SMITH FOR CHRIST

TEACHING THE WORD · WATCHING THE TIMES

REFLECTION JOURNAL · FIVE DAYS

Romans

Chapter 14

The Weak, the Strong, and the Lord

MEMORY VERSE · ROMANS 14:8

"for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."

THIS JOURNAL BELONGS TO _____

BEFORE YOU BEGIN

This week in Romans 14

This week Paul sits me down at a table with brothers who see some things differently than I do. Where the Bible leaves a matter open, he asks me to welcome my brother instead of looking down on him or passing sentence on him — because Christ is his Lord and mine, and Christ died for him too.

How to use this journal

1. Each day, read the passage slowly — out loud if you can.
2. Answer the **Observe** question from the text before you write what it means.
3. Write honestly on the **Reflect** questions. No one grades this.
4. Do the **Respond** step today, not someday. Say the memory verse.
5. Bring this journal to the group. The last page is for the table.

The full Deep Dive, the O·I·A study, the slides and the film for this chapter are on the Romans study page.

WHERE I AM AS I START THIS CHAPTER

What is going on in my life right now that I want to bring to God this week?

DAY 1 OF 5

Receive the One Who Is Weak

READ · ROMANS 14:1–4

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

In verse 3, what is the man who eats tempted to do to the man who doesn't, what is the man who doesn't eat tempted to do in return, and what reason does Paul give both of them?

REFLECT

"Weak in faith" here means the stricter brother whose conscience is still bound by rules God has lifted (vv. 1–2). Which comes more naturally to you — rolling your eyes at the stricter man, or judging the freer one — and where did it show up recently?

REFLECT

"He will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand" (v. 4). How does that promise take pressure off you — both for holding your brother up and for holding yourself up?

RESPOND — TODAY

Think of one brother you keep at arm's length over something the Bible leaves open. Reach out to him today — sit with him, eat with him, or call him — with no agenda to change his mind.

❐ READ IT ❐ PRAYED IT ❐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 14:8)

DAY 2 OF 5

Fully Convinced, and for the Lord

READ · ROMANS 14:5–9

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

How many times does the phrase “for the Lord” appear in verses 6–8, and according to verse 9, why did Christ die and live again?

REFLECT

“Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind” (v. 5). What is one practice in your life — how you keep the Lord’s day, what you eat, what you watch or listen to — that you do out of habit or pressure rather than settled conviction before God?

REFLECT

“Not one of us lives for himself” (v. 7). Who is affected by the choices you make this week, and how does belonging to the Lord (v. 8) change the way you see those choices?

RESPOND — TODAY

Give thanks to God out loud at every meal today, as verse 6 describes, and let each prayer remind you whose you are.

❒ READ IT ❒ PRAYED IT ❒ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 14:8)

DAY 3 OF 5

Before the Judgment Seat of God

READ · ROMANS 14:10–12

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What two questions does Paul ask in verse 10, and in verse 12, whose account does each one of us give to God?

REFLECT

"Each one of us will give an account of himself to God" (v. 12) — not of his brother. What would change in your next conversation about another man if you took that sentence literally?

REFLECT

Every knee will bow and every tongue will give praise to God (v. 11). What would it look like for you to bow gladly now, in the area where you have been most sure you are right?

RESPOND — TODAY

Before you speak about another man today, stop and ask, "Lord, what do I need to answer for in myself?" Write down what He shows you, and bring it to Christ, who died for you.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 14:8)

DAY 4 OF 5

The Kingdom Is Not Eating and Drinking

READ · ROMANS 14:13–18

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

Verse 13 uses the word "judge" two ways ("let us not judge one another … but rather determine this"). What does Paul tell us to judge instead, and what does verse 17 say the kingdom of God is made of?

REFLECT

"Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died" (v. 15). What freedom do you enjoy that might be a trap for a particular brother near you, and what would love have you do about it?

REFLECT

Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit (v. 17). Which of those three has been most missing in your life lately, and where have you been looking for it instead?

RESPOND — TODAY

Ask God to show you one brother whose footing you need to protect, and quietly set down one thing for his sake this week — without making a speech about it.

☐ READ IT ☐ PRAYED IT ☐ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 14:8)

DAY 5 OF 5

Whatever Is Not from Faith

READ · ROMANS 14:19–23

OBSERVE — WHAT DOES IT SAY?

What two things does verse 19 tell us to pursue, and what does verse 23 say about the man who eats while he doubts?

REFLECT

"It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do anything by which your brother stumbles" (v. 21). For a man in recovery the first drink is a matter of being mastered, not of liberty (1 Corinthians 6:12). How does this verse shape the way you sit beside a brother who is fighting for sobriety — or the way you treat a brother who can drink without sin (v. 3)?

REFLECT

"Whatever is not from faith is sin" (v. 23). Where are you acting while doubting — doing something you have not settled before God — and what would it take to settle it or stop?

RESPOND — TODAY

Do one thing today that builds up a brother (v. 19) — a word of encouragement, a ride, an hour of your time — and pray that God would finish His work in him (v. 20).

❒ READ IT ❒ PRAYED IT ❒ SAID THE MEMORY VERSE (ROMANS 14:8)

WHEN THE GROUP MEETS

Questions for the table

FOR THE GROUP · 1

Paul says both the man who eats and the man who doesn't do it "for the Lord" and give thanks (v. 6). Where did you see a brother this week honoring Christ in a way different from your own?

FOR THE GROUP · 2

Verse 14 says nothing is unclean in itself, yet it is unclean to the man who thinks it is. How do we help a brother grow in freedom without bullying his conscience (vv. 14–15)?

FOR THE GROUP · 3

Verse 19 calls us to pursue "the building up of one another." What is one practical way our group could build each other up this coming week, rather than tear down the work of God (v. 20)?

MY PRAYER

Lord Jesus, You died and lived again to be my Lord and my brother's Lord; help me receive him as You received me, and…

CUT OUT · CARRY IT · ROMANS 14:8

"for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's."