

If you have limited time to prepare, this 3-step outline is a helpful tool for leading a small group discussion:

1. Read the text from Sunday's message.
2. What did you find most helpful/confusing/new/ that you did not understand from the message?
3. What were your big takeaways? How will you put these into practice in your life?

Getting Started

- What “non-essentials” (*little cones*) have you seen Christians argue about? What have been the results?
- How does this quote from Augustine relate to Romans 14?
“In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity.”

Discussion

What was your key take away from Pastor Lee's illustration of “Big Cones” and “little cones” from Sunday's message?

In chapter 14, it is important to be clear that Paul is not referring to a weakness neither of will nor character, but of “faith”. So, if we are trying to picture a weaker brother or sister, we must not envisage a vulnerable Christian easily overcome by temptation, but a sensitive Christian full of indecision and scruples. What the weak lack is not strength of self-control but liberty of conscience. – John Stott.

- What “disputable matters” (*little cones*) had the potential of dividing the Christians at Rome (14:1-8)?
- Who are described as weak Christians and who are described as strong Christians? Why? Where would you put yourself on this continuum?
- How would you explain that it is right for one Christian to abstain from meat sacrificed to idols out of service to the Lord while another Christian can eat the same meat and give thanks to God (14:6-8)?
- Make a list of as many issues as you can think of that are debated in the church. Divide the list under two headings:
 1. Disputable matters on which Scripture is not explicit. (*little cones*)
 2. Issues on which Scripture gives clear guidance as to what is right. (*Big Cones*)

On which issues are you “strong” or “weak”?

Some possible issue to consider: food, clothes, make-up, dating, sex, alcohol, movies, TV, abortion, gun control, medical technology, music (leisure), music (in the church), the Sabbath (Sunday), women's roles in the church, tithing, capital punishment, spiritual gifts, politics, baptism, communion

- What does Romans 14:1-12 say about accepting/receiving one another? How would you rate yourself in this area?
- What does it mean that each believer will give an account of himself to God? How should this impact the way we live?

Prayer

Ask God to show you what you ought to hold on to as core truth and what you ought to leave to personal preference. Ask God to search your heart with the goal of correcting any lack of tolerance you may have for other Christians who disagree with you on the unimportant matters.