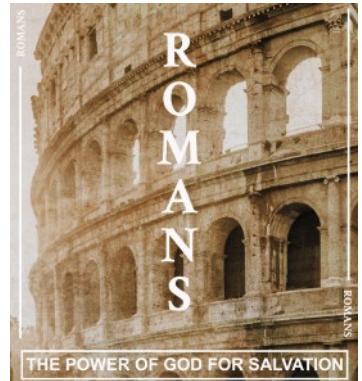


Pastor Jake Magee

January 18, 2026

Romans



Surprising Weakness

Romans 14:1-4

¹As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ²One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. ³Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him. ⁴Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.

1. Who are the “weak” in this passage?

2. Why are they considered “weak”?

- They confused _____ with _____.

Small Group Discussion Guide

Surprising Weakness

Romans 14:1-4

Getting Started

Paul addresses areas of disagreement among Christians—issues that believers are often tempted to turn into standards for being a “good” Christian. What was the disagreement Paul was addressing in Romans 14? What are some issues today where Christians are tempted to make the same mistake?

Digging Deeper (Read Romans 14:1–23 together and pray.)

1. Who does Paul identify as the “weak” in this passage? Why would this have been surprising—both then and now?
2. In your experience, why do we so often assume that **more rules = stronger faith?**
3. On Sunday, the commandments were compared to *crutches* that help weak people get to a Savior, not badges of spiritual strength. What was the point of that illustration? How does it help explain the conflict in Romans 14?
4. God has clear, non-negotiable standards for what it means to be a Christian. What made the people in this passage “weak” was that they **added to God’s standards** and then used those additions to evaluate others.
 - What are some biblical markers of a faithful Christian life?
 - What are some additional standards that may sound reasonable or spiritual, but go beyond what God requires?

5. On Sunday, Pastor Jake said that **theological liberals tend to turn God's commands into opinions, while legalists turn their opinions into commands**—yet both are doing the same thing. What is that? Why is this so dangerous spiritually?

6. Read verses 13–14 and 21–23. This passage teaches that a person's conscience may be misinformed and may restrict things God has not forbidden. Yet, under normal circumstances, Paul says it is still better for that person to obey their conscience rather than violate it. How would you explain this principle in your own words? What questions or tensions does this raise for you?

7. Sometimes people need extra boundaries because of their personal history with sin. Can you think of examples where this might be true? Why is it often difficult to accept that something may be wrong *for me* but not *for someone else*?

Making It Real

We are told not to “judge” or “despise” other Christians on disputable matters. What’s the difference between the two? Ask God to expose this in you if you are doing either.

Resources:

Romans: Righteousness from Heaven | R. Kent Hughes

www.blueletterbible.org

www.biblehub.com

www.preceptaustin.org