

# Standing in the Judgment

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[ 0 : 00 ] It's not always easy, and you all know this, it's not always easy to live life with other people. It's just not. Other people can be difficult at times. Sometimes other people can treat you in ways that are just not fair and not right, so that we find ourselves in the situation of living in a world where we are surrounded by other people, and yet, as we've seen as we've been walking through these last few chapters of Romans, that's not always an easy road to walk because other people are going to cause us problems.

And then on the other hand, we're going to cause other people some problems. Even within the body of Christ, even within the church, we find that it's not always easy to get along with one another.

And as we've been seeing for the last couple of weeks, Romans chapter 14 and 15 are meant to address the issue of how do we get along with one another? How do we live together within the body of Christ when we have actual, real differences?

Now, there are things that we sometimes consider to be differences that sometimes irritate us and aggravate us. You may not like somebody's personality. You may not like the way that somebody happens to talk or the way that they conduct themselves.

[ 1 : 26 ] You may not like some of the personal choices that some people make. And that's not precisely what Paul has in mind here. He has in mind when we actually have differences of opinion among us that result in different types of lives that are lived out for the glory of God.

So that one person believes, Paul says, that you ought not to eat meat and that you ought not to drink wine and that you ought to observe certain days in the Jewish calendar, chiefly among them, as we saw last week, the Sabbath.

And then Paul says, on the other hand, there are those who are willing to eat anything and they don't abstain from any sorts of foods. They drink freely if wine is offered. And they don't observe those Jewish feasts and holidays.

They don't recognize the Sabbath as binding upon them. Those can be, and they certainly were at least in the church at Rome at the time that Paul was writing, those can be substantive differences. Those can be differences that are not merely a matter of opinion about the way that you dress or the way that you talk or the things that you like and enjoy. Those are substantive opinions on how the Christian life ought to be lived.

[ 2 : 32 ] And if we are not careful, and if we do not follow the Apostle Paul's instructions here, we will allow those kinds of differences to divide us and to fracture the unity that we are supposed to have within the body of Christ.

It would be easy if we always agreed on everything within the church. That would be very easy because unity is easy to uphold and to maintain when everybody agrees about everything.

But when unity is preserved in the midst of real differences, that's when the gospel is magnified. That's when the glory of Jesus and the power of Jesus to bring together diverse people and forge them into one body of Christ, that's when His power is put on display.

It's not miraculous when people who all like the same things and all agree on the same things are able to come together for a common purpose. It's miraculous when people that are actually quite different from one another and actually live their lives quite differently from one another on the basis of actual real convictions that they don't necessarily share about every aspect of the Christian life. When those sorts of people are able to be brought together, the glory of God is manifest, the power of Jesus is made known, and the gospel is made to look as what it is, a great and powerful gospel, the good news that all are justified by faith in Jesus and all come to Him on the same grounds and therefore all can be united within the body of Christ.

[ 4 : 11 ] That's what Paul is writing these chapters to show us. He's writing to show us how can we display the power of Jesus in a unity that transcends the differences that we have among us.

Now as I said last week, and I probably said it the week before as well, when Paul is talking about these differences, he's not talking about fundamental foundational differences.

Say, for instance, in our theology. Everyone that he's talking about here, that he's dealing with in the church at Rome, they already agree on the basic gospel message. That's why Paul spent 11 chapters outlining his gospel, defining and defending his gospel, so that these Romans who already agreed on the message of the gospel would know that he proclaims the same gospel.

So they are united in their faith in Jesus. They are united in their belief that they are made right with God through faith alone. Otherwise, Paul would not have repeatedly referred to all of them as brothers.

So we've seen already that the differences, substantive though they are, they are not foundational differences. They are not the kind of differences that would draw a line between Christians and non-Christians.

[ 5 : 24 ] Those differences do exist. And we have to have boundaries. We have to cordon off what beliefs are acceptable within the body of Christ and which are not acceptable within the body of Christ.

Because there are groups that deny things, like the very nature of who God is as He reveals Himself in His Word. So the fact that God is one in nature and three in person, we call that the doctrine of the Trinity, that is a foundational doctrine.

And while not everybody within the body of Christ is at the same level of understanding that doctrine, we would want to say that for those who deny that doctrine and teach something contrary to it, they are outside of the boundaries of Christianity.

They are not truly members of the body of Christ. So there are differences on matters of foundational issues that would place someone outside the body of Christ. But there are other differences, as we have seen, that are based upon real and firm conviction, but that do not necessarily place people on opposite sides of that divide.

There are people within the body of Christ who have real, genuine differences of opinion among them, not just on theological issues, but upon how to live the Christian life.

[ 6 : 35 ] And those differences do not place them in the category of believer and unbeliever.

They're both in the category of believer. And so we have to figure out, how do we go about dealing with those differences?

How do we go about living with one another in the midst of those differences? And that's what these chapters are about. And we have seen Paul clearly say, that though the truth should be upheld, and we should not compromise the truth, we should not ignore the truth, neither do we have to insist that everybody see everything the same way that we do.

So that he openly affirms that all food is clean, and therefore he sides with the group that calls himself the strong, right? All food is clean, so Paul is fine.

He doesn't believe that they have to follow the Jewish ritualistic eating laws. He says you don't have to follow the food laws. All food is clean. But he allows room for those Jews within the body of Christ who still feel convicted that they ought to follow those laws, and therefore they abstain from certain foods.

He does not believe that we have to observe the Jewish calendar anymore. He does not believe that the Sabbath law is binding upon new covenant believers. But he allows a place, he allows room within the body of Christ for those who do believe that, so that we can simultaneously state what we believe to be the truth without pushing out those who don't agree on non-essential matters, and without creating divisions among us within the body of Christ.

[ 8 : 08 ] It is possible to do that. We are capable of doing that through the power of the Holy Spirit as he binds us together and unites us together, and he grows us in maturity.

It is not a sign of maturity to be advanced in your theological education and then despise those who are less advanced than you, to look down upon those who perhaps do not know the Word of God as well as you do.

That is not a sign of maturity. That is a sign of the kind of knowledge that Paul says in 1 Corinthians 13 merely puffs up. It's not a sign of maturity. Knowledge does not equal maturity.

And it is possible to be right upon a number of things and then treat those who disagree with you and have your treatment of them reveal that though you are knowledgeable, you are yet immature in Christ in some ways.

And so Paul says, Do not despise your brother. You who are strong, that is, you who've got the right answers to these issues, do not look down upon those who are the weak and have a wrong understanding of these issues.

[ 9 : 17 ] Do not despise them, Paul says. There are ways that we treat each other within the body of Christ that require us in maturity to not insist upon constantly correcting everyone around us about every minor issue.

Take a look at how Paul opens this chapter in chapter 14. Notice what he says. We've spent quite a bit of time talking about this. As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.

Not to fight. Not to argue. Welcome them into the body of Christ. Invite them into the body of Christ. They are your brother. They are your sister in Christ. But do not welcome them into your life and into the body merely for the sake of gaining an opportunity to argue and fuss and fight with them. There is a time to state the truth so that they might learn the truth. But stating the truth and teaching others and patiently disciplining others is not the same as welcoming them for the sake of quarreling. But saying all that, seeing the commands that Paul has given us here about how to treat one another in the body of Christ, that doesn't necessarily make it easy. And in fact, I am convinced because of how Paul has written this chapter that we won't be able to do that merely by saying, yeah, that's a good idea.

[ 10 : 52 ] That's a good idea. We shouldn't treat each other badly so let's not treat each other badly. I don't think that that is going to be enough to enable us to consistently display the love of Christ to our brothers and sisters and avoid quarreling among us.

I think we need something firmer. I think we need something stronger to stand upon than a momentary conviction of, yeah, we ought to be nice to each other. I mean, there are times, right? There are times when I would like to preach a sermon that consists of nothing more than, be nice, alright? There are many times when that would be the content of my sermon based upon my experience during the week is be nice to each other, be kind to each other.

But you need more than me telling you to be nice. You need something firm. You need something stable beneath your feet. You need a theological foundation.

That is, you need something that you know about God that will compel you on a regular basis to treat one another the way that Paul requires us to treat one another.

[ 11 : 59 ] And Paul gives us a theological reason for the kind of treatment that he is encouraging in these chapters. Now, we received a peek, a glance at the theological reason all the way back up in verses 3 and 4.

And now this morning, as we come down to verses 10 through 12, we're going to see that there are strong connections between what Paul says in verses 3 and 4 and what he now says to us in verses 10, 11, and 12.

There are powerful connections to them. And if we put them together, we will see that Paul has built for us a very strong and sturdy theological foundation. In other words, he's going to tell us something about God that's going to motivate us to treat one another well, to be nice to each other. So let's take a look. First, I want you to see the connections between verses 3 and 4 and verses 10 through 12 so that you'll understand that I'm not pulling this out of thin air. It's right there in the text for you to be able to see.

There are, first of all, there are a number of key words that are used in verses 3 and 4 that we find also in verses 10 through 12. Look at verses 3 and 4. Let not the one who eats despise, so you might want to underline that word, the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment, you might want to underline pass judgment, on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.

[ 13 : 26 ] All right? And then the question in verse 4, who are you to pass judgment? So there it is, that pass judgment language again. Now move down to verse 10. You're going to see these terms again.

Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Same term. Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or, why do you despise your brother? Same word that we're finding there.

Why are you doing that? These are rhetorical questions. He doesn't really want an answer to these questions. His point is, stop doing it. Don't do that. Don't judge your brother. Don't despise your brother.

You don't need to be doing this. Clear connections with verses 3 and 4. But then there's another verbal connection that is really important. Go back to verse 4.

He says in the middle of verse 4, it is before his own master, that is your brother, it is before his own master that he stands. Underline the word stands.

[ 14 : 25 ] And he will be, Paul says, upheld. Or more literally, it's the same word for stand. It's, he will be caused to stand. God will make him stand.

So there it is, the word stand again. For the Lord is able to make him stand. So we're seeing this stand language three different times in verse 4. Now jump down to the end of verse 10, where you will see it again.

For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. Now it's not the exact same word, but it's the same root that we find there in the word that occurs three times in verse 4.

So there are some, there are some verbal parallels. There are words used in verses 3 and 4 that we find now used down in these verses that forge a link, that forge a connection between what Paul says at the beginning of this letter, of this chapter, and now what he says in the middle of this chapter.

And we need to draw these verses together so that we can see clearly the theological foundation that Paul gives to us for helping us and motivating us to love one another, to be nice to one another, to deal with our differences in ways that bring glory to God and display the gospel before a watching world.

[ 15 : 38 ] And the foundation that he builds, if you'll notice, is a foundation that is pointing toward the future judgment. This is where Paul takes us.

He wants to motivate us. He wants to give us the foundation that we need to help us to treat one another nicely. And he takes us all the way to judgment day to do that.

All the way to judgment day. Now, one of the things that will immediately strike you as odd as we've been traveling through Romans is that Paul would use judgment day as a motive for Christians when we've already seen throughout this letter that our standing before God, that is, the verdict that God will render to us on judgment day, is based upon the work of Christ for us on the cross.

We've seen that. We know that. And we know that our standing before God, that is, God acquitting us on judgment day and God saying, you're righteous in my sight on judgment day, that's based upon our faith in what Christ has already done.

And so Paul has told us repeatedly throughout this letter that we are justified, that we are declared to be righteous by God, not on the basis of works of the law, but on the basis of faith, Paul says.

[ 17 : 04 ] And then you come to chapter 8 of Romans where Paul begins by saying, there is now no condemnation for those who are in Christ Jesus. You will not be condemned.

There's no condemnation hanging over you if you belong to Christ. And yet now he takes us to judgment day. And he says that we all, that is, we believers, we all will stand before the judgment seat of God.

Take a look at the language that we see here down towards the end of our passage. Verse 10, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. Verse 12, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

So we will, believers, people who've trusted in Christ, people who've been justified by faith alone, people over whom the verdict of no condemnation can be pronounced even in the present, according to Romans 8.1, we will stand before the judgment seat of God.

What is the purpose of this? What's the point of coming into judgment if your sins have already been covered by the work of Jesus on the cross? And how can Paul bring this in to motivate us to do anything if we know what the verdict is going to be?

[ 18 : 22 ] There are a couple of ways that we could solve this problem. One of the more popular ways to solve the issue of various passages in the New Testament that speak of Christians standing before God on judgment day is to say that the judgment of Christians is an entirely separate event from the judgment of the world.

So there's an idea that there are two kinds of quote-unquote judgments. There's the judgment of Christians, and then there is the judgment for the rest of the world. And the judgment of Christians

is not to determine their guilt or innocence before God.

That has already been determined by their faith in Christ and Christ's work on the cross. Rather, this view says, the judgment of Christians is solely for the distribution of rewards to Christians on the basis of the way that they've lived their life.

And that removes the problem of standing in judgment before a judge in whose sight you are already considered to be righteous through faith in Jesus.

It's a good solution to the problem, but I'm not convinced that it's necessarily the right solution. And I'm not convinced that it's the right way to understand this chapter.

[ 19 : 38 ] In fact, I believe that if you interpret this chapter and the references to judgment in this chapter as merely the distribution of rewards to believers, I think you take the force out of it and the foundation that Paul is trying to lay to motivate us to treat one another well in the body of Christ.

The foundation is greatly weakened if you take that line of interpretation. But that's not to say that that idea of Christians being rewarded on judgment day or having rewards withheld on judgment day is an unbiblical idea.

That's not, in and of itself an unbiblical idea. That's found within the New Testament. Let me show you this so that you'll see it for yourself. I'd like you to turn, hold your place in Romans and turn over to 1 Corinthians chapter 3.

Some of you may be familiar with this particular passage. Paul is speaking in this passage of the various ministry, ministry that he himself has done, ministry that another fellow named Apollos has done, and others have done various types of ministry within the church.

And now Paul speaks of an assessment of the ministries that people do within the church, of the work that you do for Christ in your life. Take a look at verse 12 here in chapter 3 of 1 Corinthians.

[ 20 : 53 ] Paul says, Now, if anyone builds on the foundation, the foundation being, of course, Christ, alright? So there's our standing before God. We stand on Christ. If anyone builds on the foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become manifest for the day, that's judgment day, alright?

ESV gives it a capital D just so you know, judgment day. For the day will disclose it because it will be revealed by fire and the fire will test what sort of work each one has done.

So the picture here is of Christians building their service and their ministry and indeed their lives out of various types of material. Gold or silver or perhaps hay or wood or straw.

Various types of material. And when fire comes those materials are going to react differently. The hay will be burned up instantly, immediately, showing that the things that you did for Christ were not of substance.

The life that you lived for Christ was lacking in some way. But if you built out of gold, if you built out of some sort of precious metal, it will survive the fire. It will still be standing.

[ 22 : 08 ] That's the judgment here that will happen on the day. Verse 14. If the work that anyone has built on the foundation survives, he will receive a reward.

So there it is. There's the idea of receiving a reward for the way that you've lived your life for Christ. What happens though if it's burned up? Is that an indication that you are lost and you're going to hell?

Not here in 1 Corinthians 3. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss. He's not going to get the reward. Though he himself will be saved, but only as through fire.

So he's still saved. He's still delivered. He's still rescued by Christ. But he loses something. He's missing out on reward. Whatever form that reward might take, he's missing out on something.

But what is at stake in 1 Corinthians 3 is not anyone's salvation. It's the testing of what they've done for Christ, particularly the ministries and services that they've rendered for Christ, to see if they are of any lasting value.

[ 23 : 15 ] And it is entirely possible on judgment day for the conclusion to come they're not of lasting value. It's merely hay. It's merely straw.

It's burned up. And the things that you thought you were doing for Christ, they're not of value to Him. They weren't biblical. They didn't align with His purposes.

They didn't align with the way that He Himself requires us to do things. For whatever reason, they don't survive. This is a kind of judgment.

But it's not a judgment that results in the condemnation of any believer. whether what they've built is burned up or whether it survives.

Nobody receives condemnation here. Everyone is still in the category of saved. So there is, there is in the New Testament this idea of on judgment day of rewards being distributed to the followers of Jesus based upon what they have done in this life.

[ 24 : 23 ] But that does not automatically mean that this judgment is an entirely separate event from the final judgment. We've seen here in 1 Corinthians Paul uses the word day, which is frequently used in the prophets and even occasionally in the New Testament to describe the final day, the judgment day.

So we ought not to separate these things out. We ought not to say, well, Christians are only judged for the sake of their rewards and that's separate from the judgment that determines whether you receive eternal life or you don't receive eternal life.

They're not separated events. In fact, they happen all together. And, it is entirely possible that not only will someone who proclaims to be a Christian have their work burnt up, but they themselves, though a professing Christian, may find on judgment day the verdict rendered that you do not belong to Him.

Now, let me give you some scriptural support for that as well. Here, I want you to turn all the way back to the Gospel of Matthew. Turn back to Matthew chapter 25.

Matthew chapter 25 is in the midst of a series of parables that Jesus tells to explain at times the nature of the kingdom, but now here He's telling a series of parables that speak to what's going to happen on judgment day.

[ 25 : 55 ] What will happen on the day when everyone is judged? Here in verse 14 He begins, it's kind of a long parable so I want you guys to hang with me until we can come to the conclusion of this parable.

Jesus says, It will be like a man going on a journey who called his servants and entrusted to them his property. To one He gave five talents, to another two, to another one, to each according to his ability.

So the master has handed out to his servants different amounts of money. You've got to do something with this money. You're responsible to do something. Then He went away. He would receive the five talents, went at once and traded with them and He made five talents more.

So also He had the two talents, made two talents more. But He would receive the one talent, went and dug in the ground and hid His master's money. Now after a long time the master of the servants came home and settled accounts with them.

And He who had received the five talents came forward bringing five talents more saying, Master, you delivered to me five talents. Here I've made five talents more. His master said to him, Well done, good and faithful servant.

[ 27 : 01 ] You've been faithful over a little. I will set you over a much. Enter into the joy of your master. So there's a reward. He's done well with the things that God has entrusted to him throughout his life. So here's your reward.

You've been faithful over a little. Here's a lot. Enter into the joy of your master. Now I will say just sort of parenthetically that if you start to wonder what are these rewards? What's the nature of these rewards that God is giving out to believers on Judgment Day?

I will say at the outset I'm not sure exactly what they are. Some will approach confidently and say they know exactly what the rewards are but I don't think the New Testament is clear on exactly what these rewards happen to be.

But I do think here we're given an indication that whatever the reward is it is closely connected to our experience of the joy of our master's presence. It is some sort of relational award.

And I think of course of Paul in Philippians chapter 3 saying that he has given up everything for the sake of knowing Christ. That he's willing to abandon everything and give up everything once precious to him in order that he might somehow attain to the resurrection of the dead.

[ 28 : 09 ] And I take that for Paul to mean his goal is to experience as intimate a fellowship with Jesus as possible in the life to come. His goal is to experience the greatest amount of joy in knowing Christ.

So I think that the reward in some way is connected to our experience of the joy of Christ in the next world. But I can't say more than that about the nature of the rewards but I think that much is indicated here.

Back to the main point. Alright? I'm done with that. Alright. Alright. Now look down. We are told here verse 22 and he also who had the two talents came forward saying Master you delivered to me two talents here I have made two talents more.

His master said to him well done good and faithful servant you've been faithful over a little I will set you over much enter into the joy of your master so reward for this guy's wealth. He hasn't done as well as the other right?

But then again he didn't receive as much of the other. He did the best with what he had. He served his master the best that he could with what he had so he receives reward. Verse 24 He who had also received the one talent came forward saying Master I knew you to be a hard man reaping where you did not sow and gathering where you scattered no seed so I was afraid and I went and hid your talent in the ground.

[ 29 : 29 ] Here you have what is yours so he just here's what you gave me nothing I've done nothing for you nothing that I've done while you've been gone that indicates that I've been serving you faithfully there's nothing I just have what you gave me here this is all I've got.

Verse 26 But his master answered him you wicked and slothful servant you knew that I reap where I have not sown and gather where I scattered no seed then you ought to have invested my money with the bankers and at my coming I should have received what was my own with interest you should have done at least something there should have been some evidence that you actually believed the things that you know to be true about me so he says take the talent from him give it to him who has the ten talents for to everyone who has will be given more will be given and he will have an abundance but from the one who has not even what he has will be taken now I want you to notice verse 30 because it's key for our understanding here and cast the worthless servant into the outer darkness in that place there will be weeping and gnashing of teeth you notice this the third quote unquote servant who did not actually serve his master what's his reward destruction this is the language that Jesus uses elsewhere to describe the experience of hell in the most vivid terms that he can think of there will be weeping there will be gnashing of teeth so this servant stands for those who held themselves out to be Christians but on judgment day it was not merely revealed that they didn't deserve a reward it was revealed that they were to be cast into the outer darkness they are now lost they are not saved they are not in the category of those in 1 Corinthians 3 whose work is burned up but they are themselves saved as though by fire no these these experience eternal condemnation separation from God and so we see here in this parable the combination of a judgment that renders rewards to believers on the basis of what they have done how they have lived their lives and how they have served their master and a judgment in which those who prove not to be genuine servants or followers of the master cast out into utter darkness so that when we approach Romans chapter 14 and when we approach any passage

I believe in the New Testament that speaks of believers coming before the judgment seat of God we ought not to dismiss out of hand real judgment a real assessment of whether or not this person will enter into the presence of God a real effective declaration about their eternal destiny no that is always in view there may be also the distribution of rewards in view but that is always in view we are not exempt from judgment day so what do we say then about the verdict already rendered no condemnation what shall we say about that how does that fit into the overall picture I believe that what the apostle Paul is teaching us here and elsewhere is that on judgment day your life will be assessed it will be

Paul says in 2nd Corinthians that everyone will appear before the judgment seat of God to receive his due for what he has done in this life whether good or evil all of us so that so that Paul is saying that we will all appear before him we will all be judged but those who have genuinely trusted in Christ will have following that faith evidence in their lives that proclaims the validity of that faith that says that faith was real that says they were a genuine servant to the master that says they really trusted in him so that judgment day for actual real true believers is not about them receiving the verdict of righteous in God's sight it is about their lives demonstrating and showing that their faith was genuine and it's faith that justifies and nothing else and yet you can have justifying faith and a judgment based upon works if those works for believers merely serve to confirm that their faith in Christ was real and therefore they are justified by faith alone and therefore there is no condemnation over them what is at stake in judgment day for those who proclaim faith in Jesus is a testing of the genuineness of their faith and also when they pass that test the distribution of rewards whatever those may be on the basis of just how strong and fruitful that evidence happened to be

but for all true believers there must be evidence on judgment day according to the way that they've lived as they stand before the judge there must be real evidence that they were a genuine follower of Christ so that when you understand that when Paul is speaking here of real genuine judgment in Romans chapter 14 when you understand that then you can begin to understand just how firm a foundation Paul is building to motivate us to treat one another's in way treat each other in ways that demonstrate the reality of our faith in

[ 35 : 28 ] Christ now there are there are two ways in which he applies this great theological truth about all of us standing before the judgment seat there's one application that he offers for those who are in the category of the weak that is those who have some very strong convictions about certain types of behavior that their brothers and sisters in Christ at least some of them do not share so they do not live according to those convictions and there are a lot of these I've used several examples in the last two weeks there are a lot of things that we might have strong convictions about but that those convictions are not necessarily binding upon all Christians for the Jewish believers in Rome it was about food and days and Paul says though they have strong convictions about those they are not to judge others who do not share those strong convictions and therefore do not live up to the standard that these

Jewish believers have set for themselves and you will find that there will be times when other people other brothers and sisters in Christ do not live up to the standards that you have set for yourself now again these are not fundamental foundational things these are not foundational theological issues nor are these the things that we would throw into the category of gross overt sin that God openly and frequently condemns I mean there are behaviors there are lifestyles that reveal that you're on the wrong side of that divide that means on judgment day you will be shown to have not been a genuine follower of Christ there are those things those are not the things that we're dealing with here but we are dealing with real moral convictions that another brother or sister may not share and therefore as you look at their life you will be tempted to judge them you will be tempted to say they're not living the kind of life that I'm living so they must not be a Christian so they're not going to stand on judgment day they're going to fail the test they're not a real Christian and yet it's not it's not these major major sins that they're committing it's convictions that you have that they are violating Paul says if you understand the coming judgment day and if you keep in mind what's going to happen on that day then you will be freed from the temptation to judge your brother or sister in Christ who does not hold all of your convictions back in Romans 14 let me show you where Paul says that it's back up in verses 3 and 4 first the command let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains we'll get to that in a moment here's the command that pertains to those who have some convictions that not everyone shares all right let not the one who abstains who's convicted about what foods to eat pass judgment on the one who eats for God has welcomed him now here's the theological foundation who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another in other words you're not their master

Jesus is their master he is your master he is their master and since you are not their master who are you to before judgment day has even arrived pronounce judgment over them who are you to do that now to judgment day it is before his own master that he stands or falls it is before his own master that he will either be proclaimed follower of Jesus justified by faith or it was a mere profession it was outward only you never trusted in Jesus and you never followed Jesus and therefore he falls in the judgment Jesus will make that determination not me not you and now listen listen carefully because this is going to untie a knot that's forming in some of your minds he will be literally made to stand or caused to stand for the Lord is able to make him stand some of you this whole time are thinking what about eternal security what about the perseverance of the saints what what about the fifth point what are we going to do with that is it not to be found in the text what do we do and here it is right here Paul says don't judge your brother or sister in Christ because they have convictions that differ from yours do not be afraid that they will make shipwreck of their faith because of that no trust in the judge who is capable of making him or her to stand on judgment day God could make us stand we do not stand on judgment day merely because of our own grit and determination in this life we stand because he makes us stand we stand because he causes us to stand because he has the power and he's able for all those who truly belong to him he can make them stand on judgment day and he will do that for all who belong to him so what you ought to do is not judge them but you ought to pray for them God strengthen their faith in you as you strengthen my faith because you are able and you I believe will make them stand just as you will make me to

stand on judgment day you will do that and no one else and I trust in you a sovereign powerful God who oversees and causes the perseverance of all those who believe in you I trust in you to do that work on the behalf of a brother or sister just as well as I trust you to do it for me the ultimate grounds of our assurance on judgment day is the power of

God to make us stand and he can do that for other people besides yourself he can and he will and so when you find yourself in the category of having very specific convictions that some others in the body of Christ do not share and you worry you become concerned because of some of the things that they do and participate in in that moment you trust in your master and theirs that he can make them stand and if he desires to and he so chooses then he will give them the same conviction that you have if indeed your conviction is biblical and it is right he will lead them ultimately if we pray for them to that conviction as well but we have no room for judgment we are not the judge we are not their master and they have a master who is powerful enough to make them stand you do not need to make them stand he will uphold them he will cause them to stand before him on judgment day that's the application of this theological foundation if you find yourself in the category of the weak what if you find yourself in the category of the strong I don't want to say too much about this this morning because we're going to be talking about this in depth next week we're going to come to how the strong ought to regard the weak within the body of Christ that is how do those who fully participate in the freedom that they have in Jesus how do they regard those who in various specific areas choose not to express their freedom in Christ that's how the strong regard the weak I don't want to get into detail on that but I do want to show you quickly that the treatment of the weak by the strong is motivated motivated by the same theological foundation of looking toward the judgment so take a look down here in our passage there's a hint that that's the case because he asked two questions in verse 10 one of the weak and one of the strong first the weak why do you pass judgment on your brother you shouldn't do that right because we're all going to stand before the judgment seat of God biblical proof of that statement Isaiah 45 as I live says the Lord every knee will bow to me every tongue will confess to God the biblical proof Paul offers that everybody's going to stand weak don't judge your brother they'll stand because I've said they'll stand before me in judgment now strong second question in verse 10 or you why do you despise your brother that brings us back to the strong remember the command of the strong earlier not to despise why do you despise and the same reason is given for for both issues for we will all stand before the judgment seat of God each of us will give an account of himself to God so it's clear here in the text and the just what we're looking at here that the the motive for the strong not despising the weak is don't worry all of us are going to stand before the judgment seat of God but there is a bit of a twist verse 13 we won't spend a lot of time on this today we'll cover it next week but I want you to see it verse 13 therefore let us not pass judgment on one another there's judgment we're not going to judge them but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean in other words Paul's in the strong category I know nothing's unclean but understand this you strong

[ 45 : 34 ] if your brother or sister view something as unclean then for them it is unclean they they ought not to do that which they themselves are convicted is a sinful thing to do they shouldn't do that now verse 15 for if your brother is greed by what you eat you are no longer walking in love now notice closely by what you eat do not destroy the one for whom Christ died that is strong language do not destroy them how are the strong going to destroy the weak how are they going to do it by causing the weak through their own behavior in their own actions the strong can lead the weak to violate their own conscience and therefore live a life of sin they can lead the weak into a life of sin even though technically they're not violating any of the express commandments of God under the new covenant but you can lead them into a life of sin where they disregard their obedience to their master because they believe their master has said don't do this and they're going to do it anyway and you're pushing them into that you are pushing them to rebel against the one that ought to stand over them as ruler and master and therefore on judgment day what will be seen in their lives is not an attitude of submission to God and their convictions about what he requires and therefore evidence of real and genuine faith but what will be seen on judgment day is rebellion against God I know he said this I believe he said to do this but

I'm not going to do it because you don't do it and you seem to be pushing me in this direction the motive for the strong not to be unloving to the weak that is not to flagrantly display their own

