

Men's Bible Study
Romans

Romans 14

12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

This verse launched us onto a rabbit trail of end time events

Revelation 20:1–3 – Satan's location during the Millennium

1 And I saw an angel coming down out of heaven, having the key to the Abyss and holding in his hand a great chain.

An angel sent from God (out of heaven) to take care of Satan

The Abyss is likely the temporary prison for some fallen angels and demons

2 He seized the dragon, that ancient serpent, who is the devil, or Satan, and bound him for a thousand years.

The angel bound Satan with the chain for the whole Millennium

3 He threw him into the Abyss, and locked and sealed it over him, to keep him from deceiving the nations anymore until the thousand years were ended. After that, he must be set free for a short time.

The angel threw Satan into the Abyss and locked and sealed it

At the end of the Millennium Satan will be released for a short time

Why would God set Satan free ?

I think it is the same reason that God allowed Satan to
roam the earth in the first place

God created man so that man could have a loving relationship with Him

But that relationship had to be a voluntary choice by man

In order to be voluntary man had to have an alternative choice

And Satan is that alternative

At the end of the Millennium Satan's release gave mankind that choice again

And as we read in The Revelation – Satan will be able to recruit a huge
army to surround Jerusalem in an attempt to defeat Christ

After 1000 years under the perfect, loving rule of Christ, they chose Satan

This revealed the true heart of those who did not love Christ

But Satan was not evil when he was created – God did not create evil

Satan or the devil or Lucifer was created perfect and sinless

Genesis 1:31 – At the end of the sixth day of creation – it was all very good

31 God saw all that he had made, and it was very good. And there was evening, and there was morning—the sixth day.

God had finished creation – everything that was created

Including all the angels and Lucifer

And God said that it was all very good – even Lucifer

But God gave men and angels free will

And Lucifer chose to sin by trying to replace God

After He sinned Lucifer was cast out of heaven down to earth along with

One third of the angels followed Satan

Later Peter warned Christians about Lucifer or Satan

1 Peter 5:8 – The devil prowls the earth seeking to devour Christians

8 Be self-controlled and alert. Your enemy the devil prowls around like a roaring lion looking for someone to devour.

Satan or the devil does not seek those of the world to devour

They are already his

He is seeking Christians to devour – to cause havoc and to destroy

Revelation 20:7–10 – Final destination of Satan

7 When the thousand years are over, Satan will be released from his prison

8 and will go out to deceive the nations in the four corners of the earth—Gog and

Magog—to gather them for battle. In number they are like the sand on the seashore.

Even after living under the reign of Christ for a thousand years there

Were so many recruited by Satan = sand on the seashore

9 They marched across the breadth of the earth and surrounded the camp of God's people, the city he loves. But fire came down from heaven and devoured them.

The city He loves is Jerusalem – Christ's capital during the Millennium

Fire from heaven devoured them = Not annihilation – just killed them

All their spirits will go to Hades (Gehenna) awaiting resurrection

10 And the devil, who deceived them, was thrown into the lake of burning sulfur, where the beast and the false prophet had been thrown. They will be tormented day and night for ever and ever.

The first inhabitants of hell (lake of fire) will be the beast and the false prophet

Then Satan was thrown in there - to be tormented day and night for ever

Than all those from the Great White Throne Judgment will be thrown in

Now back to Romans

Romans 14

12 So then, each of us will give an account of himself 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 your brother's way.

We must stop trying to judge one another = both of weak faith and of strong
We are not to be judges of others
Instead we must judge ourselves
Are we a stumbling block or obstacle to their growth ?

Luke 17:1–3 – Jesus said for us to watch ourselves

1 Jesus said to his disciples: “Things that cause people to sin are bound to come, but woe to that person through whom they come.

2 It would be better for him to be thrown into the sea with a millstone tied around his neck than for him to cause one of these little ones to sin.

3 So watch yourselves.

I think “these little ones” would include those of weak faith

We must be very careful to not cause any of those for whom Jesus

Died to stumble in their growth to maturity

We should be encouragers and helpers and not a hindrance

Romans 14

14 As one who is in the Lord Jesus, I am fully convinced that no food is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean.

Out of all the Christians who ever lived – Paul was probably the most mature

And he was convinced that all food was clean

But he did not always behave according to that conviction

In fact he made this great statement

“If anyone regards something as unclean, then for him it is unclean.”

Paul is telling the Romans to live in the light they have been given

Do not behave in any way that violates your conscience

1 Corinthians 8:10–12 – Paul also wrote on weak faith to the Corinthians

10 For if anyone with a weak conscience sees you who have this knowledge eating in an idol’s temple, won’t he be emboldened to eat what has been sacrificed to idols?

His belief is that eating meat in an idol’s temple is forbidden by God

Whereas your conscience is fine with eating there

But if he sees you – of stronger faith – doing that he may be drawn to try it

And so he will be going against his conscience

11 So this weak brother, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge.

Boy – destroyed is a very strong word here

The Greek word usually means physical death

But physical death does not necessarily mean spiritual death

This person could still be saved anyway – it depends on their heart

We do not know that person’s heart but God does

IVP Bible Background Commentary: New Testament

The person who associates meat with idols might think that eating it was all right even if it meant participating in idolatry, misunderstanding the “strong” person’s convictions.¹

The person of weak faith might conclude it was alright to worship idols since it looked like the person of strong faith seemed to be doing that
He might be tempted to go against his conscience – he knows right from wrong
But worshipping idols is always prohibited by God
The weak faith person might sin against God because of your example

12 When you sin against your brothers in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

Here Paul writes that we would be wounding their weak conscience
You would be causing him to doubt what his conscience was telling him
Then we would be sinning against Christ
We see this in Paul’s encounter with Christ on the Damascus road

Acts 9:1–5 – Christ told Paul that he was persecuting Christ Himself

1 Meanwhile, Saul was still breathing out murderous threats against the Lord’s disciples. He went to the high priest

2 and asked him for letters to the synagogues in Damascus, so that if he found any there who belonged to the Way, whether men or women, he might take them as prisoners to Jerusalem.

Here we see that Paul was clearly persecuting Christians

3 As he neared Damascus on his journey, suddenly a light from heaven flashed around him.

4 He fell to the ground and heard a voice say to him, “Saul, Saul, why do you persecute me?”

5 “Who are you, Lord?” Saul asked. “I am Jesus, whom you are persecuting,” he replied.

And here we see that in persecuting Christians Paul was persecuting Christ

1 Corinthians 8:13

13 Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.

Paul writes the same thing to the Romans

Romans 14

¹ Keener, C. S. (1993). *The IVP Bible background commentary: New Testament* (1 Co 8:10–13). Downers Grove, IL: InterVarsity Press.

15 If your brother is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love.

We must consider how our behavior impacts our brother
We are not free to behave according to our own conscience if what
 We do brings offense to our brother
If we behave that way anyway then we are not acting in love toward him

15 Do not by your eating destroy your brother for whom Christ died.

We must be careful to not destroy our brother
Here Paul uses the same word – destroy – as he did to the Corinthians
Paul will continue to explain what this means

16 Do not allow what you consider good to be spoken of as evil.

Your conscience is calling something good but his
 Conscience is calling it evil
Some Jewish Christians still followed clean and unclean Jewish food laws
Paul would refer to them as having weak faith

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

This is our goal in living in the kingdom of God as God’s children
We must always live according to the Holy Spirit living in us
And God speaks to us often through our conscience
Our conscience tells us what is right and what is wrong
It is not a matter of the things of this world but of eternal things
Not eating and drinking but righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit

18 because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by men.

When we live this way we are serving Christ and we
 Are pleasing to God
And then He makes even our enemies our friends

19 Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

We should be concerned with keeping peace in the body of Christ
And we certainly should be trying to bring edification to our brothers
This will encourage them to cooperate with the Holy Spirit Who is
 In the process of sanctifying them – making them more mature