



## When Christians disagree part 2

Romans 14:1 – 15:7



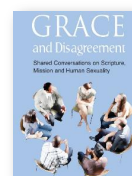
"Disagreement in the church can be a healthy reminder that truth matters"

"Better a thousand times for *Christians* to disagree & be alive, than to exhibit a dumb show of unity and be dead"

Bishop J C Ryle, an Evangelical Bishop who died in 1900



**LISTEN** carefully  
**LOOK** deeply  
**LOVE** liberally



## How to handle disagreements Christianly

**STOP**  
**LOOK**  
**LISTEN**



**STOP**  
**LISTEN**  
**LOOK**  
**LOVE**



**STOP ..... and reflect**



## Expressive Individualism



- ✓ We are all free to express ourselves as we see fit
- ✓ We all need to get along & so it helps to smooth over our differences
- ✓ It is offensive to suggest your ideas are better than mine

✓ Matters of truth & morality are private matters and so open discussion of such issues is an infringement on our freedom



## Expressive Individualism



"We trust that there is no substantial criterion by which to judge our choices that stands higher than the unquestioned good of free choice itself, and that therefore all judgement, divine no less than human, is in some sense an infringement upon our freedom"

David Bentley Hart, a Christian theologian, cultural commentator & polemicist



## The Heartbeat

Christians in Rome, whether from a Jewish or Gentile background, whether their faith is weak or strong, are called to overlook their differences over disputable matters and unite together as a demonstration of God's new covenant community for the glory and praise of God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.



## The weak and the strong

Romans 14 : 1 – 15 : 7



## The weak and the strong

- Christian brothers & sisters vs 10,13,15 & 21
- Those for whom Christ died v15b
- Whose faith is weak i.e. **a weak grasp of the Gospel and the freedom it brings**
- The Lord is able to make them stand v4

"For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of **righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit**" v17



## The Gospel

"For in the Gospel the **righteousness of God** is revealed, a **righteousness** that is by faith from first to last" **Romans 1 : 17**

"This **righteousness** is given through faith in Jesus Christ to all who believe. There is no difference between Jew and Gentile, all have sinned and fall short of the glory of God, and all are justified freely by his grace through the redemption that came by Christ Jesus" **Romans 3 : 22 - 23**



## Disputable matters

**Romans 14 : 1 – 15 : 7**



## Disputable matters

*Adiaphora* = differences which don't matter  
i.e. matters we can be indifferent over

- i. Food & drink **v2 & 6**
- ii. Sacred or Holy days **v5**

"I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself" **v14**

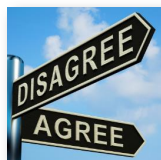


## Levels of disagreement

"Disputable matters"  
*(Whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God)*

**or**

Undisputed issues



## What not to do and why?

**Romans 14 : 1 & 3  
and 14 : 10 - 12**



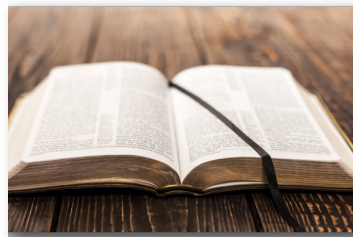
For we will all stand before God's judgment seat. It is written:  
"As surely as I live," says the Lord,  
'every knee will bow before me;  
every tongue will acknowledge God.'"  
So then, each of us will give an account of ourselves to God.  
**v10-12**





## What to do instead and why?

Romans 14 : 19, 22 & 15 : 1 - 7



"For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope." 15:4



"May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had, so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ."

Romans 15:5-6



## When we disagree let us remember:

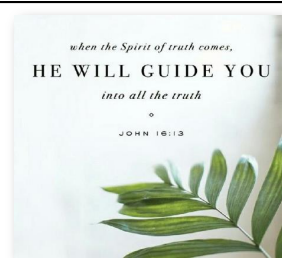
- ✓ The clash of worldviews
- ✓ We are brothers & sisters for whom Christ died
- ✓ Truth matters
- ✓ Our disagreements are real and sometimes go deep
- ✓ Decide what issues can be left and what needs tackling
- ✓ All of us will give an account of ourselves to God
- ✓ God's Word is there for our instruction
- ✓ Keep in mind the destination



## How to handle disagreements Christianly



**STOP  
LISTEN  
LOOK  
LOVE  
and REJOICE!**



"But when he, the **Spirit of truth**, comes, he will guide you into all truth" John 16:13

