



Grain

“Judging a person does not define who they are, it defines who you are.” –Unknown

Submitted by Intern Evan Sadlon, Madison

Field

¹⁴ Welcome those who are weak in faith, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² Some believe in eating anything, while the weak eat only vegetables. ³ Those who eat must not despise those who abstain, and those who abstain must not pass judgment on those who eat; for God has welcomed them. ⁴ Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? It is before their own lord that they stand or fall. And they will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make them stand. ⁵ Some judge one day to be better than another, while others judge all days to be alike. Let all be fully convinced in their own minds. ⁶ Those who observe the day, observe it in honor of the Lord. Also, those who eat, eat in honor of the Lord, since they give thanks to God; while those who abstain, abstain in honor of the Lord and give thanks to God... ¹⁰ Why do you pass judgment on your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall give praise to God.” ¹² So then, each of us will be accountable to God. Romans 14:1-6, 10-12

Thoughts by LOPPW Intern Evan Sadlon, Madison

We’ve all had that feeling. Whenever you see or meet someone new, you judge them. You begin to form an opinion about someone before they even open their mouth. Why do we do this? It’s human nature. Instinctively, we compare ourselves to others, choosing whether to like or dislike them. I feel it too, my instant, silent judgment of others as I pass people in the streets.

The first twelve verses in chapter 14 of Paul’s Epistle to the Romans capture a crucial lesson for people across the earth. While this passage may seem simple and straightforward, taking a step back and looking at our society gives a very different picture. In verse 4, Paul asks an unassuming but deep question. Who are you to pass judgment on servants of another? Why do we judge their likes and dislikes? Why can’t we just appreciate others for the individuals they are? These questions speak even louder when considering the recent shooting of Jacob Blake in Kenosha and the murders of George Floyd, Breonna Taylor and countless others. Sometimes it feels like the United States is still fighting a war that ended in 1865. The wounds of slavery and racism still run deep in this nation, as much as we would like to deny it. Only once we move beyond the judgment of others can society itself begin to heal and progress.

Romans asks us, why pass judgment on our brothers and sisters. God’s answer is simple: don’t. At the end of our lives, the only being left to judge us is God. So, how do we move forward? What can change here and now? Well, someday, when we come face-to-face with a situation that makes us feel completely uncomfortable, we need to step up and be accountable to God. Instead of judging another person based on a physical characteristic, get to know them. Understand them. Empathize with them. But we also need God’s help to realize injustice. We ask for the grace to love more than judge and truly live a life filled with honor and dignity in the eyes of the Lord. Happy Monday!

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Many Blessings upon you,

LOPPW Intern Evan Sadlon