



February 11, 2022

Let's Look at Romans 14

Warm hellos friends, brethren, co-workers, spiritual family, and scattered children of God, from here in Charleston, SC. My wife and I pray and hope this finds you all doing well, and that again your week has been blessed.

Sometimes I receive some unusual questions as a fellowship or church. Not too long ago I received a question "Why does Church of God Ministries emphasize observing the seventh day Sabbath in light of Romans 14?" (By the way, our emphasis is not alone, as there are many within the Body of Christ who do the same).

Some make the mistake of lifting one or two Scriptures out of context of which it was written, and then at the same time ignore the many Scriptures that pertain to understanding a particular doctrine or subject.

Some assert that the seventh day weekly Sabbath has been abolished or replaced by Sunday.

I'm not here to bash or discredit but simply explain why this believe is held by many. I hope to shed some light on why it is we do teach the observance of the Seventh Day Sabbath.

The misapplication of Romans 14 and a few other Scriptures could be an attempt to discredit God's Sabbath while ignoring the statements about the importance of keeping God's commandments, the 4th in particular, that God makes plain all throughout His Word. Here's some helpful scriptures to consider. (Exodus 16; Exodus 20; Exodus 31; Leviticus 23; Deuteronomy 4:40; Deuteronomy 5:29; Isaiah 56; Isaiah 58; Mark 2:27-28; John 14:15; 1 Corinthians 7:19; 1 John 2:3-4; 1 John 5:2-3; Revelation 12:17; Revelation 14:12; Revelation 22:14)

At times, others use Romans 14 to claim that "believers no longer need to observe Passover and the other annual festivals outlined in Leviticus 23".

I'll be speaking about this very thing on this upcoming Sabbath in Charleston, SC.

A man asked Jesus, "*Good Teacher, what good thing shall I do that I may have eternal life?*" The man did not ask *how* he could earn eternal life. Jesus told him, "*But if you want to enter into life, keep the commandments.*" (Matthew 19:16-17)

Jesus did not say that the man could earn salvation or eternal life, but He did lay down

conditions. Because Jesus did not specifically mention the Sabbath, does that mean we can pick and choose which commandments are to be kept? That doesn't make sense.

The apostle Paul in the Book of Hebrews prepared long-time church members for the eventual loss of the Temple and the Levitical system. He reminded them that they needed to continue to meet together, and that Sabbath observance remained for the people of God. "*There remains therefore a rest* [from Greek - sabbatismos = a keeping Sabbath (Online Bible Greek Lexicon)] *for the people of God.*" (Hebrews 4:9)

Hebrews 4:4 recalls the record of Genesis 2:2-3 "*For He has spoken in a certain place of the seventh day in this way: "And God rested on the seventh day from all His works."*

Then we are told about what is expected of the people of God. "*For he who has entered His rest has himself also ceased from his works as God did from His.*" (Hebrews 4:10) God rested on the seventh day from the work of the previous six days and *set an example for us to follow Him as the Lord of the Sabbath.* (Mark 2:27-28)

Entering the promised land of Canaan and being given rest from Israel's enemies was a type of *New Covenant Israel* entering the kingdom of God and ruling with Christ in the almost 1000 years free of Satan's influence.

If we are to have a spiritual rest and a special relationship with God, we must repent of our sins and turn our lives around in obedience to God's instructions and commandments. Christ came to call sinners to repentance. (Mark 2:17) He instructed the disciples that "*that repentance and remission of sins should be preached.*" (Luke 24:47) Sin is defined as "*the transgression of the law.*" (1 John 3:4)

Paul goes on later in the book to emphasize the importance of the "convocation component" of celebrating the Sabbath.

God's Word instructs us that the seventh day Sabbath and the other appointed times are set aside for convocation and assembling together. (Leviticus 23:3) "*And let us consider one another in order to stir up love and good works, not forsaking the assembling of ourselves together, as is the manner of some, but exhorting one another, and so much the more as you see the Day approaching.*" (Hebrews 10:24-25)

Leviticus 23 lists the appointed times of the LORD that are times of convocation for the people of God. The LORD gave them to mankind, (not Moses or any man or organization).

Interestingly the apostle Paul stated in Romans 14, "*One person esteems one day above*

another; another esteems every day alike. Let each be fully convinced in his own mind. He who observes the day, observes it to the Lord; and he who does not observe the day, to the Lord he does not observe it. He who eats, eats to the Lord, for he gives God thanks; and he who does not eat, to the Lord he does not eat, and gives God thanks." (v.5-6)

So, what is the point of Paul's instruction in Romans 14? Was Paul claiming that a believer could take it or leave it regarding observing the Sabbath day or a holy day? Does this mean that the Sabbath is no different from any other day or that we are free to choose whatever day we wish to observe?

To come to that conclusion, we would have to read into the verse something that is simply not there, because neither the Sabbath nor holy days are mentioned.

Keep in mind that Paul, earlier in this same epistle, had said: "*The law is holy, and the commandment holy and just and good*" (Romans 7:12); "*The doers of the law will be justified*" (Romans 2:13), and "*I delight in the law of God*" (Romans 7:22).

Paul states, "*Therefore let us keep the feast . . .*" (1 Corinthians 5:8). We'll continue examining Romans 14 next time...

Arms up friends! Our prayers and thoughts are with you daily. Please do pray for us as well.



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