

## Romans 14 - cont.

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this context. By “weak”, Paul means that a person does not have a complete and confident conscience to do something. This person is not completely convinced that he or she should be doing something.

For the brother who is “weak” his weak “faith” originates in his conscience. This person has a conscience that will not allow him to engage in a particular activity. He is not negligent or worldly, but weak in conscience; he does not have a particular “knowledge;” he is not “used to” a particular activity due to his culture, family, education, religion, etc. (1 Cor. 8:7; for eating meat see Gen. 9:3; Mk. 7:19; 1 Tim. 4:4-5).

The brother who is “weak” has a particular “faith” (verses 1, 2, 22, 23). In Romans 14, “faith” does not mean something like belief in Jesus or faith that comes from hearing God’s word (Romans 10:17). It means “full assurance” and without any doubts (vv. 5b, 14a, 22b, 23; compare Romans 4:19, 21). The weak brother is not fully assured concerning matters of personal scruple and so does not do them.

( continued next week )  
- Chris Reeves -

## - Thought of the Week -

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This time of the year is a great time for me to get outside and enjoy God’s creation. I’m going to get out and breathe some fresh air. I’m going to look up into the sky and behold God’s glory. I’m going to look at the beautiful blooms of spring. I’m going to smell God’s fragrances, see God’s colors, listen to God’s sounds, taste God’s flavors, and feel God’s textures. God’s creation is far more vast and stimulating than anything man has made (yes, including my cell phone). I will enjoy it all this week.

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## THE WARFIELD BULLETIN

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For though we walk in the flesh, we do not war according to the flesh, for the weapons of our warfare are not of the flesh, but divinely powerful for the destruction of fortresses.  
- 2 Corinthians 10:3-4 -

# Romans 14: Used and Abused - Part I

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Paul's writing in Romans 14 and how to handle matters of personal scruple (opinion) is a great, but often abused, passage of scripture. Romans 14 has been abused when brethren fail to use it at all and end up dividing over every matter including matters of opinion. Romans 14 has also been abused when brethren put matters into the chapter that don't belong there in order to broaden their fellowship with people living in sin.

Both approaches are wrong! Ironically, a chapter in the NT like Romans 14 that teaches unity has become a source of division among brethren. Let us therefore examine the proper use of Romans 14 for all brethren today.

When you read Romans 14 (and it is good to read it through before going farther in this study), you will find that Paul answers five important questions. We will be examining the answers to these questions in the next few Warfield bulletins. The questions are:

1. What matters are discussed in Romans 14?
2. Who are the brethren under discussion in this chapter?

3. How are these brethren to treat one another with such matters?
4. What is God's view of such matters and brethren?
5. What attitudes are all brethren to have?

Before looking at Paul's answers to these questions, let us consider a basic outline of Romans 14: The Loving Attitude of Brethren in Matters of Opinion

- A. Refrain from Division (14:1-2).
- B. Refrain from Usurping the Lord's Role of Judging (14:3-12).
- C. Refrain from Causing a Brother to Violate His Conscience (14:13-23).

Question 1. What matters are discussed in Romans 14? The matters discussed in this chapter are matters of "scruples" (v. 1; "opinions," NASV). These matters are of a personal and private nature to the individual. (Take time to read 1 Corinthians 8:4-13 where Paul discusses the same kind of matters.)

The two examples that Paul gives concerning these matters are the eating of meats (vv. 2,3,14,15,20) and the observing of special days (vv. 5,6). It is important to

note that these two examples are two, God-approved matters. They are matters that were practiced privately but were not bound as conditions of salvation (see also Colossians 2:16-23).

It is also important to know from the very beginning of this study what exactly Paul is, and is not, discussing. Paul is discussing matters of opinion, matters of indifference to God; matters that are neither right, nor wrong (1 Cor. 8:8); matters that are optional, not demanded so far as God is concerned; matters that are practiced individually, not congregationally.

Paul is not discussing matters of right and wrong; matters of sin; matters of evil and wickedness; matters that are unauthorized. Many have tried to slip these kinds of matters into Romans 14 in order to have fellowship with things that are wrong and they abuse the text by doing so.

Question 2. Who are the brethren under discussion in this chapter? The first group of brethren under discussion in Romans 14 are the "weak" brethren. These brethren are "weak in faith" (v. 1) ... "he that is weak" (v. 2).

What does Paul mean by "weak" in