice (Rom 12:1-2) and is fulfilling the law of love (13:10) rather than the lusts of the flesh (13:14), what does Paul say the Christian must do? [14:1; consider the initial context of Jewish legal ritual versus Gentile “liberty” (even though there certainly were Gentile stoics with a “legalistic” hard line against the abuses of the body)]
  - Skip ahead to Romans 15:7 and consider the final time Paul uses the expression to “receive” one another. What is the basis for this mutual “reception”? [14:1; cp 15:7]
  - Therefore, what must not happen as we “receive one who is weak”? [14:1b; cp vv 3, 10, 13; etc]
2. What first example does Paul give as a difference between two people who have come to Christ in faith, but one is “weak”? [14:2; note that this “weakness” does not describe the one’s *belief* in Christ, but rather his understanding of what “liberties” or “restrictions” such belief in Christ entails...]
  - In this particular case, does the “weak” brother have a more “liberal” or a more “restricted” view about what things he can eat and still be pleasing to Christ? [14:2b; cp Acts 10:9-15; Gal 2:11-12; etc]
3. In practice, what must neither the “liberal” eater nor the “restricted” eater do with regard to the other person? [14:3a-b; cp 14:10]
  - What is the reason why this must not happen? [14:3c; cp 15:7]
4. What question does Paul ask of those who “despise” or “judge” others? [14:4a; cp James 4:11-12]
  - In truth, who is the only one who has a right to judge his servants? [14:4b; cp James 4:11-12]
  - What is the master’s intent when he “judges” the performance of his servant? [14:4c; note that the “master” in this case is of course God]
5. What is the second example Paul uses as a difference between two people who have come to Christ in faith? [14:5]
  - What principle does Paul say is imperative about each one in what he believes? [14:5c; note this is not a thought “in a vacuum”. Paul is not saying that “as long as you firmly believe it, it’s true”; rather, he is speaking in a context where “faith comes by hearing, and hearing by the word of God” (10:17); cp also 14:23]

6. What does each one's conviction mean in practice, whether he eats or abstains, treats a day as special or does not treat it as special? [14:6]
- Remember our more immediate context of being a "living sacrifice" (Rom 12:1-2). These issues at hand are a part of the Christian's "living" and "dying" to the Lord. [14:7-8] How does this discussion fit into the broader context of Christ's "Lordship"? [14:7-9; cp 6:11-18; also 14:15, 18]
7. As an initial conclusion to the argument he began in 14:3, Paul asserts (by means of an argument set up by rhetorical questions) that WE are not the judges of our brethren. [14:10a-b] In truth, where will our personal convictions in service to Christ be judged, and by whom? [14:10c]
- As indicated in Paul's citation of Isaiah, WHO will bow and confess before God? [14:11; cp Is 45:23]
  - In the judgment, will we be required to give account of *another servant's* convictions, or *our own*? [14:12]
8. Being aware of both the Lordship of Christ and the judgment of God, what should be our attitude toward our brethren as both we and they strive to serve Him with a clear conscience? [14:13; cp 14:21]

***Romans 14:14-23: "Therefore let us pursue the things that make for peace..."***

9. In this context of foods, what does Paul say is his conviction ("by the Lord" – remember our context that "faith comes by hearing" [Rom 10:17])? [14:14; cp Mark 7:18-19; Acts 10:9-15; 1 Tim 4:1-5; etc]
- Even though Paul's conviction is correct, what is the situation of one whose conscience has not yet come to the same conviction? [14:14b; cp 14:23]
10. In this specific context, in what practical way does Paul say the Christian can be guilty of "no longer walking in love"? [14:15; cp 13:8-10]
- What does Paul say is the true outcome of "grieving" a brother because of food? [14:15; cp 14:13]
11. Even if your conscience is correct and your practice "good" – what may happen if your insistence on your personal conviction causes a brother to stumble with regard to their own conscience? [14:16]
- At the bottom of it all, in the service of Christ what is more important than questions about food and drink? [14:17; cp Colossians 2:20-3:3; see also Matthew 23:23; etc]
  - Instead of his "good" being "spoken of as evil" (v16), what is the result when the Christian practices these more important things? [14:17-18; cp 1 Sam 2:26; Luke 2:52; etc]

12. What **two** things does Paul say must therefore be our “pursuit” when serving Christ and one another? [14:19; cp how Christ has done this in Rm 5:1-4, etc]

- How does having **both** of these things keep us from the problem of “ecumenism”? [14:19; I define “ecumenism” as that religious push for “unity-in-diversity” that seeks to “unite” all “Christian denominations” by promoting “peace” over “doctrine” – cdb; consider also James 3:17-18]

13. Even if my understanding is true and right and my eating “pure”, what does Paul say is the case if it leads another to “eat with offense”? [14:20; cp 14:14-15, 23]

- In contrast to the “evil” of leading another to “eat with offense” (v20), what does Paul say is “good”? [14:21]

14. What does Paul mean by the question “do you have faith”? [14:22; cp 14:2, 14; 15:1; etc]

- What does Paul say the one who “has faith” ought to do? [14:22; cp 14:3-6; etc]

- What is the result of proper faith and clear conscience? [14:22; cp 14:14, 18]

- However, what is the result of a “weak” faith that is violated for fear of someone else’s judging? [14:23; cp 14:3-4, 10, 13-15, 20-21; etc]

**Romans 15:1-6: “We then who are strong ought to bear with the scruples of the weak...”**

15. With whom does Paul identify himself in these considerations? [15:1; cp food and drink, the regarding of days (Rm 14:14, 21)]

- What does Paul say the “strong” ought to do? [15:1; cf NASB]

16. Whom does Paul say we ought to seek to please, and for what purpose? [15:2; cp 13:8-10]

17. Whom does Paul use as the perfect example of this? [15:3]

18. From the context, why does Paul start speaking of “whatever things were written beforehand”? [15:4; cp v3]

- What does Paul say the Scriptures offer us, and what is it meant to lead us to? [15:4]

19. How does Paul describe God in his prayer for unity among the Roman brethren? [15:5]

- In what way does Paul call the Roman brethren to be unified, and what is the ultimate purpose of this? [15:5b-6; cp 1 Cor 1:10; Philippians 2:1-4; etc]

***Romans 15:7-13: "Therefore receive one another...to the glory of God"***

20. Ultimately, what is the reason Paul gives as to why they must receive one another despite personal differences? [15:7; cp 14:3]
  
21. What does Paul say Jesus did with regard to the Jews in order to glorify God? [15:8; cp 15:3; Ph 2:5-11]
  
22. What does Paul say has been the result of what Jesus did? [15:9; cp 11:30-33; etc]
  
23. Paul continues to marshal evidence from several places in the Old Testament to demonstrate the fulfillment of God's "promises made to the fathers". (cp 15:8; see 2 Samuel 22:50; Psalm 18:49; Deut 32:43; Psalm 117:1; Isaiah 11:10) What do all of these texts he uses have in common? [15:9-12]
  
24. How does Paul refer to God in his "prayer" for them at the end of this section? [15:13; cp v4]
  - What does Paul desire in his "prayer" for them? [15:13; cp v4]