ROMANS 14:1-23

Review...

- Outline of the Book of Romans...
 - Chapters 1-8 -The doctrine of Salvation by grace through faith in Jesus Christ...
 - Chapters 9-11 The example of salvation by faith Israel vs. Gentiles...
 - Chapters 12-16 The application of our salvation how we should live our lives in Christ...
- Chapter 12:1-2 A living sacrifice...
 - In light of Romans 1-11 in light of the Gospel of Grace the gift of God's Spirit...
 - So do not be conformed to this world the standards / definitions of this world
 - Instead be transformed renewed by the power of the Spirit made into a new man
 - So that we will know the perfect will of God for our lives!
- Chapter 12:3-21 Living for Jesus in the church...
 - 1st Live in Humility we are many members but one body...
 - 2nd Live in Jesus using the gifts you have been given...
 - We all have different gifts we have been given by God step out to find out your gift...
 - Then use your gift to serve the Lord bless others within the Body of Christ!
 - 3rd Live in Love the mark of a disciple of Jesus Christ...
- Chapter 13:1-14 Living for Jesus in the world...
 - 1st Obey the government they are appointed by God / God has given them authority...
 - 2nd Do not be in debt to anyone instead owe nothing but to love one another...
 - 3rd The Day of the Lord is coming soon so live for Jesus put on Jesus Christ!

LIVING WITH ONE ANOTHER (3 THINGS)...

- 1st Different convicions... vs. 1-5
 - Doctrine vs. Opinion...
 - The Bible is VERY clear on many issues as to what is right and what is wrong...
 - Do not commit Adultery it is sin Exodus 20:4 / Galatians 5:19-21
 - Do not murder it is sin **Exodus 20:13 / Deuteronomy 5:17**
 - Do not get drunk it is sin **Ephesians 5:18**
 - Do not steal or tell a lie it is sin **Exodus 20:15-16**
 - But there are issues that are not as clear are we allowed to do them as Christians...
 - As a believer in Jesus are we allowed to smoke / can we listen to secular music...
 - As a believer in Jesus are we allowed to see movies what rating...
 - As a believer in Jesus drink coffee / can we have tattoos / can we wear jewelry...
 - Not all believers in Jesus have the same convictions what we can or cannot do…
 - Paul gives us 2 examples of these 'grey' areas in a Christian's life Meat & Sabbath...
 - These were critical issues in Paul's day he was reaching out to a gentile church...
 - The gentiles did not worry about eating meat / they did not honor the Sabbath day
 - Where as the Jews who represented the 1st church in Jerusalem did both!
 - 1st Being able to eat meat verses only eating vegetables... vs. 2-3

- Jesus addressed this issue of eating meat...
 - Matthew 15:11 "You are not defiled by what you eat; you are defiled by what you say and do."
 - Whatever you eat it just goes into your stomach then into the CR
 - No matter what you eat it all ends up in the same place obviously
 - ° So you are not a better person if you don't eat pork or worse if you do
 - ° If you eat pork of if only eat fish it all ends up the same place...
- Someone not knowing what Jesus taught might think its better not to eat meat...
 - Even though we are allowed to eat anything we like...
 - A person might avoid eating meat (or certain meats) to honor God...
- 2nd Worshiping God on a specific day verses everyday being the same... vs. 5-6
 - Jesus also addressed this issue of the Sabbath day...
 - ° Matthew 12:8 "For the Son of Man is Lord even of the Sabbath."
 - ° God did not create us to follow the Sabbath He gave the Sabbath to us!
 - ° It was meant to give us a day to unwind rest recover...
 - It is no longer required but it is probably a really good idea
 - Someone not knowing this might think the only day to worship is the Sabbath...
 - ° Even though it does not matter what day we worship the Lord...
 - $^{\circ}$ A person might be convinced the only day for church is Saturday / or Sunday...
- Two perspectives the 'strong' and the 'weak'...
 - In these 'grey' areas of our Christian walk we should not be judgmental of each other...
 - Those who have more freedom in their faith (eat what they want / worship every day)
 - These 'stronger' brothers should not look down upon those who have more rules...
 - This tends to be the easier position to take having more freedom in Jesus...
 - If someone follows more rules than we do 'God bless them' we don't mind...
 - So long as they do not force their rules onto us!
 - Those who are the 'weaker' saints bound by more rules (don't eat / certain days)
 - Weak not if their faith but in their understanding of God's word I Corinthians 8:7
 - Should not criticize those who have more freedom in their walk in Christ...
 - This is where most people tend to struggle be judgmental of others...
 - If we think we cannot see movies / cannot listen to secular music / no tattoos...
 - If we have a rule we believe we must follow and someone else do not...
 - Then we tend to think we are better Christians more righteous than they are...
- The danger in forcing your convictions on others... vs. 4
 - Passing on your convictions...
 - If I have a conviction that is it wrong to watch movies (there is a lot of junk in movies)
 - And I tell you that you should also not watch them I have given you a law...
 - The problem is I have not changed your heart you still want to see movies...
 - So I have set you up for failure you will watch a movie then feel like a failure...
 - Trusting in the Lord to show others right and wrong...
 - If instead I tell you to go to the Lord ask Him if you should see a movie...
 - God will tell you and if He says no He will change you heart so you don't want to!
 - God does not just give you the Law- He gives you the ability to live up to the Law!
- 2^{ND} We shall all stand before Jesus... vs. 6-13
 - What is the motive behind our actions... vs. 6-9

- God has received both the 'strong' and the 'weak'... vs. 6-8
 - No matter what we do eat or don't eat / worship on Saturday or any day...
 - It is not so much about our convictions as it is about the motivation of our heart
 - In other words it does not really matter whether we are the 'strong' or the 'weak'
 - If we are doing it for the Lord God accepts either way!
- Whether we live of we die we are the Lords…
 - **I Corinthians 6:20** "For you were bought at a price; therefore glorify God in your body and in your spirit, which are God's."
 - Are we using our freedom in Christ to justify our sin just to do what we want...
 - Are we following lots of rules just to show we are more righteous than others...
 - Or are we doing what we do in order to give our lives completely to God...
 - Only the Lord knows the heart only God knows our motives...
- So do not judge your brother... vs. 10-13
 - That does not mean we let people get away with open sin...
 - Though we are not called to judge men's convictions we can judge their fruit...
 - Matthew 12:33 "Either make the tree good and its fruit good, or else make the tree bad and its fruit bad; for a tree is known by its fruit."
 - If we see a brother giving into sin living a life that is contrary to Jesus...
 - Out of love for your brothers warn them encourage them stay away from sin
 - **Hebrews 3:13** "You must warn each other every day, as long as it is called 'today,' so that none of you will be deceived by sin and hardened against God."
 - We are not to judge them when it comes to our convictions...
 - We might be absolutely convinced we are right about our convictions...
 - Yet often we get our 'convictions' not from God but from other people...
 - ° We might be convicted that we have to go to church on Holy Friday...
 - ° Or be convicted that we need to give 10% of our money to the church...
 - $^{\circ}$ $\,$ Or perhaps we get our convictions from our own experiences in life...
 - ° If I know I struggle with 'lust' perhaps I am convicted not to watch TV (images)
 - ° If I struggle with gambling I might be convicted not to play with cards...
 - Out the only one who knows which convictions are really from God is God!
 - Every knee will bow every tongue confess to God…
 - ° The truth is we will all stand before Jesus and He will ultimately decide...
 - o Jesus is the only one who can say whether we have been a faithful Christian...
 - ° Whether we have been obedient to the convictions He has given us or not!
 - ° Therefore we should not try and judge each others convictions instead...
- 3^{RD} Consider one another... vs. 14-23
 - To the 'stronger' brother... vs. 14-15, 20-21
 - It is true that things are not sin but to the one who thinks they are wrong...
 - We might know that pork is nothing / cards are nothing / movies are nothing...
 - But to a brother who thinks they are evil to him they are sin...
 - So be considerate of the convictions of your brother in Christ...
 - If eating pork stumbles your brother don't eat in front of him...
 - If watching a movie stumbles him then don't watch the movie in front of him...

- If playing with cards stumbles him then don't put out the deck when he comes by...
- Don't use your freedom in Christ to destroy the faith of someone else!
 - I knew a brother in the Lord who struggled with alcohol lost his whole family...
 - He grew in the Lord stopped drinking and stated to get his life back...
 - One day a 'brother' invited him over to play some pool offered him a beer...
 - 'We have freedom in Jesus' the brother told him what can one beer hurt...
 - He ended up falling back into his old lifestyle walked away from the Lord
 - One man's freedom in Christ can be another man's undoing...
 - We need to be sensitive to each other's weaknesses protecting each other from sin!
- To the 'weaker' brother... vs. 16-19
 - Don't get so caught up in your convictions you miss what's most important...
 - Following Jesus is not about what you eat or drink or what you wear...
 - Worrying about what you look like, what you listen to, what you watch...
 - To often in the Christian walk we focus on the little things and miss the big picture...
 - It is about righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit...
 - If you have these things then you will be approved by God and by men!
 - If the heart of a person is right focused on Jesus (*righteousness*)
 - Full of joy empowered by the Holy Spirit everything else will fall into place!
 - Therefore focus on the things that encourage one another...
 - So if you are going to say anything to your brother encourage him in Christ!
 - Encourage him to read his Bible encourage him to be full of the Holy Spirit...
 - Rather than tearing one another down build each other up in the Lord!
- To both the 'strong' and the 'weak'... vs. 22-23
 - If you have any doubts about what your freedom or rules...
 - If you are not sure if you should see that movie play with those cards...
 - If you are not sure if you should eat that pork...
 - Then better not to because whatever is not done in faith is sin...
 - Don't let your freedom or rules lead you away from Jesus...
 - I Corinthians 6:12 "You may say, 'I am allowed to do anything.' But I reply, 'Not everything is good for you.' And even though 'I am allowed to do anything,' I must not become a slave to anything."
 - The bottom line we have incredible freedom in Jesus but be careful...
 - Do not let your freedom become a snare that brings you into the bondage of sin
 - Make sure whatever you do or don't do do it to the glory of God!
 - I Corinthians 10:31 "Therefore, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."