**Home Group Leaders' Notes**
**Week of November 1, 2026**
**ALIVE! Through Faith in Jesus Christ**
**Romans 14**

**Greetings Friends.** I want to remind you that these notes are suggestions and ideas. It is your choice of what to use, when you pray, what you discuss, when you serve, etc. We all need to plan how we encourage, enrich, and build trust in relationships. The purpose is to help people be and make disciples.

As facilitators, we want to provide opportunities to

- build relationships that go beyond the meeting times,
- listen and ask God to help us know where people are in their faith,
- trust God to help us shepherd people into deepening faith as disciples, and
- seek opportunities to equip people so that they can branch out and equip others

**Steve's OVERVIEW OF ROMANS 14**

The letter we call "Romans" was written to the church family in Rome. In the first eleven chapters, the author, Paul, wrote a clear record of how sinful people can be acceptable before a righteous God through faith in Jesus Christ. Beginning in chapter twelve, Paul describes how those who are in Christ can now live righteously by faith in God. As we have seen in previous chapters, the church was composed of Jews and non-Jews (Gentiles), both of whom are righteous only by trusting in Jesus. In 49 A.D., those who were Jewish were expelled from Rome for about five years (by the emperor, Claudius) This letter was written in 57 A.D., three to four years after the Jews returned to Rome and regathered in their house churches. During the absence of Jewish Christians, the Gentile Christians held more prominence and were now judging the Jews who returned to Rome. (We see Paul's warning to Gentiles about "superiority" and "arrogance" in Romans 11:17-21.) Some of the Jewish disciples were still holding on to convictions about Old Testament commands. Specifically, they believed that God wanted them to continue to follow Old Testament laws about foods and holy days. In chapter 14, Paul instructs them about how to live like Christ in this setting.

**GROUP TIME: DISCUSSION OF APPLICATION FROM GOD'S WORD**

**GROUP SURVEY**: What are some of the practices you have experienced in past times that have changed or that you changed? For example:

- Methods of baptism
- How often we practice communion
- What we should or shouldn't do on Sunday
- Is it OK to consume some alcohol?
- Etc.

**ASK SOMEONE TO READ THE FOLLOWING:**

The focus in this chapter is not on orthodox doctrine (teaching) but on personal application. We know that correct doctrine is clearly revealed in the Word of God, the Bible.

However, throughout history there have been those who have judged others for how they follow the Lord. What differences of application became issues in the church in Rome?

**ASK**: In church culture today, what kinds of practices or choices get judged or even divide us? What would Paul say about this? What are your feelings about this?

**ASK AND READ TOGETHER THESE SCRIPTURES.** In this chapter, Paul reveals the criteria for the choices of how we live? What do we learn from his statements in 14:4, 6, 8, 10, 14, 15, 19, 20, 22, 23?

**ASK:** After what we read, how are we to live in fellowship with people who have different practices?

**SHARE:** In our coalition of churches (Evangelical Free Churches), we have a statement that we try to follow: "In essentials unity; in non-essentials liberty; in all things charity." Does this capture the essence of this chapter?

**ASK:** What are some of the essentials? What are some of the things that we do that are non-essential?

**ASK:** How can we, in our own small group, avoid judging or dividing over “non-essentials?”