

# Romans 14:4-6 Commentary

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Righteousness Needed	Righteousness Credited	Righteousness Demonstrated	Righteousness Restored to Israel	Righteousness Applied
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Slaves to Sin	Slaves to God			Slaves Serving God
Doctrine				Duty
Life by Faith				Service by Faith
Modified from Irving L. Jensen's excellent work " <a href="#">Jensen's Survey of the NT</a> "				

Romans 14:4 **Who** are you to **judge** the **servant** of **another** ? To his **own master** he **stands or falls** ; and he will **stand**, for the **Lord** is **able** to **make** him **stand**. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** su tis ei (3SPA1) o krinon (PAPMSN) allotrion oiketen; to idio kurio stekei (3SPA1) e piptei (3SPA1) : stathesetai (3SFPI) de, dunatei gar o kurios stesai (AAN) auton.

**Amplified:** Who are you to pass judgment on and censure another's household servant? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he shall stand and be upheld, for the Master (the Lord) is mighty to support him and make him stand. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**NLT:** Who are you to condemn God's servants? They are responsible to the Lord, so let him tell them whether they are right or wrong. The Lord's power will help them do as they should. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** After all, who are you to criticise the servant of somebody else, especially when that somebody else is God? It is to his own master that he gives, or fails to give, satisfactory service. And don't doubt that satisfaction, for God is well able to transform men into servants who are satisfactory. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** As for you, who are you who are judging another's household slave? To his own personal master he stands or falls. Indeed, he shall be made to stand, for the Lord has power to make him stand. ([Eerdmans](#))

**Young's Literal:** Thou -- who art thou that art judging another's domestic? to his own master he doth stand or fall; and he shall be made to stand, for God is able to make him stand.

**WHO ARE YOU TO (continually) JUDGE THE SERVANT OF ANOTHER:** su tis ei (3SPA1) o krinon (PAPMSN) allotrion oiketen:

- Ro 9:20; Acts 11:17; 1Co 4:4,5; James 4:11,12

#### Related Passage:

James 4:11-12+ Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and judges the law; but if you judge the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it.

### BEWARE OF JUDGING OTHERS

**Middletown Bible - The Law of Love (Romans 14:1-15:3) - For further help in understanding how to live so as to not cause a brother to stumble, see our paper entitled, "[Guidance: 67 Biblical Tests to Use in Deciding Upon a Course of Action](#)"**

**Who are you** - While the **you** is probably most accurately defined as the weaker brother, the truth in this passage applies both weak and strong. The word is "You" for emphasis which immediately confronts this individual and arouses their attention. It's as if Paul is saying "as for you, who are you, etc." As **Denney** says "The sharpness of this rebuke shows that Paul, with all his love and consideration for the weak, was alive to the possibility of a tyranny of the weak, and repressed it in its beginnings. It is easy to lapse from scrupulousness about one's own conduct into Pharisaism about that of others." ([Romans 14 Commentary - Expositors Greek Testament](#))

**MacArthur** - Paul is questioning any believer's right to evaluate someone else's servant. Their opinion doesn't improve or impair that servant's position before his own master. Judgment by an outsider is irrelevant. ([Receiving One Another with Understanding, Part 2](#))

**Spurgeon** - Matters of meat and drink are to be left to Christian liberty, and no one has any right to dictate to another how he shall act. It is, however, a good rule—"in all cases of doubt be sure to take the surer side."

**Judge** (2919) (**krino**) primarily signifies to distinguish, separate or discriminate and then, to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, without necessarily passing an adverse sentence, although that is often what is usually involved. The **present tense** indicates this is a continual action.

**Servant** (3610) (**oiketes** from **oikos** = dwelling, home) means one who lives in the same house as another and then household slaves or domestic servants (a "household slave") not as strongly servile as **doulos**. Many of the domestic slaves were well

educated and held responsible positions in the households. Among their number were doctors, teachers, musicians, actors and stewards over great estates. The oiketes thus describes one who is of the household of the "family." It is to his own **master** that the **servant** is responsible, not to another believer.

**The servant of another** - "Paul speaks of judging "another's", not "another man's"; his illustration is taken from human affairs, but he has in mind the divine Master. The possessive means that the servant in question belongs to and therefore is accountable to that Other. If a servant is acceptable to his master, it does not matter what his fellow servants think." (See [The Epistle to the Romans](#))

**Of Another** - In context the "another" clearly refers to Christ as the Master, for we have all been bought with the price of His precious blood and thus belong solely to the Savior (Titus 2:14, 1Cor 6:19-20, 1Pe 2:9)

**Cranfield** - The abstainer, who is passing judgment on his fellow-Christian who does not abstain, is challenged to consider who he himself is who thus presumes to pass judgment on someone who, like himself, is a household-slave of Christ (or of God) and therefore only answerable to Him (according to ordinary human law governing slavery the household-slave was answerable solely to his master). The point made by **another** (allotriou) is not, of course, that the strong Christian belongs to a master other than the one to whom the weak Christian belongs, but that he belongs to a master other than the weak Christian—he is not the weak Christian's slave, but Another's, i.e., Christ's (or God's), and therefore not answerable to the weak Christian. (BORROW [A critical and exegetical commentary on the Epistle to the Romans](#) PAGE 702)

**J Vernon McGee** has a pithy comment (as usual) - "Paul asks, "What right have you to judge another man's servant?" What right have you, Christian friend, to sit in judgment on another Christian's conduct when it involves something that is questionable? Are you God? Is that person accountable to you? Paul says, "He is not accountable to you. He is accountable to God. He is going to stand before his own Master." Can you imagine being a dinner guest in someone's home) and the servant brings in cold biscuits. You say to the servant, "What's the big idea of bringing me cold biscuits?" And you chide—in our common colloquialism, bawl out—the servant! May I say to you, there would be an awkward silence in that home. That person is not your servant. Maybe she should not have served cold biscuits, but it is not your place to say so. I have a notion that the lady of the house will go back to the kitchen and will tend to the matter. Now maybe you disapprove of my conduct in one of these doubtful areas. I don't have to account to you; you are not my master. I am responsible to Jesus Christ. He is my Master.' (SEE [Thru the Bible Vol. 43: The Epistles \(Romans 9-16\)](#))

**TO HIS OWN MASTER HE STANDS OR FALLS AND STAND HE WILL, FOR THE LORD IS ABLE TO MAKE HIM STAND: to idio kurio stekei (3SPA) e piptei (3SPA) stathesetai (3SFPI) de dunatei (PA) gar o kurios stesai (AAN) auton:**

- Ro 14:3; 11:23; 16:25; Deut 33:27-29; Ps 17:5; 37:17,24,28; Ps 119:116,117; Jn 10:28, 29, 30; Ro 8:31-39; Heb 7:25; 1Pet 1:5; Jude 1:24
- Isa 40:29

## **ONE LORD OVER THE WEAK AND THE STRONG**

**To his own master** ([kurios](#)) (and no one else!) - The Master of both the weak and the strong brother is the same Lord and it is to Him both are accountable. Paul made a similar statement regarding his ultimate accountability writing "Let a man regard us in this manner, as servants of Christ, and stewards of the mysteries of God.:2 In this case, moreover, it is required of stewards that one be found trustworthy. 3 But to me it is a very small thing that I should be examined by you, or by [any] human court; in fact, I do not even examine myself. 4 For I am conscious of nothing against myself, yet I am not by this acquitted; but **the one who examines me is the Lord.** (1Cor 4:1-4)

**J Ligon Duncan** - Paul says, "God is our master." He's telling us to accept one another in these areas of secondary opinion, to do so in light of a tremendous truth: That is God is master, God is judge because He is the master of His children. We should not be too quick to take upon ourselves the role of judge and master. We should refrain from it. We should be ready to give as much room as we possibly can to the consciences of our brothers and sisters in Christ. This is a tremendous principle that he sets down. There is the first thing that he says in this passage. God is our master and therefore we need to remember that (truth) as we estimate, as we exercise discretion, as we practice judgment with regard to those in the body of Christ. ([A Warning Against Judging Brothers](#))

**Godet** feels that "The idea is: It is to the advantage or disadvantage of his master, not of his fellow-servants, that a servant fulfils or neglects his task. The terms standing and falling refer, not to the servant's absolution or condemnation at the judgment, but to his daily faithfulness or unfaithfulness, and to the strengthening or weakening of his inward relation to Christ. What proves this, is the ground for confidence indicated in the words: "Yea, he shall stand; for God is powerful to hold him up." There is no more need of being held up, or at least of being so by the power of God, in the judgment day. Of course the servant's sincerity, in the line of

conduct which he has adopted, is assumed, even if he were in error on a particular point. Paul affirms that the Lord will be able to hold him in communion with Himself.—Here the Lord is probably, as generally in the N. T., Christ. It is He, indeed, who is Master of the house, and for whom the servants labour (Luke 12:41–48)" ([Romans 14:1-15:13 Directions Regarding a Difference of View](#))

**Steven Cole** - To refrain from wrongly judging my brother, I must remember that God is the Savior, Sanctifier, and Lord; I'm not. Paul says (Ro 14:4), "**Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand.**" In other words, I didn't save the one with whom I differ; God did. I'm not the one who will keep him and perfect him for the day of Christ Jesus; God is. I'm not that man's Lord and Judge; God is. So I need to let God be God and trust that He will deal with my brother on these non-essential matters if He thinks that they need correcting. But my job is to love my brother, accept him in Christ, and trust God to work in his life. ([Getting Along in Spite of Our Differences Romans 14:1-4](#))

**Master** (owner)([2962](#))(**kurios**) signifies sovereign power and absolute authority. It is the one who has absolute ownership of another and is the same word translated "**Lord**" below.

The first reason why we must not look down on the weak or judge or condemn the strong is because it is not our responsibility to change our brother. We are not his **master**. He is not our **servant**. We are not responsible for one another's conduct in these "non-essentials." This is an area of our spiritual life that each individual believer has to decide (krino - judge) before His Master, and we have no **responsibility** to try to change another's opinion or action (in the area of "neutral", non-essentials, in which Scripture gives no clear guidelines) and no **authority** to do so. The weaker or stronger brother (depending on which camp you are in) is not your servant, but is the Lord's for the **Lord** chose him. The **Lord** is the One responsible to change him.

**Steven Cole** however does give one important caveat writing "I repeat this so that we're all clear. Paul does not mean that we should not judge others on matters where the Bible speaks clearly. **We should judge sin in others as sin.** In 1 Corinthians 5, he rebuked the church because they accepted and did not judge a man who was involved immorally with his father's wife. **We should judge and not accept serious doctrinal error.** In Galatians, Paul did not accept the Judaizers' view that you must obey the Law of Moses in addition to faith in Christ to be saved. He said that they were damned if they taught such a false "gospel" (Gal. 1:6-9). **So the Bible is clear that we are to hold to sound doctrine and condemn false doctrine on core issues. We are to make moral judgments on matters where Scripture gives commandments. We must speak out if a matter threatens the truth of the gospel or the spiritual health of a church or an individual.** But then there are many issues where the Bible either is silent or not clear about what to do. Often we can apply biblical principles to figure out what to do. On some issues, godly men differ. We might debate our case vigorously, but we need to be gracious toward those who differ with us." ([Getting Along in Spite of Our Differences Romans 14:1-4](#)) (Bolding added)

**For** - Functions here as a **term of explanation**. Paul is explaining why we don't need to worry (and judge) our weaker or stronger brother, fearing that what he is doing or thinking will cause his spiritual downfall. Why not? Because "the Lord is able to make him stand."

**Lord** (master, owner)([2962](#))(**kurios**) signifies the one who has complete sovereignty, absolute authority, total ownership and unrivaled power. Is this Who Jesus is in our life? What about where you go, what you watch, what you buy, etc? Is He Lord over all areas of my life?

In spite of your sharp criticisms of one another. NLT is a good paraphrase and brings out Paul's idea well "Who are you to condemn God's servants? They are responsible to the Lord, so let him tell them whether they are right or wrong. The Lord's power will help them do as they should."

**Is able** ([1414](#))(**dunateo** from **dunatos** = one who possesses power; from **dunamai** = describes power in one by virtue of inherent ability and/or resources) means to show oneself to be able to accomplish what needs to be accomplished. To exert overwhelming, unstoppable power ("unstoppably able")! In Ro 14:4 **dunateo** is followed by an infinitive ("to") = "to be able to."

The **present tense** indicates He **is** continuously **able**! (cp Heb 7:25).

**Able** (Webster) = having the necessary power, resources, skill, time, opportunity, etc., to do something, having sufficient power, skill, or resources to accomplish an object; Having physical power sufficient; having competent power or strength, bodily or mental;

**Thayer** - To be powerful or mighty; show oneself powerful (2Cor 13:3) as opposed to weak (astheno); to be able to have power.

**BDAG** - to display capability, be effective, be able

**TDNTA** - Words of this stem (**duna-**) all have the basic sense of ability or capability.

See related study on the encouraging truth - [GOD IS ABLE](#)

**Dunateo** - 3x - Is able (2), mighty. Used only in NT (no uses in Septuagint).

Romans 14:4 Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord **is able** to make him stand.

2 Corinthians 9:8 And God **is able** to make all grace abound to you, so that always having all sufficiency in everything, you may have an abundance for every good deed;

2 Corinthians 13:3 since you are seeking for proof of the Christ who speaks in me, and who is not weak toward you, but **mighty** in you.

**Comment:** The power at work in believers is that of the same Spirit that raised Jesus from the dead. (Spirit filled life study Bible)

**ESV Study Bible** - like Christ, Paul will manifest the power of God in judging the Corinthians' behavior and beliefs (see 1 Cor. 5:12–13; 6:1–3).

**Bill Bright** - "The Christian life is more than difficult; it is humanly impossible to live. Only Jesus Christ can live it through you as He dwells within you (**Ed:** Specifically via the "Helper," the Holy Spirit, the Spirit of Christ). The Christian life is not a person trying to imitate Christ; rather, it is Christ imparting His life to and living His life through the person. The Christian life is not what you do for Him; it is what He does for and through you. He wants to think with your mind, express Himself through your emotions, and speak through your voice, though you may be unconscious of it."

**MacArthur** adds that "The Greek word (dunateo) translated "is able" is a form of **dunamis**, the source of the English word dynamite. Our God is powerful! (a) John 10:28-29--Jesus said, "Neither shall any man pluck them out of my hand. My Father, who gave them to me, is greater than all, and no man is able to pluck them out of my Father's hand." (b) Ro 8:35-39--Nothing can separate us from the love of Christ because those whom He predestined, He will bring to glory (Ro 8:29-31). (c) John 6:37--Jesus said, "All that the Father gives me shall come to me, and him that comes to me I will in no wise cast out." (d) Jude 24-25--Jude said, "Now unto him that is able to keep you from falling ... to the only wise God, our Savior." (e) 1Peter 1:5-6--Peter said that we "are kept by the power of God through faith unto salvation ready to be revealed in the last time. In this ye greatly rejoice." **We don't need to fear that our legalist brothers or those who live out their freedom in Christ will fall away.** ([Receiving One Another with Understanding. Part 2](#)) (Bolding added)

**Leon Morris** - In the last resort it is the power of God that matters. The Lord is able to make his servant stand, and he will. (See [The Epistle to the Romans](#)) This recalls the great closing words of the Epistle of Jude...

**Now to Him Who is able (dunamai) to keep you from stumbling, and to make you stand in the presence of His glory blameless with great joy,** to the only God our Savior, through Jesus Christ our Lord, [be] glory, majesty, dominion and authority, before all time and now and forever. Amen. (Jude 1:24-25-note)

**Denney** - It is his own Lord who is concerned—it is His interest which is involved and to Him (not to you) he must answer—as he stands or falls. But he shall be made to stand, i.e., shall be preserved in the integrity of his Christian character. For the Lord has power to keep him upright. Paul does not contemplate the strong man falling and being set up again by Christ; but in spite of the perils which liberty brings in its train—and the Apostle is as conscious of them as the most timid and scrupulous Christian could be—he is confident that Christian liberty, through the grace and power of Christ, will prove a triumphant moral success. ([Romans 14 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**Ray Stedman** - The thing Paul brings out (V4) is that the man under consideration is being changed. He is on his way to standing. He will stand, Paul says. Stand, of course, means that he will be straightened out if he is doing wrong in this area. If it is really wrong, God will straighten him out and it is not up to you to do it. This is why I enjoy so much that little pin that Bill Gothard gives out with the letters **PBPGINFWMY**, i.e., "**Please be patient, God is not finished with me yet.**" We are all in the process of change. The Lord is doing it, and he will do it. He is changing us, and if we will just wait a little while we can see some of the changes. Now, if the problem is one of not understanding truth, the solution is teaching the truth more plainly. As people hear it and understand it, they will be freed from this. To try to force them into some kind of compliance with something they yet do not understand is ridiculous and futile. Therefore, be patient. If they are being exposed to truth, they will change. Let the Lord change them; it is his responsibility. Not only will he do so, but he is perfectly able to do so. God is able to do it. I like Phillips' translation here. He says, "God is well able to transform men into servants who are satisfactory." That is exactly what Paul is relying on here. ([On Trying to Change Others](#)) (Bolding added)

**Wayne Barber**

Ro 14:4 "Who are you to judge the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and stand he will,

for the Lord is able to make him stand."

The word "judge" is *krino*, which means to separate or to discriminate, to form or give an opinion after considering the particulars of a case. Let me give you an example. I go overseas a lot, and a lot of the people there just don't understand grace. They are so tied to the law. They are tied to so many things. I walk in and see these precious, precious people and immediately the discernment comes. But you see, I can't take the next step and make a judgment. I am there to encourage and instruct. By the grace of God they will be able to come to the light of realizing that Jesus Christ determines their eternal security with Him and that nothing they do or don't do affects that. It may affect their fellowship, but not their eternal standing with God.

You see, it is immediate that we realize we are not somebody else's lord. He is Lord of both. Paul says, "to his own master he stands or falls." In other words, it is his master that is going to cause him to stand or determine whether he is going to fall. It is not our determination. Our determination is to love without hypocrisy. Our determination is to make sure that whatever we do builds up, encourages and instructs. We are never to take the place of lording over or judging that individual for his lack of understanding of grace.

Then Paul goes on in Ro 14:4 to say, "and stand he will, for the Lord is able to make him stand." The word "to stand" there means to be established and to confirm. Thank God for that. God will establish both men. He will establish the strong men. He will establish the weak men.

Thank God for that back when I did not understand grace. Folks, I didn't. And I tell you what, hiding behind the corner of great things that God is doing in your life is that temptation to be spiritually proud and to judge your brother because he hasn't done what you have done. There have been many, many times when God has led me to a fast that nobody knew about. Those times of fasting are those times of deep commitment. Somehow you think you are in a realm that nobody else is in, and you become spiritually proud and begin to judge others because they don't do as you do. I had that judgmental "I can tell you how to live if you will just ask me" attitude.

That is the biggest problem in the body of Christ today. People are spiritually proud of what they know and what they understand, so they take that and use their freedom under grace to become a stumbling block for somebody else. We have no right to do that. It says that He will be the one to establish them. I am so glad that God loved me when I was so arrogant. I went from ignorance to arrogance in about six weeks. When I was so arrogant, I had an answer for everything. Buddy, if you wanted to know how to live your life, just ask me and I would tell you. The word "lovingkindness" is one of my favorite words in scripture. God just loved me.

Finally through people and situations He began to bring me into an understanding of what grace really is. When you come to realize it that way, who are you going to throw a rock at? You used to be in the same boat. You see, this is what this love is all about. This is the thing that distinguishes us. Let's don't get proud of what we know or what we do or don't do. It is not that at all. My spirituality is not ever determined by what I do or don't do in the sense of that. It is in the sense of whether or not my relationships are totally wrapped up in such unconditional love that nobody can question that God is doing something in this person's life. That is the key. (**Romans 14:1-6**)

**Steven Cole** Conclusion - When I was in seminary, a classmate of mine told me after we had become acquainted that when he first met me, he questioned whether I was even a Christian. I asked him why he thought that. He replied, "Because you have a mustache and you mentioned that you had gone to some movies." (I would have had a beard, but the seminary wouldn't allow it!) He had grown up in an ultra-conservative church where being clean-shaven and not going to movies apparently were marks of the new birth! The truth is, I probably would have judged some of the ultra-conservative brothers for not being as free in Christ as I was.

**We're all prone to judge those who are different than we are. But we need to learn to accept one another and love one another in spite of our differences over minor matters where the Bible does not give specific commandments. Application**

**Questions:** (1) Why does Paul here command us not to judge others, but elsewhere (1Cor. 5:3, 12, 13) he rebukes the church for not judging a man? (2) How can we determine whether a matter is non-essential, so that we should let it go or one that requires correction? (3) When (if ever) is it okay to debate a non-essential matter? What guidelines apply? (4) What are some non-essential matters (besides those in the message) where we must accept and not judge those who differ from us? ([Getting Along in Spite of Our Differences Romans 14:1-4](#)) (Bolding added)

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**Judge** (2919) (*krino* and its cognates [see below] is a root of English words like critic, critical [*kritikos*] = a decisive point at which judgment is made) primarily signifies to distinguish, to decide between (in the sense of considering two or more things and reaching a decision), to make up one's mind, to separate, to discriminate. to distinguish between good and evil, right and wrong, without necessarily passing an adverse sentence, although that is often what is usually involved. As you will see from this study, *krino* has

various shades of meaning which must be determined from the context.

The basic meaning of **krino** is to form an opinion after separating and considering the particulars in the case. **Krino** means to evaluate and determine what is right, proper, and expedient for correction.

**Krínō** should be distinguished from a cognate verb **katakrino**, "to condemn," derived from **kata**, "down, against," and **krínō**, "to judge." In Romans 2:1 both verbs are used - "Therefore you are without excuse, every man [of you] who **passes judgment (krino)**, for in that you **judge (krino)** another, you **condemn (katakrino)** yourself; for you who **judge (krino)** practice the same things. The understanding of this verse lies in the proper rendering of what is translated "**another**" (*heteros*). It is **another** who is different than you are. If the only reason you judge another person is because he is different than you are, the basis of your judgment is faulty; and it is no surprise that you will condemn him, for who is better than self! Only God knows the extent of suffering there has been in this world because people have judged their fellowmen by the color or physical features specific to their race. "Undoubtedly much of the warring and rioting and bloodshed in the world today is due to just such judgment." (Zodhiates)

**Wuest** gives an excellent sense of the progression of meaning of this Greek word - The word **krino** meant originally to **separate**, then to **distinguish**, to pick out, to be of opinion, and finally, to **judge**. The act of judgment was therefore that of forming an accurate and honest opinion of someone, thus, appraising his character, and placing him in a certain position with respect to the law of God. The result of such a judgment is commonly **condemnation**. (Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament)

**HCSB Study Bible** - The Greek verb **krino** means to judge and always involves the process of thinking through a situation and coming to a conclusion. The term could be used in a narrowly judicial sense but it also has several nuances related to judging in a more general sense. In nonjudicial contexts, **krino** can mean to select, prefer, decide, consider. In the NT, **krino** most often refers to judging something or someone in general. However, **krino** does occur in specific judicial settings several times, and the court can be human (Mt 5:40; Jn 7:51; 18:31; Ac 23:3; 24:21; 25:9-10,20; 26:6; 1Co 6:1,6) or divine (Jn 5:22,30; 12:48; Ac 17:31; Ro 2:16; 3:4-7; 2Tim 4:1; 1Pe 4:5; Rev 20:12-13). In two passages, **krino** is used with the meaning to rule. Jesus said that the twelve apostles would judge the twelve tribes of Israel "in the Messianic Age" (Mt 19:28), and here **krino** likely means to rule, as the verse's reference to sitting on thrones would imply. Similarly, Paul's statement that the saints would judge the world and angels (1Co 6:2-3) probably means that believers will rule over them both in the future kingdom (cp. Rev 2:26-27). ([Holman Christian Study Bible-enter 1 Corinthians 6 - Click "Read" under Study Bible Notes](#))

**Krínō** means "to form a proper appreciation of anything by discriminating between two or more things," to divide or separate and thus, "to form a judgment." The idea is to sift out and analyze evidence.

The primary meaning of **krino** is "to judge in the sense of discerning something" or "to reach a decision about something." The decision in the case of **krino** can be either for or against someone. However, many times **krino** denotes a decision of condemnation in which the guilty party is handed over for punishment. It is used in this sense in Acts 13:27. Here Paul said that the Jewish leaders fulfilled the words of the Old Testament prophets in condemning Jesus.

When one judges (**krino**) in their own mind as to what is right, proper, expedient the idea is that they decide or determine. Another sense of **krino** is to form and express a judgment or opinion as to any person or thing, whether favorable or unfavorable (Jn 8:15). **Krino** means to hold a view or have an opinion with regard to something (Acts 15:19). Finally, **krino** means to judge in the classic judicial sense (decide a question of legal right or wrong, and thus determine the innocence or guilt of the accused and assign appropriate punishment or retribution) (Jn 18:31), some of these uses referring to eschatological (future) judgment by God (or Jesus -Jn 5:30, 2Ti 4:1, 1Pe 4:5, Rev 19:11) (Jn 5:22, 8:50, Acts 17:31, Ro 2:16, 3:6, etc). One of the most incredible passages (to me) is "Or do you not know that the saints will **judge** the world? And if the world is **judged** by you, are you not competent [to] [constitute] the smallest law courts?" (1Cor 6:2)

**Wayne Detzler** - The word translated "judgment" in the New Testament is *krisis*, and the verb, "to judge," is **krino**. This root is seen in many English words, including "crisis" (a decisive time when judgment must be made) and "critical" (a decisive point at which judgment is seen). The elementary meaning is to make a judgment. In early Greek the word was related to the supposed activities of the gods, who were guardians of rights and customs. They judged those actions which conflicted with their rights or customs. If people violated these basic rules of life, it was believed that the gods would punish (or judge) either the violaters or their children. When the word was taken up in the Septuagint Greek Old Testament it took on a Hebrew flavor. In the Old Testament it was Jehovah God who judged between right and wrong. The standard for judgment was His holy Law, handed down at Sinai. (New Testament Words in Today's Language)

**MacArthur** - In the New Testament, **krínō** (to judge) has numerous shades of meaning, ranging from the broad and usually positive sense of forming an opinion or of resolving an issue (As in Luke 7:43; Acts 4:19) to the immeasurably more serious and negative sense of condemning or damning (As in John 12:48; Acts 13:27; 2 Thess. 2:12). (2 Timothy. Chicago, Ill.: Moody Press)

**Green** - Like the English verb "**judge**," the Greek word **krínō** can mean "form an opinion" (Lk 7:43). But normally in the NT it

describes the passing of a sentence—either in a law-court (Mt 5:40) or metaphorically with reference to divine judgment (Mt 7:1–2; Jn 5:22, 30). Often the focus is on the negative aspect of condemnation (Mt 7:1; Jn 3:17–18). (Dictionary of Jesus and the Gospels. Downers Grove, Ill.: InterVarsity Press)

Broadly speaking, **krinō** can have either a legal, judicial sense or a casual sense of personal preference.

**BDAG** summarized - Primary meaning: 'to set apart so as to distinguish, separate', then by transference **(1)** to make a selection = to select, prefer (Ro 14:5) **(2)** to pass judgment upon (and thereby seek to influence) the lives and actions of other people (a) judge, pass judgment upon, express an opinion about Mt 7:1, 2; Lk 6:37; (b) Especially to pass an unfavorable judgment upon, criticize, find fault with, condemn (Ro 2:1, 14:3-4) **(3)** to make a judgment based on taking various factors into account = to judge, think, consider, look upon. (you do not consider yourselves worthy Acts 13:46; you considered their shortcomings as your own 1 Clement 2:6; to decide whether it is right to obey you rather than God Acts 4:19) **(4)** to come to a conclusion after a cognitive process = to reach a decision, decide, propose, intend (Acts 3:13, 20:16, 25:25, 1Cor 2:2, 5:3, Titus 3:12) **(5)** to engage in a judicial process = to judge, decide, hale before a court, condemn, also hand over for judicial punishment. ([A Greek-English Lexicon of the New Testament and Other Early Christian Literature](#))

**Krino** - Primarily "to judge," primarily signifies to separate, to select, to choose, to distinguish; then, to distinguish between right and wrong, without necessarily passing an adverse sentence, though this is usually involved. **Katakrimo**, a strengthened form of **krinō**; always denotes "to pass an adverse sentence". (Vine)

**Vine** - "The uses of this verb in the NT may be analyzed as follows: **(a)** to assume the office of a judge, Mt 7:1; Jn 3:17; **(b)** to undergo process of trial, John 3:18; 16:11; 18:31; James 2:12; **(c)** to give sentence, Acts 15:19; 16:4; 21:25; **(d)** to condemn, Jn 12:48; Acts 13:27; Ro 2:27; **(e)** to execute judgment upon, 2Th 2:12; Acts 7:7; **(f)** to be involved in a lawsuit, whether as plaintiff, Mt 5:40; 1Cor 6:1; or as defendant, Acts 23:6; **(g)** to administer affairs, to govern, Mt 19:28; cp. Jdg 3:10; **(h)** to form an opinion, Lk 7:43; Jn 7:24; Acts 4:19; Ro 14:5; **(i)** to make a resolve, Acts 3:13; 20:16; 1Cor 2:2" ([Judge - Vine's Expository Dictionary of NT Words](#))

**Liddell-Scott** (partially summarized) - To separate, put asunder, distinguish. To pick out, choose. to choose the best, passive - to be chosen out, distinguished, admit to a class, number in it (numbered among), esp. of admitting as a competitor in games. (2) decide disputes, judge crooked judgments, they decide the question, by what do you form this judgment? b. decide a contest, e.g. for a prize. (3) adjudge, the sum adjudged to be paid, etc, etc. (very long and detailed - if interested see original entry in L-S)

**Friberg - Krino** - from a basic meaning divide out or separate off; (1) as making a personal evaluation think of as better, prefer (Ro 14.5); (2) as forming a personal opinion evaluate, think, judge (Acts 13.46; (3) as reaching a personal or group decision resolve, determine, decide (Acts 16.4); (4) as passing a personal judgment on someone's actions judge, criticize (Mt 7.1); often in a negative sense condemn, find fault with (Jas 4.11); (5) as a legal technical term; (a) in a human court judge, condemn, hand over for punishment (Jn 7.51); passive be on trial, be judged (Acts 25.10); middle/passive go to law, sue (1Cor 6.6); (b) of God's judging judge, administer justice; with an obviously negative verdict condemn, punish (2Th 2.12); (6) Hebraistically, in a broader sense rule, govern (Lk 22.30) ([Analytical Lexicon of the Greek New Testament- Barbara Friberg and Neva F. Mille Timothy Friberg](#)).

**Goodspeed** - In the NT 'to judge' is always a translation of *krinein* or its compounds, although **krino** is frequently rendered by other words than 'judge.' The primary meaning of **krino** is to separate, put asunder. Through the derivative signification (*krino* can convey the sense of) to search into, to investigate. **Krino** came to mean to choose, prefer, determine, to decide moral questions or disputes after examination, to judge. In this last sense it is used of the authoritative decisions Christ will declare as to conduct and destiny at the general judgment of the last day. **When krino is not rendered by 'judge' in the NT, it always involves the kindred meaning of reaching a decision, or of action consequent upon a decision.** In a number of instances it means to determine to pursue the course decided upon as best. Paul had determined (*krino*) to sail past Ephesus (Acts 20:16); he determined not to know anything among the Corinthians save Jesus Christ and Him crucified (1Cor 2:2); not to come to them in sorrow (2Cor 2:1). The Jews denied Jesus before Pilate when he was determined (*κρίναντος*) to let Him go (Acts 3:13, See also Acts 24:21, Acts 25:25, 1Cor 7:37). In Mt 5:40 **krino** is rendered 'go to law' and other forms are rendered 'condemn' (Acts 13:27), 'called in question' (Acts 24:21), 'ordained' (Acts 16:4), 'esteemeth' (Ro 14:5). **1. Judging by men permitted and commended.**—The right to pass judgment upon both the actions of men and their characters as manifested in their conduct is implied in the power of rational and moral discrimination which all possess. Its exercise is also made imperative by the very nature of things. Men must form an opinion not only of the quality of deeds, but also of those who do them, if there is to be the prudent and wise action in our necessary relations to others, which shall be best for us and for them. Paul recognizes this power of moral judgment in even the heathen (Ro 2:14-16). To this, truth and right conduct may confidently appeal (2Cor 4:2). He commends those who exercise it upon all moral questions, and bold fast the good it approves, and abstain from the evil it condemns (1Th 5:21-22). It is to this moral judgment that all true teaching and preaching appeal. Our Lord assumes that all have the power to know the quality of outward deeds of men, and lays down the principle that the quality of the man corresponds with that of his deeds (Mt 7:15-19), and, therefore, that we can form a right

judgment of men, when the fruitage of their lives matures, however much they may seek to hide under false pretences. To this great principle of judging our Lord made frequent appeal in His controversies with the Pharisees. The Satanic conduct of these leaders proved them the children of the devil,—as having his nature (Jn 8:38-44),—while His own works made it plain He was from God (Jn 5:36; Jn 10:25 etc.). Even in Mt 7:1-5, in connection with our Lord's strongest condemnation of judging, it is implied (Mt 7:2; Mt 7:5) that men may judge others guilty of faults and help to cure them of the failings discovered, if they but be free enough from faults themselves to have the clearest discernment. He also censures the Jews (Lk 12:57) because they do not judge what is right as to the Messianic time of His preaching, as they do the signs of the sky, and are therefore in danger of arraignment and condemnation at the highest tribunal. **.2. The judging which is condemned (a) That prompted by a wrong spirit.** Of this kind is that forbidden by our Lord in Mt 7:1-4. It is prompted by a critical and censorious spirit. The man possessed by this disposition subjects others to searching scrutiny to find out faults. Where even the smallest defects are discovered, he becomes so absorbed in them that he is oblivious alike of his own greater faults and the greater virtues which may be associated with the minor faults of others. Those who are critical of others in order to find something to blame, instead of being critical of themselves in order to become fitted to help them, will but bring upon themselves from God as well as from men the condemnation they are so ready to mete out to others (see also Lk 6:37). **(b) Judging according to false or inadequate principles or standards.** In Jn 7:23-24; cf. Jn 5:8, our Lord condemns judging upon superficial principles—mere literal conformity to outward rules. Had the Jews seen the deeper intent of the Sabbath law, they would not have condemned Him for apparently breaking it by healing a man on that day. It was this superficial standard of judging—on literal and mere legal grounds rather than upon the deeper underlying principles—which constituted judging after the flesh rather than after the spirit. It is only the judging after the spirit that is righteous and to be commended (Jn 8:15). It is for this reason that the natural man receives not the things of the Spirit, but he that is spiritual judges (anakrino) all things (1Cor 2:14). The one has in his nature only that to which the mere outward and superficial appeals—the other has in him that in which the deepest inner principles of life and action find a response. The latter, through this sensitive response of his nature to the deepest truths, can give strict judgment as to their character. ([Judging by Men - Hastings' Dictionary of the New Testament](#))

**Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary** - The basic meanings of *krinō* include: (1) "To separate, to distinguish"; from that comes (2) "to pick, choose"; and (3) "to judge, to decide" (especially in legal contexts). Added meanings such as "to estimate, interpret," also fall under this third category. A fourth meaning for *krinō* is "to bring to trial" (and subsequently "condemn/ punish"). The term customarily has legal overtones, but not necessarily always. The legal sense of "to judge" is most significant in the New Testament... From the overall perspective of the Synoptic Gospels it appears that the writers integrated fully the Old Testament understanding of the Day of the Lord as well as later Jewish concepts. The concept that God would judge all men, prevalent in Pharisaic Judaism, emerges in such texts as M 7:2 (parallel Lk 6:37; cf. Lk 22:30; Mk 12:40). Judgment language may accompany the proclamation to repent (Mt 3:10) in light of the arrival of God's Messiah. Here the coming of salvation will concomitantly bring judgment. Unless one repents and responds to God's mercy he or she will be judged instead of saved (cf. Büchsel, *ibid.*, 3:936, who points out how many of the parables and debates assume a consequence of judgment). ([Complete Biblical Library - Greek-English Dictionary - Ralph W.; Gilbrant, Thoralf Harris](#))

**Ralph Earle** asks "What does the verb *krino* mean? In classical Greek it first meant "to separate, put asunder, to pick out, select, choose" (Thayer). Later it conveyed the sense: "to determine, resolve, decree," and then "to pronounce an opinion concerning right and wrong." In the passive (as here) it meant "to be judged," that is, "summoned to trial that one's case may be examined and judgment passed upon it." **Thayer** continues: "Where the context requires, used of condemnatory judgment, i.q. to condemn" (p. 361). **Abbott-Smith** notes that sometimes in the NT it is used as the equivalent of *katakrino*, which properly means "condemn." In fact, the simple verb *krillō* is translated "condemn" five times in the KJV. **Arndt and Gingrich** note that *krino* came to be used as a legal technical term meaning "judge, decide, hale before a court, condemn ... hand over for judicial punishment" (p. 452). They write: "Often the emphasis is unmistakably laid upon that which follows the Divine Judge's verdict, upon the condemnation or punishment." And so the verb comes to mean "condemn, punish" (p. 453). The doctrine of divine judgment is not a minor emphasis in the NT. In the article on *krinō* in TDNT, Büchsel says of the preaching of Jesus in the Synoptic Gospels: "Here the thought of judgment is central. Jesus' call to repentance is urgent because God's judgment hangs over every man" (3:936). He repudiates the modern "rationalistic criticism" which rejects the NT concept of judgment as mythical and unethical. Büchsel declares: "In face of this we must stress the fact that in the NT judgment is not capricious or emotional... It is an inwardly necessary consequence of the sin of man" (3:940). He concludes: "The concept of judgment can-not be taken out of the NT Gospel. It cannot even be removed from the centre to the periphery. Proclamation of the love of God always pre-supposes that all men are moving towards God's judgment and are hopelessly exposed to it" (3:941). Altogether there are a dozen words which are translated "judge" or "judgment" in the KJV NT. This opens up a whole field of study in preparation for preaching on the Judgment—a topic which is surely relevant today. ([Word Meanings in the New Testament](#))

**Stephen Renn** - *Krino* is the predominant New Testament term designating the judicial function of "judging." This verb occurs around ninety times, though not exclusively in formal judicial settings. *Krino* refers to the act of judging predicated of human beings, Christ, and God. As far as human beings are concerned, the contexts of judicial function involving the use of *krino* are varied. There are instructions not to judge unjustly or in hypocritical self-righteousness (cf. Mt 7: 1; Ro 2: 1, 3; 14:3ff.). Jn 18:31; Acts 4:19 allude to

the civil function of Jewish judges. Mt 7: 2 affirms the principle that our criteria in judging others will be applied in the same measure by God towards us. The valid right of church leaders to judge those within the church is spelled out in 1Co. 5: 3, 12. Mt 19:28; Lk 22:30 refer to the anticipated heavenly privilege of judging the twelve tribes of Israel, as well as angels (1Co. 6: 2ff.). Gentile judges are mentioned in 1Co. 6: 1, 6. In "non-judicial" contexts, krino refers to judging in the sense of passing an opinion or considering an issue (cf. Col. 2:16; 1Co. 10:29; Acts 13:46; 1Co. 10:15; 2Co. 5:14). It also expresses the idea of judging in the sense of one who exercises discernment, whether it be commendation (cf. Lk 7:43), or condemnation (cf. Lk 19:22; Ro 2:27; 2Th. 2:12). When speaking of Christ as the agent of judging, krino indicates in Jn 3:17; 12:47 that his mission lay not in "judging" (i.e., condemning) the world, but in rescuing it. Then, Jn 5:22, 30; 8:26 affirm that all divine judgment is given to the Son by God. 2Ti. 4: 1 declares that Christ's act of judgment will be consummated at his appearing. Jn 8:16; Rev. 19:11 declare that Christ's judgment is perfect. Krino also refers to God as the agent of judging. Such divine action is universal in its effect and includes his people as well as the nations (cf. Jn 8:50; Heb. 10:30; Acts 7: 7; 1Co. 5:13). The phenomenon of divine judgment at the end of time is highlighted with respect to "the evil ruler of this world" (Jn 16:11; Rev. 18: 8, 20) and to the world in general on the great day of judgment (Acts 17:31; Ro 3: 6; 1Pe. 4: 5; Heb. 13: 4; Rev. 11:18). God is also said to judge his people in the sense of chastising them, to avoid their ultimate condemnation (1Co. 11:32). Several texts also declare that God judges justly (cf. 1Pe. 2:23; Rev. 16: 5; 19:2). ([Expository Dictionary of Bible Words- Word Studies for Key English Bible Words Based on the Hebrew and Greek Texts; Coded to the Revised Strong's Numbers](#))

Discern (Luke 7:43)

Judge believers (1 Peter 1:17)

Determine (Ro 14:13)

To rule or govern over people or angels (Lk 22:30, 1Cor 6:2-3)

To try another (Acts 23:3) To be on trial (Acts 23:6, Acts 24:21, Acts 25:9, 10, 20, 26:6)

Consider (Acts 26:8)

Decide (Acts 27:1, Acts 16:4, Acts 20:16, 1Cor 7:37, Titus 3:12) Having decided in Acts 21:25 means having made a judgment or determination.

Decide referring to Pilate determining after reviewing the facts of the case to release Jesus (Acts 3:13)

Of future (eschatological) judgment (Luke 22:30, John 12:47, Acts 17:31, Ro 2:16, 3:6, 2 Thessalonians 2:12, 2 Timothy 4:1, 1Peter 4:5, Revelation 11:18, 20:12, 13)

Judgment by Jesus (John 5:22, 8:15, 2Ti 4:1, Rev 19:11)

To "regard" a day (eg, like the Sabbath day) better or worse (Ro 14:5)

Condemn ([Bible Dictionary](#)) (Acts 13:27, Ro 14:22)

Pass judgment or judge a person (Ro 2:1, 3, Ro 14:3, 4, 5, 10, 13, 1Cor 4:5)

Judged in the sense of consider (Acts 16:15)

Descriptive of Satan's future judgment (that judgment being so certain) (John 16:11)

Sue (go to law, go to court) (1 Corinthians 6:1, 6, Mt 5:40)

**Webster's** definitions of the various synonyms -

**Separate** = make a distinction between.

**Distinguish** = to perceive a difference in: mentally separate, To ascertain and indicate difference by some external mark. The farmer distinguishes his sheep by marking their ears. The manufacturer distinguishes pieces of cloth by some mark or impression. To separate one thing from another by some mark or quality; to know or ascertain difference.

**Decide** = to decide, in the sense of considering two or more things and reaching a decision; to come to a conclusion in the process of thinking and thus to be in a position to make a decision; to arrive at a solution that ends uncertainty or dispute about (decide what to do) b : to select as a course of action — used with an infinitive (decided to go); to determine, as a controversy, by verdict of a jury, or by a judgment of court. We say, the court or the jury decided the cause in favor of the plaintiff, or of the defendant. To end or determine,

as a dispute or quarrel.

**Determine** = Firmly decide. To resolve; to conclude; to come to a decision. to settle or decide (an argument, question, etc.) conclusively, as by referring to an authority. to ascertain or conclude, esp. after observation or consideration. to settle or decide by choice of alternatives or possibilities. to find out or come to a decision about by investigation, reasoning, or calculation

**Discriminate** - to mark or perceive the distinguishing or peculiar features of; to distinguish by discerning or exposing differences; especially : to distinguish from another like object. To distinguish; to observe the difference between; as, we may usually discriminate true from false modesty. To separate; to select from others; to make a distinction between; as, in the last judgment, the righteous will be discriminated from the wicked. To mark with notes of difference; to distinguish by some note or mark. We discriminate animals by names, as nature has discriminated them by different shapes and habits.

**Condemn** = to declare to be reprehensible, wrong, or evil usually after weighing evidence and without reservation. To determine or judge to be wrong, to judge as guilty. to pronounce judicial sentence on.

**Judge** = To compare facts or ideas, and perceive their agreement or disagreement, and thus to distinguish truth from falsehood. Judge not according to the appearance. John 7. 2. To form an opinion; to bring to issue the reasoning or deliberations of the mind. If I did not know the originals, I should not be able to judge, by the copies, which was Virgil and which Ovid. Dryden. 3. To hear and determine, as in causes on trial; to pass sentence. He was present on the bench, but could not judge in the case. The Lord judge between thee and me. Gen. 16. 4. To discern; to distinguish; to consider accurately for the purpose of forming an opinion or conclusion. Judge in yourselves; is it comely that a woman pray unto God uncovered? 1 Cor. 11.

[Click for a chart of the Greek Words for Judging \(scroll down the page\)](#)

**Note** the frequency of usage of **krino** (not counting cognate derivatives) in First Corinthians.

#### COGNATES OF KRINO:

- **akatakritos** (178) = uncondemned,
- **anakrino** (350) = to judicially investigate, examine;
- **anakrasis** (351) = a judicial examination;
- **apokrínomai** (611) = to respond;
- **autokatakritos** (843) = Self-condemned;
- **diakrino** (1252), to separate thoroughly, discriminate, make to differ, judge thoroughly;
- **diakrasis** (1253) = a distinguishing or discerning clearly;
- **dikaiokrisia** (1341) = a judgment which renders justice;
- **egkrínō** (1469), to class with, count along, approve;
- **eilikrineia** (1505) = purity, sincerity;
- **eilikrines** (1506), pure, sincere;
- **epikrínō** (1948), to give sentence;
- **katakrima** (2631) = decision against someone;
- **katakrino** (2632) =, to judge against, condemn;
- **katakrasis** (2633) = condemnation against someone;
- **krima** (2917), judicial decision;
- **krísis** (2920), judgment;
- **kritērion** (2922) = judgment the art of judging;
- **krites** (2923) = he who decides; a judge;
- **kritikos** (2924) = Able to discern or decide, critical;
- **prokrima** (4299) = decide beforehand, prefer before;
- **sugkrínō** (4793), to judge one thing comparing it with another, to interpret;
- **hupokrínomai** (5271), to speak or act under false identity.

**Krino** - 114x in 98v - Note that 86 uses are used in the sense of to **judge** - **Usage in NAS**: act as... judge(1), concluded(1), condemn(1), condemning(1), considered(1), decided(8), determine(1), determined(2), go to law(1), goes to law(1), **judge(42)**, **judged(25)**, **judges(10)**, **judging(5)**, **judgment(1)**, **pass judgment(1)**, **passes judgment(1)**, **passing judgment(1)**, pronounced(1), regards(2), stand trial(2), sue(1), trial(3), tried(1), try(1).

Matthew 5:40 "If anyone wants to **sue** you and take your shirt, let him have your coat also.

Matthew 7:1 "Do not **judge** so that you will not be **judged**. 2 "For in the way you **judge**, you will be **judged**; and by your standard of measure, it will be measured to you.

**MacArthur - Krino** (to judge) means basically to separate, choose, select, or determine, and has a dozen or more shades of meaning that must be decided from the context. In our present passage Jesus is referring to the judgment of motives, which no mere human being can know of another, and to judgment of external forms. Paul says, "Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this-not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way" (Ro 14:13). The Bible consistently forbids individual or vigilante justice that assumes for itself the prerogatives of a duly established court of law. It also consistently forbids hasty judgments that do not have full knowledge of the heart or of the facts. "He who gives an answer before he hears, it is folly and shame to him" (Pr 18:13). Sometimes what appears to be wrong is nothing of the sort. (Matthew. Chicago: Moody Press)

Matthew 19:28 And Jesus said to them, "Truly I say to you, that you who have followed Me, in the regeneration when the Son of Man will sit on His glorious throne, you also shall sit upon twelve thrones, **judging** the twelve tribes of Israel.

Luke 6:37 "Do not **judge**, and you **will** not be **judged**; and do not condemn, and you will not be condemned; pardon, and you will be pardoned.

**Comment:** The disciples are forbidden to usurp the place of God in judging and condemning other people. Jesus uses a present tense in Greek. He is telling the people not to be living on a daily basis in a judgmental mood, criticizing motives and actions without evidence. A judgmental attitude opens the door to be condemned, but one who has a pardoning spirit will find mercy and be pardoned.

Luke 7:43 Simon answered and said, "I suppose the one whom he forgave more." And He said to him, "You have **judged** correctly."

Luke 12:57 "And why do you not even on your own initiative **judge** what is right?

Luke 19:22 "He said to him, 'By your own words I will **judge** you, you worthless slave. Did you know that I am an exacting man, taking up what I did not lay down and reaping what I did not sow?

Luke 22:30 that you may eat and drink at My table in My kingdom, and you will sit on thrones **judging** the twelve tribes of Israel.

**Louw-Nida** - Though it would be possible to understand **krino** in Lk 22:30 as meaning 'to judge' (see 56:30), the function of the twelve disciples seems to be far greater than that. Furthermore, there seems to be a significant Semitic influence in the meaning of **krino**, since the corresponding Hebrew term likewise involved far more than merely making judicial decisions.

John 3:17 "For God did not send the Son into the world to **judge** the world, but that the world might be saved through Him. 18 "He who believes in Him is not **judged**; he who does not believe has been **judged** already, because he has not believed in the name of the only begotten Son of God.

John 5:22 "For not even the Father **judges** anyone, but He has given all judgment to the Son,

30 "I can do nothing on My own initiative. As I hear, I **judge**; and My judgment is just, because I do not seek My own will, but the will of Him who sent Me.

John 7:24 "Do not **judge** according to appearance, but **judge** with righteous judgment."

51 "Our Law does not **judge** a man unless it first hears from him and knows what he is doing, does it?"

John 8:15 "You **judge** according to the flesh; I am not **judging** anyone. 16 "But even if I do **judge**, My judgment is true; for I am not alone in it, but I and the Father who sent Me.

26 "I have many things to speak and to **judge** concerning you, but He who sent Me is true; and the things which I heard from Him, these I speak to the world."

50 "But I do not seek My glory; there is One who seeks and **judges**.

John 12:47 "If anyone hears My sayings and does not keep them, I do not **judge** him; for I did not come to **judge** the world, but to save the world. 48 "He who rejects Me and does not receive My sayings, has one who **judges** him; the word I spoke is what will **judge** him at the last day.

John 16:11 and concerning judgment, because the ruler of this world has been **judged**.

John 18:31 So Pilate said to them, "Take Him yourselves, and **judge** Him according to your law." The Jews said to him, "We are not permitted to put anyone to death,"

Acts 3:13 "The God of Abraham, Isaac and Jacob, the God of our fathers, has glorified His servant Jesus, the one whom you delivered and disowned in the presence of Pilate, when he had **decided** to release Him.

Acts 4:19 But Peter and John answered and said to them, "Whether it is right in the sight of God to give heed to you rather than to God, you be the **judge**;

Acts 7:7 "AND WHATEVER NATION TO WHICH THEY WILL BE IN BONDAGE I MYSELF WILL **JUDGE**,' said God, 'AND AFTER THAT THEY WILL COME OUT AND SERVE ME IN THIS PLACE.'

Acts 13:27 "For those who live in Jerusalem, and their rulers, recognizing neither Him nor the utterances of the prophets which are read every Sabbath, fulfilled these by **condemning** Him.

46 Paul and Barnabas spoke out boldly and said, "It was necessary that the word of God be spoken to you first; since you repudiate it and **judge** yourselves unworthy of eternal life, behold, we are turning to the Gentiles.

Acts 15:19 "Therefore it is my **judgment** that we do not trouble those who are turning to God from among the Gentiles,

Acts 16:4 Now while they were passing through the cities, they were delivering the decrees which had been **decided** upon by the apostles and elders who were in Jerusalem, for them to observe.

15 And when she and her household had been baptized, she urged us, saying, "If you have **judged** me to be faithful to the Lord, come into my house and stay." And she prevailed upon us.

Acts 17:31 because He has fixed a day in which He will **judge** the world in righteousness through a Man whom He has appointed, having furnished proof to all men by raising Him from the dead."

Acts 20:16 For Paul had **decided** to sail past Ephesus so that he would not have to spend time in Asia; for he was hurrying to be in Jerusalem, if possible, on the day of Pentecost.

Acts 21:25 "But concerning the Gentiles who have believed, we wrote, **having decided** that they should abstain from meat sacrificed to idols and from blood and from what is strangled and from fornication."

**NET Note:** **Having decided** refers here to the decision of the Jerusalem council (Acts 15:6–21). Mention of this previous decision reminds the reader that the issue here is somewhat different: It is not whether Gentiles must first become Jews before they can become Christians (as in Acts 15), but whether Jews who become Christians should retain their Jewish practices. Sensitivity to this issue would suggest that Jewish Christians and Gentile Christians might engage in different practices.

Acts 23:3 Then Paul said to him, "God is going to strike you, you whitewashed wall! Do you sit to **try** me according to the Law, and in violation of the Law order me to be struck?"

**NET Note:** In violation of the law. Paul was claiming that punishment was given before the examination was complete (m. Sanhedrin 3:6–8). Luke's noting of this detail shows how quickly the leadership moved to react against Paul.

Acts 23:6 But perceiving that one group were Sadducees and the other Pharisees, Paul began crying out in the Council, "Brethren, I am a Pharisee, a son of Pharisees; I **am on trial** for the hope and resurrection of the dead!"

Acts 24:21 other than for this one statement which I shouted out while standing among them, 'For the resurrection of the dead I **am on trial** before you today.'

Acts 25:9 But Festus, wishing to do the Jews a favor, answered Paul and said, "Are you willing to go up to Jerusalem and **stand trial** before me on these charges?" **10** But Paul said, "I am standing before Caesar's tribunal, where I ought to **be tried**. I have done no wrong to the Jews, as you also very well know.

**20** "Being at a loss how to investigate such matters, I asked whether he was willing to go to Jerusalem and there **stand trial** on these matters.

**25** "But I found that he had committed nothing worthy of death; and since he himself appealed to the Emperor, I **decided** to send him.

Acts 26:6 "And now I am **standing trial** for the hope of the promise made by God to our fathers;

8 "Why is it **considered** incredible among you people if God does raise the dead?

Acts 27:1 When it was **decided** that we would sail for Italy, they proceeded to deliver Paul and some other prisoners to a centurion of the Augustan cohort named Julius.

Romans 2:1 Therefore you have no excuse, everyone of you who **passes judgment**, for in that which you **judge** another, you condemn yourself; for you who **judge** practice the same things.

**Wuest** - The word (**krino**) here refers to censorious criticism and judgment. It refers to a derogatory appraisal of another's character, the forming of a judgment of his character.

3 But do you suppose this, O man, when you **pass judgment** on those who practice such things and do the same yourself, that you will escape the judgment of God?

12 For all who have sinned without the Law will also perish without the Law, and all who have sinned under the Law will be **judged** by the Law;

16 on the day when, according to my gospel, God **will judge** the secrets of men through Christ Jesus.

27 And he who is physically uncircumcised, if he keeps the Law, will he not **judge** you who though having the letter of the Law and circumcision are a transgressor of the Law?

**Vine** - **Krinō** here denotes "to pronounce sentence upon." Compare the teaching of the Lord about the men of Nineveh and the queen of the South (Matt. 12:41, 42), where, however, *katakrimo*, "to condemn," is used. Stress is thrown upon each word, "judge" and "thee." (Collected writings of W. E. Vine)

Romans 3:4 May it never be! Rather, let God be found true, though every man be found a liar, as it is written, "THAT YOU MAY BE JUSTIFIED IN YOUR WORDS, AND PREVAIL WHEN YOU ARE **JUDGED**."

6 May it never be! For otherwise, how will God **judge** the world?

7 But if through my lie the truth of God abounded to His glory, why am I also still being judged as a sinner?

Romans 14:3 The one who eats is not to regard with contempt the one who does not eat, and the one who does not eat is not to **judge** the one who eats, for God has accepted him. **4** Who are you to **judge** the servant of another? To his own master he stands or falls; and he will stand, for the Lord is able to make him stand. **5** One person **regards** one day above another, another **regards** every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind.

10 But you, why do you **judge** your brother? Or you again, why do you regard your brother with contempt? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God.

13 Therefore let us not **judge** one another anymore, but rather **determine** this-- not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way.

22 The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not **condemn** himself in what he approves.

1 Corinthians 2:2 For I **determined** to know nothing among you except Jesus Christ, and Him crucified.

1 Corinthians 4:5 Therefore do not go on **passing judgment** before the time, but wait until the Lord comes who will both bring to light the things hidden in the darkness and disclose the motives of men's hearts; and then each man's praise will come to him from God.

**Wayne Detzler** - Life is really a chain of decisions. We make big decisions such as those on career, marriage and place of residence. Of course, our commitment to Christ determines all other decisions. (Woe to the man or woman who wilfully puts things above God, and thus sells his soul!) It is this decision-making which flavours the words we are considering. The basic word *krinō*, 'judge', entails decision. In Acts 16:15 Lydia asks the apostles to decide whether or not she displays spiritual life. (This is a decision we all face in Christian work.) The Lord Jesus Christ uses this word. In John 5:30 he claims that his 'judgement is just'. He will pronounce unbiased and completely informed judgement on the human race. This is a comfort to the 'justified', but a terror to the unjust. Paul presents the human inability to judge in Romans 2:1: 'You, therefore, have no excuse, you who pass judgement on someone else, for at whatever point you judge the other, you are condemning yourself, because you who pass judgement do the same things.' What insight into human life is expressed in that sentence! People are always trying to cover up their own sins by the condemnation of others. The German poet and dramatist Johann Christoph Friedrich von Schiller (1759–1805) said, 'World history is world

judgement.' He thought all judgement took place within history, but he was wrong. God will judge evil in eternity, and this is the only comfort to downtrodden people. (Living Words in 1 Corinthians, Evangelical Press, 1983)

1 Corinthians 5:3 For I, on my part, though absent in body but present in spirit, have already **judged** him who has so committed this, as though I were present.

12 For what have I to do with **judging** outsiders? Do you not **judge** those who are within the church?

13 But those who are outside, God **judges**. REMOVE THE WICKED MAN FROM AMONG YOURSELVES.

1 Corinthians 6:1 Does any one of you, when he has a case against his neighbor, dare **to go to law** before the unrighteous and not before the saints?

**MacArthur** - When Jesus Christ returns to set up His millennial kingdom, believers from throughout all of history will be His coregents, sitting with Him on His throne (Rev. 3:21; cf. Dan. 7:22). Part of our responsibility as rulers with Christ will be to judge the world. The apostles will have special authority, ruling from "twelve thrones, judging the twelve tribes of Israel" (Matt. 19:28). But every believer will participate in some way. He "who overcomes, and he who keeps My deeds until the end, to Him I will give authority over the nations; and he shall rule them with a rod of iron, as the vessels of the potter are broken to pieces, as I also have received authority from My Father" (Rev. 2:26–27). If the saints will one day help rule the entire earth, they surely are able to rule themselves within the church now. That future rule will be based on perfect adherence to the Word of God and proper godly attitudes, which are available now. There will not then be any different principles of wisdom and justice than we have revealed to us in Scripture now. (1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press)

2 Or do you not know that the saints will **judge** the world? If the world is **judged** by you, are you not competent to constitute the smallest law courts?

3 Do you not know that we will **judge** angels? How much more matters of this life?

6 but brother **goes to law** with brother, and that before unbelievers?

**MacArthur** - The Greek (krinō) for judge can also mean "to rule or govern." That certainly would be the meaning if we are to have authority over the holy angels, for they will have no sin for which to be condemned. One cannot be dogmatic, but I am inclined to think that glorified believers will help judge the fallen angels and exercise some rule over the holy angels. If Christ was exalted above all the angels (Eph 1:20–23), if we are in Him and are like Him, and if we are to reign with Him, it must be that somehow we will share in His authority. Whatever the sphere and extent of that heavenly judgment or ruling, Paul's point here is the same: If we are to judge and rule over the world and over angels in the age to come, we are surely able, under the guidance of Scripture and the Holy Spirit, to settle any matters of disagreement among ourselves today. (1 Corinthians. Chicago: Moody Press)

1 Corinthians 7:37 But he who stands firm in his heart, being under no constraint, but has authority over his own will, and has **decided** this in his own heart, to keep his own virgin daughter, he will do well.

1 Corinthians 10:15 I speak as to wise men; you **judge** what I say.

29 I mean not your own conscience, but the other man's; for why is my freedom **judged** by another's conscience?

1 Corinthians 11:13 **Judge** for yourselves: is it proper for a woman to pray to God with her head uncovered?

31 But if we **judged** ourselves rightly, we would not be judged. 32 But when we are **judged**, we are disciplined by the Lord so that we will not be condemned along with the world.

2 Corinthians 2:1 But I determined this for my own sake, that I would not come to you in sorrow again.

2 Corinthians 5:14 For the love of Christ controls us, having concluded this, that one died for all, therefore all died;

Colossians 2:16 Therefore no one is to **act** as your **judge** in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day--

2 Thessalonians 2:12 in order that they all may be **judged** who did not believe the truth, but took pleasure in wickedness.

2 Timothy 4:1 I solemnly charge you in the presence of God and of Christ Jesus, who is **to judge** the living and

the dead, and by His appearing and His kingdom:

Titus 3:12 When I send Artemas or Tychicus to you, make every effort to come to me at Nicopolis, for I have **decided** to spend the winter there.

**Wuest** - "**Decided**" is **krinō**, "to separate, put asunder, pick out, select, choose, approve, prefer," thus, "to determine, resolve." It is in the perfect tense which speaks of an action completed in past time having present results. The use of this tense by Paul is indicative of a person who thinks a matter through and finally comes to a conclusion where he is so sure of himself that he is settled in his **determination** to follow a certain course of action. Paul thought the matter through carefully as to the advisability of spending the winter season in which travel by land was difficult, and by sea impossible, at Nicopolis, and came to the settled conclusion that that city was the best place at which he could stay. (Wuest's word studies from the Greek New Testament)

Hebrews 10:30 For we know Him who said, "VENGEANCE IS MINE, I WILL REPAY." And again, "THE LORD WILL **JUDGE** HIS PEOPLE."

Hebrews 13:4 Marriage is to be held in honor among all, and the marriage bed is to be undefiled; for fornicators and adulterers God will **judge**.

James 2:12 So speak and so act as those who are to be **judged** by the law of liberty.

James 4:11 Do not speak against one another, brethren. He who speaks against a brother or judges his brother, speaks against the law and **judges** the law; but if you **judge** the law, you are not a doer of the law but a judge of it. **12** There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, the One who is able to save and to destroy; but who are you who **judge** your neighbor?

James 5:9 Do not complain, brethren, against one another, so that you yourselves may not be **judged**; behold, the Judge is standing right at the door.

1 Peter 1:17 If you address as Father the One who impartially **judges** according to each one's work, conduct yourselves in fear during the time of your stay on earth;

1 Peter 2:23 and while being reviled, He did not revile in return; while suffering, He uttered no threats, but kept entrusting Himself to Him who **judges** righteously;

1 Peter 4:5 but they will give account to Him who is ready to **judge** the living and the dead. **6** For the gospel has for this purpose been preached even to those who are dead, that though they are **judged** in the flesh as men, they may live in the spirit according to the will of God.

Revelation 6:10 and they cried out with a loud voice, saying, "How long, O Lord, holy and true, will You refrain from **judging** and avenging our blood on those who dwell on the earth?"

Revelation 11:18 "And the nations were enraged, and Your wrath came, and the time came for the dead to be **judged**, and the time to reward Your bond-servants the prophets and the saints and those who fear Your name, the small and the great, and to destroy those who destroy the earth."

Revelation 16:5 And I heard the angel of the waters saying, "Righteous are You, who are and who were, O Holy One, because You **judged** these things;

Revelation 18:8 "For this reason in one day her plagues will come, pestilence and mourning and famine, and she will be burned up with fire; for the Lord God who judges her is strong.

**20** "Rejoice over her, O heaven, and you saints and apostles and prophets, because God has **pronounced judgment** for you against her."

Revelation 19:2 BECAUSE HIS JUDGMENTS ARE TRUE AND RIGHTEOUS; for He has **judged** the great harlot who was corrupting the earth with her immorality, and HE HAS AVENGED THE BLOOD OF HIS BOND-SERVANTS ON HER."

**11** And I saw heaven opened, and behold, a white horse, and He who sat on it is called Faithful and True, and in righteousness He **judges** and wages war.

Revelation 20:12 And I saw the dead, the great and the small, standing before the throne, and books were opened; and another book was opened, which is the book of life; and the dead **were judged** from the things which were written in the books, according to their deeds. **13** And the sea gave up the dead which were in it, and death and Hades gave up the dead which were in them; and they **were judged**, every one of them according to their deeds.

**Krino** - 173v in the non-apocryphal Septuagint - Gen 15:14; 16:5; 18:25; 19:9; 26:21; 30:6; 31:53; 49:16; Ex 5:21; 18:13, 22, 26; Lev 19:15; Num 35:24; Deut 1:16f; 16:18; 25:1; 32:36; Jdg 3:10, 30; 4:4; 10:2f; 11:27; 12:7ff, 11, 13f; 15:20; 16:31; 21:22; Ruth 1:1; 1 Sam 2:10; 4:18; 24:15; 25:39; 2 Sam 18:19, 31; 19:9; 1Kgs 3:9, 28; 7:7; 8:32; 2Kgs 15:5; 23:22; 1Chr 16:33; 2Chr 1:10f; 6:23; 19:6, 8; 20:12; 24:6, 22; 26:21; Ezra 4:9; 7:25; Job 7:18; 8:3; 9:3; 10:2; 13:19; 22:13; 23:13; 27:2; 31:13; 35:14; 36:31; 37:23; 40:4; Ps 2:10; 5:10; 7:8; 9:4, 8, 19; 10:18; 26:1; 35:24; 37:33; 43:1; 51:4; 54:1; 58:1, 11; 67:4; 72:2, 4; 75:1; 82:2f, 8; 94:2; 96:10, 13; 98:9; 109:7; 110:6; 119:154; 135:14; Prov 17:15; 22:23; 23:11; 28:25; 29:7, 9, 14; 30:12; 31:5, 8f; Eccl 3:17; 6:10; Isa 1:17, 23; 2:4; 5:3; 11:3f; 16:5; 19:20; 41:6; 43:26; 49:25; 50:8; 51:22; 66:16; Jer 2:9, 35; 5:28; 11:20; 21:12; 22:16; 25:31; 30:13; 50:34; 51:36; Lam 3:36, 59; Ezek 7:8, 14; 11:10f; 18:30; 20:36; 21:30; 22:2; 23:36; 24:14; 33:20; 34:22; 35:11; 36:19; 38:22; 44:24; Dan 2:6f; 3:10, 29; 4:8, 26; 9:12, 24; Hos 2:2; 13:10; Mic 3:11; 4:3; 6:1; Zech 7:9; 8:16.

Some of the uses of **Krino** in the OT

Gen 15:14 “But I will also judge the nation whom they will serve; and afterward they will come out with many possessions.

Gen 16:5 And Sarai said to Abram, “May the wrong done me be upon you. I gave my maid into your arms; but when she saw that she had conceived, I was despised in her sight. May the LORD judge between you and me.”

Gen 18:25 “Far be it from Thee to do such a thing, to slay the righteous with the wicked, so that the righteous and the wicked are [treated] alike. Far be it from Thee! Shall not the Judge of all the earth deal justly?”

Gen 19:9 But they said, “Stand aside.” Furthermore, they said, “This one came in as an alien, and already he is acting like a judge; now we will treat you worse than them.” So they pressed hard against Lot and came near to break the door.

Gen 26:21 Then they dug another well, and they quarreled over it too, so he named it Sitnah.

Gen 30:6 Then Rachel said, “God has vindicated me, and has indeed heard my voice and has given me a son.” Therefore she named him Dan.

Gen 31:53 “The God of Abraham and the God of Nahor, the God of their father, judge between us.” So Jacob swore by the fear of his father Isaac.

Gen 49:16 “Dan shall judge his people, As one of the tribes of Israel.

Psalms 7:8 The LORD judges the peoples; (Vindicate me, O LORD, according to my righteousness and my integrity that is in me.

**Complete Biblical Library Greek-English Dictionary** - The cognates of **krinō** are quite frequent in the Septuagint (cf. krima [2890], krisis). Krinō itself translates 13 Hebrew words or constructions. By far, the most dominant words rendered by krinō are **shāphat** (and other forms), **rîv**, and **dîn**. **Shāphat**, the most frequent of the three, ranges in definition from “to decide” (a dispute; e.g., Genesis 19:9; cf. Leviticus 19:15), to the idea of “to help” someone get justice (Isaiah 1:17), or “to rule, lead” (Judges 3:10; 10:2,3). **Rîv** especially denotes the litigation of a lawsuit (e.g., Ge 26:21) or the pleading of a legal case (1Sa24:15). **Dîn** means “to judge” and more. It denotes the carrying out of sentence and punishment (Genesis 15:14). The provision of justice through judgment (Ge 49:16; Ps 9:8) is also included. **It should not be overlooked that judgment and salvation are two sides of the same coin in Old Testament understanding** (particularly in terms of eschatology). Judgment is not simply the action of decision. Judgment, so typically portrayed by the prophets, means punishment of the ungodly. Therefore, on the Day of the Lord, God will administer both salvation and judgment; He is Saviour as well as Judge. One can escape judgment only because of His great mercy. It is never some “reward” for proper behavior. In every case it is God’s response to a relationship.

**Romans 14:5** One person regards one day above another, another \* regards every day alike. Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** os men (gar) krinei (3SPA1) hemeran par hemeran, os de krinei (3SPA1) pasan hemeran: hekastos en to idio noi plerophoreistho (3SPPM).

**Amplified:** One man esteems one day as better than another, while another man esteems all days alike [sacred]. Let everyone be fully convinced (satisfied) in his own mind. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Barclay:** One man rates one day beyond another; one regards all days alike. Let each man be fully convinced

in his own mind. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

**NLT:** In the same way, some think one day is more holy than another day, while others think every day is alike. Each person should have a personal conviction about this matter. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** Again, one man thinks some days of more importance than others. Another man considers them all alike. Let every one be definite in his own convictions. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** For, on the one hand, there is he who judges a day above another day. On the other hand, there is he who subjects every day to a scrutiny. Let each one in his own mind be fully assured. ([Eerdmans](#))

**Young's Literal:** One doth judge one day above another, and another doth judge every day alike; let each in his own mind be fully assured.

**ONE MAN REGARDS (judges) ONE DAY ABOVE ANOTHER ANOTHER REGARDS EVERY DAY ALIKE: Os men (gar) krinei (3SPAI) hemeran par hemeran os de krinei (3SPAI) pasan hemeran**

- Galatians 4:9,10; Colossians 2:16,17

## DISPUTE OVER DAYS

**Regards** (judges) **one day** - The verb is **krino** (elsewhere translated judge) and here means to judge something to be better than something else, to judge as superior, and hence, to prefer, to regard as more valuable.

**One day... days** - An example would be a believer who feels strongly as a matter of conscience that the Sabbath is **aday** to be kept holy. I know some believers who genuinely wrestle with this question (Sabbath) even today. However Paul does not specify the Sabbath which means some could be observing feast days or fast days, especially the believers of Jewish background. Paul's mention of days in this context is entirely different from his mention of days in Galatians and Colossians, for in both of those situations he denounces the keeping of days as essential to one's Christian walk (for that would be out and out legalism and would add works to faith). Thus Paul wrote...

You observe **days** and months and seasons and years. I fear for you, that perhaps I have labored over you in vain. (Gal 4:10-11)

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath **day**—things which are a [mere] shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (Col 2:16-17-note)

**Morris** comments - It seems that some regarded the keeping of sacred times as of the essence of the Christian way. Paul rejected all such views with decision. But where the centrality of justification by faith was clear and the observance of a certain day (or days) was no more than a practice some believer found helpful, it was another matter. (See [The Epistle to the Romans](#))

**John MacArthur** - Though it was no longer required by God, the weak Jewish believer felt compelled to observe the Sabbath and other special days associated with Judaism (cf. Gal. 4:9, 10+; see notes on Col. 2:16, 17+). On the other hand, the weak Gentile wanted to separate himself from the special days of festivities associated with his former paganism because of its immorality and idolatry. On the other hand, the weak Gentile might want to separate himself from the special days of festivities associated with his former paganism because of its immorality and idolatry. (BORROW [The MacArthur Study Bible PAGE 1720](#))

**Spurgeon** - Some kept the Jewish festivals and some did not.

Eric Liddell

**Read this example of a "weaker" brother who regarded one day above another** (and it helps one understand that a "weaker" brother is not necessarily one who is **not spiritually mature**): In 1924 [Eric Liddell, the "Flying Scotsman"](#) was the fastest man in world in 100 meters. For months Eric Liddell trained with the purpose of winning the 100-meter race at the 1924 Olympics in Paris & indeed most sportswriters predicted he would win. Then Eric learned the qualifying heats were scheduled for Sunday. This posed a problem: Eric believed that he could not honor God by running on the Lord's Day. He simply said "I'm not running on a Sunday" & even said "no" to Prince of Wales, all because he regarded "**one day above another**". Eric didn't make a big deal about it and shout his convictions from the rooftop so people would see how pious he was. Nevertheless his fans were stunned by his refusal. Some who had praised him now called him a fool. But Eric stood firm in his convictions and did not go against his conscience (Ro 14:6 "*he*

who observes the day, observes it for the Lord" & Ro 14:23 "he who doubts is condemned if he (runs on Sunday), because his (running) is not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin") . Many thought it was completely in character for Eric & a lot of the athletes were quietly impressed by it. They felt that here was a man who was prepared to stand for what he thought was right, without interfering with anyone else, and without being dogmatic. That's the power of integrity. His masseur gave him the following verse just prior to his world record race. (1Sa 2:30+ "those who honor Me I will honor")

As God's providence would have it a runner dropped out of the 400-meter race, scheduled on a weekday. Eric offered to fill the slot, even though this was four times as long as the race for which he had trained. When the 400 meters had concluded, not only did Eric win running away, but he did so in record time! What Eric did was was "*acceptable to God and approved by men*" (Ro 14:18). And God did honor him. And men did approve of him. However Instead of basking in the glory & potential fortune that might have been his as an Olympic gold medalist, he chose to finish his education at the U. of Edinburgh. Upon graduation he left Scotland for the missionary fields of China. As he left the train station in Edinburgh, all the faculty, students & town sang "[All Hail the Power of Jesus' Name](#)"

In China he was captured by the Japanese during WWII and imprisoned with 1800 others in an area no bigger than 100 x 200 yards. In this difficult environment this man of integrity, proved to be a daily source of a righteous life lived out, bringing peace and joy, preaching, singing and ministering to his fellow prisoners, many of whom were also missionaries. He died there in 1945, shortly after his 43rd birthday, and just prior to the liberation. Although most of his fellow prisoners did not know it, Eric had been suffering headaches from what proved to be a brain tumor that caused his death. And yet despite his personal torment, this godly saint persevered to the end, proving to be a source of comfort, continuing to manifest his radiant smile literally up to the very day before he died. His biographer, [Sally Magnusson](#), freely admitted the source of his spirituality: "He seemed to get his strength and self-discipline and his air of quiet serenity from his early-morning sessions of prayer, meditation, and Bible study... somewhere in this daily discipline of faith lay the secret of the man, perhaps the secret of how he ran." (BORROW [The Flying Scotsman by Sally Magnusson](#))

**Eric Liddell** presented a compelling model for how we should live, calling himself and others to an honest life and to self-sacrifice:

"Let us put ourselves before ourselves and look at ourselves. The bravest moment of a person's life is the moment when he looks at himself objectively without wincing, without complaining, [However] self-examination that does not result in action is dangerous. What am I going to do about what I see? The action called for is surrender -- of ourselves to God."

The strong brother was unaffected by regard for days (such as the Sabbath), for they were all a gift from God to him (See Jesus' assessment of the Sabbath - Mk 2:27). Nowhere are Christians told to keep the Sabbath or the Lord's Day (Sunday). And yet at the same time we recognize the principle of rest for one day in seven -- one day of rest after six days of work.

## **[Eric Liddell](#)**

### **[Running The Race](#)**

On April 6, 1923, in a small town hall in Armadale, Scotland, Eric Liddell spoke for the first time of his faith in Christ. Eighty people came to hear Scotland's famous runner give his testimony.

"Shyly, he stepped forward and for a few seconds surveyed his waiting audience, then he began," writes [Catherine Swift in her biography, Eric Liddell \(BORROW THIS BIOGRAPHY "GOD'S ATHLETE"\)](#).

"There was no lecturing, no fist thumping on the table, no wagging or pointing a finger to stress a point, no raised voice to impress on them what he thought they should be doing. In fact, it wasn't a speech at all. It was more of a quiet chat, and in his slow clear words, Eric for the first time in his life told the world what God meant to him.

"He spoke of the strength he felt within himself from the sure knowledge of God's love and support. Of how he never questioned anything that happened either to himself or to others. He didn't need explanations from God. He simply believed in Him and accepted whatever came."

News of Liddell's talk was reported in every newspaper in Scotland the next morning. God was preparing Liddell to honor Him, and his testimony still reverberates today.

#### **"The Lord Guides Me"**

Liddell was an unorthodox sprinter. Coming out of trowel-dug starting holes, Liddell ran with abandon, head tilted toward the skies, knees thrust upward to his chin, feet rising high from the ground. Before each race, Liddell shook hands with each competitor, offering his trowel to fellow runners who struggled to dig their

starting holes in cinder tracks with their cleats.

*"The Lord guides me."*

When asked how he knew where the finish line was located, he replied in his deliberate Scottish brogue, "The Lord guides me."

As word of his faith in Christ spread through England, many wondered if he would display the same zeal on the track. Liddell silenced any skeptics in the AAA Championships in London in July 1923, by winning the 220-yard dash and the 100-yard dash. His time in the 100 stood as England's best for thirty-five years.

He won the Harvey Cup for the best performance of the meet and readied himself for the Paris Olympics in the summer of 1924.

### **"I'm Not Running"**

Liddell waited excitedly for the posting of the Olympic heats for the 100 meters and the 4X100 and 4X400 relays, his best events. He was stunned upon learning the preliminary dashes were on Sunday. "I'm not running," he said flatly and then turned his attention to train for the 200-meter and 400-meter dashes.

He considered Sunday to be sacred, a day set apart for the Lord; and he would honor his convictions at the expense of fame.

On Sunday, July 6, Liddell preached in a Paris church as the guns sounded for the 100-meter heats. Three days later, he finished third in the 200-meter sprint, taking an unexpected bronze medal. He quietly made his way through the heats of the 400 meters but was not expected to win. Shaking hands with the other finalists, he readied for the race of his life.

Arms thrashing, head bobbing and tilted, legs dancing, Liddell ran to victory, five meters ahead of the silver medalist. "The Flying Scotsman" had a gold medal and a world record, 47.6 seconds. Most of all, Eric Liddell had kept his commitment to his convictions of faith.

### **"It's Complete Surrender"**

The next year, Liddell returned to China, where he had been born to missionary parents, as a teacher and missionary. In 1932, he was ordained as a minister and married in 1933.

He ministered pleasantly and plainly, often traveling on bicycle, braving constant fighting between Chinese warlords and Japanese in their growing conquest of China.

His decision to share Christ in isolated communities, forcing him to leave his wife and children behind, was the result of insistent prayer. "Complete surrender" was his description of this attitude.

In March of 1943, Liddell, along with other Americans and Brits, entered a Japanese internment camp. He was appointed math teacher and supervised a sports program. He arose each morning to study his Bible and was the cheer of the camp.

But his health deteriorated rapidly. A brain tumor ravaged his body with severe headaches. Shortly after his forty-third birthday in January 1945, Liddell collapsed. His last words, spoken to a camp nurse, were, "It's complete surrender."

Upon learning of Liddell's death, all of Scotland mourned. Heaven rejoiced.

### **Run The Race**

Eric Liddell ran, spoke, and lived with great faithfulness and solid commitment to Christ. The movie, *Chariots of Fire*, chronicled his faith, influencing yet another generation for Jesus Christ.

You do not have to be famous or skilled to make a difference for Christ. God asks only that you serve Him faithfully and wholeheartedly in whatever you do.

God has "appointed you, that you should go and bear fruit, and that your fruit should remain" (John 15:16).

Honor God in all you do, and He will honor your obedience with a life that counts for eternity. "Complete surrender" to Christ is total victory.

**LET EACH MAN BE FULLY CONVINCED IN HIS OWN MIND: hekastos en to idio noi plerophoreistho (3SPPM):**

- Ro 14:14,23; 1Corinthians 8:7,11
- Isaiah 40:29
- 1John 3:19, 20, 21

**THE QUALIFYING STATEMENT**

**Let each man be fully convinced** - Paul makes their choice of days a matter of each individual believer's conscience. Why do they (you) do what they (you) do? As **Leon Morris** says "To go along with what others do simply because they do it and without being convinced for oneself can be a dangerous practice. Specifically the weak brother can hurt his conscience by following the strong brother's practice without holding the strong brother's convictions." (See [The Epistle to the Romans](#)) Note also Paul's additional important "qualifying statement" in the next verse - whatever we determine in our conscience to do, we should do it **"for the Lord."**

**Warren Wiersbe** - To be "fully persuaded—or assured—in his own mind" (Ro 14:5) means: Let every man see to it that he is really doing what he does for the Lord's sake, and not merely on the basis of some prejudice or whim. Some standards and practices in our local churches are traditional but not necessarily scriptural. Some of us can remember when dedicated Christians opposed Christian radio "because Satan was the prince of the power of the air!" Some people even make Bible translations a test of orthodoxy. The church is divided and weakened because Christians will not allow Jesus Christ to be Lord." ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))

**Fully convinced** ([4135](#))(**plerophoreo** from **pleres** = full + **phero** = to bear or bring) means literally to carry fully and so to bring to fullness or to bring to a full measure. All of the meanings in the NT are figurative and can be divided into either (1) to fulfill, accomplish or achieve, carry out fully or (2) to be fully convinced, to be wholly certain or to be persuaded as in the present verse. The primary idea is, being filled with a thought or conviction.

Each person should have a personal conviction about this matter. Each Christian must follow the dictates of his own conscience in matters not specifically commanded or prohibited in Scripture. Since conscience is a God-given mechanism to warn, and responds to the highest standard of moral law in the mind (Ro 2:14, 15-notes), it is not sensible to train yourself to ignore it. Rather, respond to its compunctions and as you mature, by learning more, your mind will not alert it to those things which are not essential.

It should however be clear that such a principle applies only to matters that are morally neutral -- the externals but not the eternals. When it comes to fundamental eternal doctrines of the Christian faith, there is no room for individual opinions. But in the area where things are neither right nor wrong in themselves, and Scripture is silent, there is room for differing views. They should not be allowed to become tests of fellowship, which far too often is the case in practice. Paul then is saying in essence "I know you are sometimes going to choose differently from each other, but by all means be confident in what you choose. Be settled in your conviction & don't be flipping back and forth." There is a reverse truth implicit here also, which is: If the Lord convicts you that something is wrong in your life, you had better not do it, even if other Christians are doing it!

**Bengel on "in his own mind"** - "As a boat may pursue its course uninjured either in a narrow canal or in a spacious lake." [Romans 14 Commentary](#)

**Mind** ([3563](#))(**nous**) refers to human intellectual perception and moral judgment. It is the God given faculty of perceiving and understanding and is the channel through which truth reaches the heart. *Nous* describes everything in the realm of the intellect, including one's will, emotions, ability to think, reason and decide.

**John MacArthur** on one's "own mind" - Deferring to one's own conscience (**Ed: See study of suneidesis**) - Paul is saying to do whatever you think you ought to do. Why? Because the veneration of days is not a moral issue. The Sabbath has been set aside. Paul is not concerned with Sabbaths and feast days, but he is concerned that people not train themselves to violate their conscience. If conscience tells you to keep a certain day, then you ought to keep it. **If you train yourself to ignore your conscience, you will have problems because the Spirit of God leads subjectively through a person's conscience.** Paul does not want anyone to have a conscience seared with a hot iron (1Ti 4:2)--a scarred conscience insensitive to truth and the prodding of God's Spirit. Don't train your conscience to do wrong. If your conscience tells you to abide by certain preferential traditions and taboos, then do so if you believe it pleases the Lord. Don't let anyone tell you not to. In Garry Friesen's *Decision Making and the Will of God* (Portland: Multnomah, 1980), the main point is that everything God wants you to know about His will for you is in the Bible. That's true, but I believe he ignores some things that Scripture teaches about keeping a pure conscience so God's Spirit can subjectively lead you. ([Receiving One Another with Understanding, Part 2](#)) (Bolding added)

**G Campbell Morgan** writes the following note on this verse - This is a far-reaching word. Its application in Paul's argument was to such very disputable matters as the observing of days, and the eating of foods. It is really passing strange how these and similarly unimportant matters have been, and continue to be, reasons for much bitterness between the children of God. Two matters are contained in this instruction—first, that of a man's personal duty; and second, that of his attitude toward all other men. The first is explicit; the second is implicit. The personal duty is that a man be fully assured in his own mind. That means first, that he is to have an opinion. He has no right to be guided in these things by the opinions or habits of others. That way lies the paralysing of the powers of personality, and therefore weakness. It may be that coming to full assurance will demand time and thought, and in the process he may be helped by conferring with others; but at last he must find his own stand. This being so, it follows that he will recognize the right and obligation of every other man to the same process. Therefore no man can have any right whatever to impose

upon any other man his own convictions. All this is important and reasonable, because one man may be helped by the observance of a day, while another is not; one may find strength in abstinence from certain forms of food, and another weakness. (Morgan, G. C. Life Applications from Every Chapter of the Bible)

## Wayne Barber

Ro 14:5 Here he shifts from food to days. It is the same thing, isn't it? You had better get this straight in your theology. A lot of people who love God believe that you have to meet on a certain day. That is exactly what Paul was dealing with. Paul was dealing with the Jewish mind-set there. The Jews felt the Sabbath was the day to be revered and set aside. That is the last day of the week. Sunday is the first day of the week. Not only was the Sabbath a particular day but it also was in regard to other periods that were reserved. The word "Sabbath" doesn't just mean the Sabbath as we think about it. There were several Sabbaths they would honor. They would fight to keep this day very special.

The Apostle Paul was the greatest preacher of grace in the New Testament. I think he learned it certainly not from the apostles, but he learned it in that desert when the Holy Spirit of God took him for three years and taught him what grace was because as soon as he came out, he went immediately to Simon Peter and told him, "Man, you are not living under grace. You won't even eat with the Gentiles and other like that when the Jewish higher ups are around. You have got to get out from under that mind-set."

Paul knew and understood grace. He says in Colossians 2:16, 17

Therefore let no one act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day—things which are a mere shadow of what is to come; but the substance belongs to Christ. (Col 2:16, 17-note)

Here is Paul, who wrote that, telling them in Rome not to ever treat with scorn somebody who doesn't understand that, who still hangs on to a day. Others treat every day the same. You see, when you understand grace, you realize that the Sabbath is a shadow. The shadow means that it is a day of rest, but we don't have a day of rest. Every day is a day of rest for the believer when he rests himself in the Lord Jesus Christ. Christ is our rest. The reason we worship Him on Sunday is because that is the day He resurrected. The Psalmist said,

"This is the day the Lord has made. Let us rejoice and be glad in it." (Ps 118:24-note)

He referred in the context specifically to resurrection Sunday. That is why we do it. It is a day of beginnings, the newness of what God has done.

But what about a brother who loves Jesus just as much as you do but still sees the Sabbath as the day that he wants to worship God? Does that mean I become his lord or his judge? I pray that God may help me to instruct him. I pray that God may help him to find the understand where he is wrong, but I don't scorn him and look down on him and demean him because God will establish that brother. I am not his lord. Jesus is his Lord. God is the revealer of all truth.

You see, the mature believer understands that he is free on any day. Every day is the same as far as loving and praising and celebrating the Lord Jesus. But Paul drives his point home. It is why you do what you do that God is looking at. Look at what he says in Ro 14:5

Let each man be fully convinced in his own mind.

The word "**fully convinced**" is the word that means to be fully persuaded. It comes from two words, **pleres**, which means full and **phoreo**, which means to cover. So the two words together mean to cover fully to the point that you are motivated, you are fully persuaded.

There is no doubt whatsoever in his own mind. The word for "**mind**" is nous. There are different words for "**mind**," and this word has to do with one's understanding which leads him to deep convictions in his life. Let each man do whatever he is doing. Now there are some people on both sides who will do it for the wrong motive, and they are already out of the picture. That is not what he is talking about. But a person who is sincere and at that point in his life is doing it because he thinks this is what will please the Lord, then let him do it out of that motive. One sees it one way, and one may see it another way. But let them do it from their own conviction. It is the motive of the heart that God looks at.

Now, before I go any further, let me draw a line and say he is not referring to anything that is wrong doctrine or anything that is intentionally deceptive. He is talking about a person's walk with God and his sincerity and

purity of his heart. He may not understand grace because of the trappings of what he came out of, because of other people's influence in his life. He may have it all wrong, but if in his heart he really believes this is what God wants, you just leave him alone. Instruct him if you can, encourage him if you can, but don't demean him because God will bring him out of that. He will come to understand it. If it is not from your encouragement, if not from your instruction, if it is not somehow from you, your love will keep him intact and not become a stumbling block to him while God is able to bring him into an understanding and revelation of what he needs.  
(Romans 14:1-6)

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**Steven Cole introduces Romans 14:5-12** - Years ago, when ice cream was a bit cheaper than now, a 10-year-old boy approached the counter of a soda shop and asked the waitress, "What does an ice cream sundae cost?"

"Fifty cents," she answered.

The boy reached deep into his pockets and pulled out an assortment of change, counting it carefully as the waitress grew impatient. In her mind, she had "bigger" customers to wait on.

"Well, how much would just plain ice cream be?" the boy asked.

With noticeable irritation, the waitress answered, "Thirty-five cents."

Again the boy slowly counted his money. "Then may I have some plain ice cream in a dish, please?" He gave the waitress the correct amount and she brought him the ice cream.

Later, the waitress returned to clear the boy's dish and when she picked it up, she felt a lump in her throat. There on the counter the boy had left two nickels and five pennies. She realized that he had had enough money for the sundae, but sacrificed it so that he could leave her a tip (adapted from A Lifetime of Success [Revell], by Pat Williams).

That story shows that we often treat people wrongly because we judged them wrongly. We need to treat all people with respect and kindness, because we don't know all the facts. Especially, we don't know what's in their hearts. We don't know their motives.

As we saw last time, the apostle Paul was very concerned that the believers in Rome learned to accept and not judge one another. He spends more time on this in the application part of Romans than on any other subject. After mentioning the issue of eating or not eating meat, Paul brings up a second matter where believers in Rome wrongly were judging one another: observing certain days as holy (Ro 14:5). Then, mentioning both issues, Paul deals with the motives behind those who do or do not do these non-essential things. He assumes that they are doing or not doing them "for the Lord" (Ro 14:6). Then he explains that all believers are under the lordship of Jesus Christ (Ro 14:7-9). As Lord of all, He also will be the Judge of all, to whom each of us will give an account (Ro 14:10-12). Thus, we are wrong to judge our brothers and sisters.

So that we're clear, I repeat what I said last week, that Paul is not condemning all judgment. Rather, he is dealing with the subject of judging others on non-essential matters where the Bible gives no commands. Paul corrected the Corinthians because they did not judge a sinning man in the church (1 Cor. 5). And Paul was not tolerant of the damnable doctrinal error of the Judaizers (Gal. 1:6-9; see, also, Ro 16:17-18).

So on moral issues where the Bible gives clear commands or on essential doctrinal truth, we would be wrong not to judge others. But there are many other secondary areas where we must be gracious and tolerant with those who differ with us. We are not to judge them or treat them with contempt. In our text, Paul is saying,

Since Jesus is Lord and we all will give an account to Him, we must not judge other believers on non-essential matters where the Bible gives no commands.

There are non-essential matters where the Bible gives no specific commands.

Paul brings up (Ro 14:5) the matter of one person regarding one day above another, whereas another regards every day alike. Then he adds, "Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind." Paul never would have said such a thing if he had been talking about the clear moral commands or essential doctrines of Scripture. Can you imagine him saying, "One person thinks that to have sexual relations outside of marriage is a sin, whereas others don't have a problem with that; each person must be fully convinced in his own mind"? Or do you think he would have said, "Some say that we are justified by grace through faith alone, whereas others say that we must add our good works; each person must be fully convinced in his own mind"? Hardly!

Rather, Paul is dealing here with non-essential matters where the Bible does not give specific commands or clear teaching. These matters may have an effect on how you live your Christian life. Paul calls those who abstain from eating foods "weak in faith" (Ro 14:1) and he would put those who observe certain days as holy in the same camp. Obviously, weaker believers need to grow

stronger in their understanding and practice. But these non-essential areas do not affect one's salvation. Both the weaker and the stronger believers have been accepted by God (Ro 14:3) on the basis of faith in Christ. Both are servants of the Lord (Ro 14:4). And both are seeking to please the Lord (Ro 14:6). But they hold to different views on these secondary matters.

There are some pastors and commentators whom I greatly respect, but with whom I differ on their understanding of Ro 14:5. They argue that Paul was referring to some of the Jewish festivals, but that he could not possibly have been referring to keeping Sunday holy as the Christian Sabbath because that is a part of God's moral law, the Ten Commandments. Since God's moral law is never abrogated, Paul could not have been referring here (or in Gal. 4:10 or Col. 2:16) to observing Sunday as the Christian Sabbath. They also argue that the Sabbath was a creation ordinance, stemming from God's resting on the seventh day. Thus it applies to us today.

But I find these arguments unconvincing for several reasons. First, regarding the Sabbath being a creation ordinance, there is no commandment or example of anyone before Moses' time keeping the seventh day holy to the Lord. God commanded Abraham regarding circumcision, but He never mentioned keeping the Sabbath. Although it is mentioned in Exodus 16 (before the Ten Commandments, Exod. 20:8-11), the Sabbath was unique to Israel as God's covenant people.

With regard to the Ten Commandments being God's moral law, the Jews would have viewed all of the commandments in the Mosaic Law as being morally binding. They would not have divided the law into moral, civil, and ceremonial categories, as many scholars do (I formerly did so, also). For the Jew, the law was a whole. To reject any of it would have been unthinkable. Also, commands that we might label as "moral" are often mixed together with other laws that we might view as "ceremonial" (e.g., Lev. 18:19 & Ezek. 18:6 in context). But the Old Testament does not label any laws according to various categories. So if we're under the "moral law," then we're under the entire law. You can't break it up into pieces.

But Paul is clear that we are not under the Mosaic Law as a system of relating to God (Rom. 6:14; 7:1-6; 2 Cor. 3:6-18; Gal. 2:19; 3:10; cf. also, Heb. 8:6-13). If the Sabbath commandment were still in effect, it is incredible that in writing to Gentile believers, who did not understand the Mosaic law, Paul would say (Col. 2:16), "No one is to act as your judge in regard to food or drink or in respect to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath day." Surely he would have put in an explanatory note, so that the Gentile Christians would not be confused. And if the Sabbath law was still binding, how could Paul have said what he says in Romans 14:5 without some note of clarification? In light of the strong emphasis on the Sabbath in the Old Testament, why is there not a single command in the New Testament to Gentile churches to observe Sunday as the Christian Sabbath?

Also, I have observed that when Christians emphasize keeping Sunday as the Christian Sabbath, they easily fall into the same kind of legalism that plagued the Jews with regard to the Sabbath. By Jesus' time, the Jews had devised all sorts of ridiculous rules about what you could and could not do on the Sabbath. Jesus often deliberately violated their rules to show them their errors and to teach that He is the Lord of the Sabbath (Mark 2:27). I have read well-meaning books that argue that Christians should observe Sunday as the Sabbath, but invariably they get into lists of what is permissible on Sundays: To think or talk about anything other than spiritual subjects is to violate the Sabbath. To stop by the store for a gallon of milk on your way home from church is to violate the Sabbath. Pretty soon, we rival the Pharisees!

Having said that, I must point out that the Lord Jesus appeared to the disciples on the first Sunday when He arose and on the following Sunday. The early Christians met on the first day of the week (Sunday; Acts 20:7; 1 Cor. 16:2), arguably to testify to Christ's resurrection. The apostle John refers to "the Lord's day" (Rev. 1:10), which everyone acknowledges to be Sunday. The author of Hebrews (10:25) exhorts us not to forsake assembling together, as is the habit of some.

Thus there is the principle that we should regularly gather on Sunday, the Lord's day, for worship, teaching, the Lord's Supper, fellowship, and prayer (Acts 2:42). It's also profitable to use the Lord's day to seek and serve Him in ways that the other busy six days of the week do not allow. Set aside your normal work and chores and spend more time in the Word, in prayer, and in reading good Christian books. Visit shut-ins, have other believers over for a meal and fellowship. Do things to refresh your soul with the Lord. (For more on this, see my sermon, "God's Day of Rest," from Gen. 2:1-3, on the church web site.)

But Paul allows for a measure of freedom on this matter. The key thing, he says (Ro 14:5), is, "Each person must be fully convinced in his own mind." This means that you shouldn't just do what you do by habit or because everyone else does it. Rather, take the time and effort to study the Scriptures and to think it through biblically. Do what you do because you believe that it glorifies God, it's not sinful, and you're applying biblical principles to this non-essential issue as best as you can.

It's important that you not violate your conscience, because to do so is not to act in faith, which is sin (Ro 14:22-23). As you grow in your knowledge of the Word, your conscience becomes more informed. You will see that keeping or not keeping certain days is not the issue; rather glorifying God in all that you do is the issue (1Cor. 10:31). But on these non-essential matters, don't judge your brother; judge yourself. Obey God as you understand His Word, seeking Him for more understanding. ([Why We Should Not Judge Others Romans 14:5-12](#))

Romans 14:6 He who **observes** the **day**, **observes** it for the **Lord**, and he who **eats**, **does so** for the **Lord**, for he **gives thanks to God**; and he who **eats** not, for the **Lord** he does not **eat**, and **gives thanks to God**. (NASB: Lockman)

**Greek:** o phronon (PAPMSN) ten hemeran kurio phronei (3SPA1): kai o esthion (PAPMSN) kurio esthiei (3SPA1) eucharistei (3SPA1) gar to theo: kai o me esthion (PAPMSN) kurio ouk esthiei (3SPA1) kai eucharistei (3SPA1) to theo

**Amplified:** He who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. He also who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; while he who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. ([Amplified Bible - Lockman](#))

**Barclay:** The man who observes a particular day observes it to the Lord. The man who eats, eats to the Lord, for he says his grace. The man who does not eat, does not eat to the Lord, for he too says his grace to God. ([Daily Study Bible](#))

**NLT:** Those who have a special day for worshiping the Lord are trying to honor him. Those who eat all kinds of food do so to honor the Lord, since they give thanks to God before eating. And those who won't eat everything also want to please the Lord and give thanks to God. ([NLT - Tyndale House](#))

**Phillips:** If a man specially observes one particular day, he does so "to God". The man who eats, eats "to God", for he thanks God for the food. The man who fasts also does it "to God", for he thanks God for the benefits of fasting. ([Phillips: Touchstone](#))

**Wuest:** The one who has formed a judgment regarding the day, with reference to the Lord he judges it. And the one who eats, with reference to the Lord he eats, for he gives thanks to God. ([Eerdmans](#))

**Young's Literal:** He who is regarding the day, to the Lord he doth regard it, and he who is not regarding the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He who is eating, to the Lord he doth eat, for he doth give thanks to God; and he who is not eating, to the Lord he doth not eat, and doth give thanks to God.

**HE WHO OBSERVES THE DAY, OBSERVES IT FOR THE LORD: o phronon (PAPMSN) ten hemeran kurio phronei (3SPA1)**

- Galatians 4:10

## WHATEVER WE DO, IT'S TO BE... FOR THE LORD!

**Observes** (5426)(**phroneo** from **phren** = literally the diaphragm and thus that which curbs or restrains. Figuratively, **phren** is the supposed seat of all mental and emotional activity) refers to the basic orientation, bent, and thought patterns of the mind, rather than to the mind or intellect itself (that is the Greek word **nous**). **Phroneo** includes a person's affections and will as well as his reasoning. In other words **phroneo** refers not simply to intellectual activity but also to direction and purpose of heart. In the present context the idea is the individual sets his mind on a certain day and/or is intent on observing a particular day. And notice why he does it -- not for "show" but "for the Lord." His desire and his motive is to honor His Lord.

**For the Lord** - Do not miss Paul's emphasis in this passage! Three times he says it is to be "for the Lord!" (Repeated in Ro 14:8, cp same idea in Col 3:23, 24-not) Ultimately, there should be no difference in motivation between the two groups (strong and weak. Those who have a special day for worshiping the Lord are trying to honor him. Do everything you do for the honor of Christ We should all conduct ourselves in this area of "non-essentials" as we are led by our conscience, but always with the qualifier that we might please our Master, the Lord Jesus. In a similar thought, Paul gave us similar principle that should be our guide in this area of externals writing to the saints at Corinth "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God." (1Cor 10:31) In debatable matters where Scripture is silent, we do well to apply a simple test and ask "Am I doing this for Jesus? Will it give God glory?" Simple but sobering questions!

Those who have a special day for worshiping the Lord are trying to honor him. Do everything you do for the honor of Christ and a heart full of thanksgiving to Him (Col 3:23, 24-note). Note Paul's repeated emphasis on "**for the Lord**" (4x in Ro 14:4, 5, 6, 7, 8) in this area of why one does or does not do a "non-essential". Paul gave us similar principle that should be our guide in this area of externals in (1Cor 10:31) = "Whether, then, you eat or drink or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God."

**Lord** (2962) (**kurios** is found 10 times Romans 14 and 38x altogether in [Romans](#)) in classical Greek, was used of gods, and the

inscriptions applied to different gods (Hermes, Zeus, etc.) or also of the head of the family, who is lord of wife and children. In the present context **kurios** describes the One Who has absolute ownership and unrivaled power.

No Christian has the right to "play God" in another Christian's life. We can pray, advise, and even admonish, but we cannot take the place of God. What is it that makes a dish of food "holy" or a day "holy"? It is the fact that we relate it to the Lord. The person who treats a special day as "holy" does so "unto the Lord." The person who treats every day as sacred, does so "unto the Lord." The Christian who eats meat gives thanks to the Lord, and the Christian who abstains from meat abstains "unto the Lord."

**Kenneth Wuest** - The man's judgment of a certain day is with reference to the Lord. That is, his measure of what that day stands for and his appropriate conduct in it is conditioned by his estimation of the Lord Jesus and what is fitting with reference to Him. Thus, a Christian's viewpoint regarding and estimation of any certain thing is controlled or conditioned by the measure in which he knows the Lord Jesus. ([Eerdmans Publishing](#) - used by permission)

**James Denney** - The indifference of the questions at issue, from the religious point of view, is shown by the fact that both parties, by the line of action they choose, have the same end in view—viz., the interest of the Lord. cf. Colossians 3:2. The setting of the mind upon the day implies of course some distinction between it and others. ([Romans 14 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**J Ligon Duncan** on Ro 14:5-9 - Paul here calls us to mutual forbearance in the body of Christ because we do what we do for the Lord and we belong to the Lord. Paul wants us to remember that our relating is controlled by this particular truth: **That we do everything that we do for the Lord. We do it as unto the Lord.** We belong to the Lord and because we live for God and because we belong to Him. His children are not to stand over one another in judgment, in spiritual scruples, because we live for God. And because we belong to Him, we are not to stand over one another in these matter of spiritual scruples. ([A Warning Against Judging Brothers](#))

**Charles Hodge** - That is, both parties are actuated by religious motives in what they do; they regulate their conduct by a regard to the will of God, and therefore, although some, from weakness or ignorance, may err as to the rule of duty, they are not to be despised or cast out as evil. The strong should not condemn the scrupulous, nor the scrupulous be censorious towards the strong. This is a fourth argument in favor of the mutual forbearance enjoined in the first verse. ([Romans 14 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

**William Barclay** has an interesting comment - Paul would have added something else to that--no man should make his own practice the universal standard for all other people. This, in fact, is one of the curses of the Church. Men are so apt to think that their way of worship is the only way. T. R. Glover somewhere quotes a Cambridge saying: "Whatsoever thy hand findeth to do, do it with thy might--but remember that someone thinks differently." We would do well to remember that, in a great many matters, it is a duty to have our own convictions, but it is an equal duty to allow others to have theirs without regarding them as sinners and outcasts. ([Romans 14 - William Barclay's Daily Study Bible](#))

**AND HE WHO EATS, DOES SO FOR THE LORD FOR HE GIVES THANKS TO GOD: kai o esthion (PAPMSN) kurio esthie (3SPA) eucharistei (3SPA) gar to theo:**

- Isaiah 58:5; Zechariah 7:5,6

When people eat all kinds of foods, they honor the Lord as they eat, since they give thanks to God. The evidence that both the "weak" and the "strong" have right hearts is that they both give "thanks" to God. That is, both do what they do with the intention of serving the Lord. The food eaten is not specified although the **NIV** is probably correct in paraphrasing it "He who eats **meat**, eats to the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who abstains, does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God."

**Charles Hodge** on **he who eats does so for the Lord** - That is, he who disregards the Mosaic distinction between clean and unclean meats, and uses indiscriminately the common articles of food, acts religiously in so doing, as is evident from his giving God thanks. He could not deliberately thank God for what he supposed God had forbidden him to use. In like manner, he that abstains from certain meats, does it religiously, for he also giveth thanks to God; which implies that he regards himself as acting agreeably to the divine will. The Lord is he who died and rose again, that he might be Lord both of the living and the dead. It is to him the believer is responsible, as to the Lord of his inner life. ([Romans 14 - Hodge's Commentary on Romans](#))

**Giving thanks (2168)**(**eucharisteo** from **eucháristos** = thankful, grateful, well-pleasing - Indicates the obligation of being thankful to someone for a favor done <> in turn from **eú** = well + **charízomai** = to grant, give.; English - Eucharist) means to show that one is under obligation by being thankful. To show oneself as grateful (most often to God in the NT). Thanksgiving expresses what ought never to be absent from any of our devotions. We should always be ready to express our grateful acknowledgement of God's

provision whether it be material things like food or spiritual things like mercy and forgiveness, etc.

**Leon Morris** - In other words, both (**Ed**: Weak and strong brethren) "say grace" over their meal, whatever it is. Both equally have a religious attitude, and neither is simply conforming to worldly practice or social custom. Paul is not referring to religious indifferentism or to ritualism. He is referring to genuinely held religious conviction, and action that springs from that conviction. (See [The Epistle to the Romans](#))

**James Denney** - Thanksgiving to God consecrates every meal, whether it be the ascetic one of him who abstains from wine and flesh, or the more generous one of him who uses both: cf. Acts 27:35, 1Corinthians 10:30, 1Timothy 4:3-5. The thanksgiving shows that in either case the Christian is acting for the glory of God (1 Corinthians 10:31), and therefore that the Lord's interest is safe. ([Romans 14 - The Expositor's Greek Testament](#))

**John Stott** - Whether one is an eater or an abstainer, the same two principles apply. If we are able to receive something from God with thanksgiving, as his gift to us, then we can offer it back, as our service to him. The two movements, from him to us and from us to him, belong together and are vital aspects of our Christian discipleship. Both are valuable and practical tests. 'Can I thank God for this? Can I do this unto the Lord?' (BORROW [Romans- God's Good News for the World -Bible Speaks Today page 362](#))

In Exodus Moses instructed Israel regarding the **feast of unleavened bread** - 'Now this day will be a memorial to you, and you shall celebrate it as a feast to the LORD; throughout your generations you are to celebrate it as a permanent ordinance. (Exodus 12:14)

And similarly in regard to the **Passover** that "It is a night to be observed for the LORD for having brought them out from the land of Egypt; this night is for the LORD, to be observed by all the sons of Israel throughout their generations. (Exodus 12:42)

And in regard to the **Sabbath** "And Moses said, "Eat it today, for today is a sabbath to the LORD; today you will not find it in the field." (Ex 16:25)

**Ray Stedman** - God sees both of these men and both of these viewpoints as honoring him. The one who thinks Sunday is a special day that ought to be kept different from all other days is doing so as unto the Lord, therefore honor that, respect that viewpoint. The one who says, "No. When we are in Christ, days do not mean anything. They are not set aside for any special purpose. Therefore, I feel every day is alike, and I want to honor the Lord on every day." Okay, do not feel upset at that. He is doing so out of a deep conviction of his heart. The one who drinks beer gives thanks to God for the refreshment of it and the taste of it, and it is perfectly proper that he does so. The one who says, "No. I cannot drink beer. I only drink coffee," gives thanks for the coffee. The coffee may do as much physical harm as the beer, but, in either case, it is not a moral question. It is a question of what the heart is doing in the eyes of God. Sometimes we are too harsh with one another in these areas. ([On Trying to Change Others - Romans 14:1-12](#))

**Warren Wiersbe** - An interesting illustration of this truth is given in John 21:15–25. Jesus had restored Peter to his place as an apostle, and once again He told him, "Follow Me." Peter began to follow Christ, but then he heard someone walking behind him. It was the Apostle John. Then Peter asked Jesus, "Lord, what shall this man do?" Notice the Lord's reply: "What is that to thee? Follow thou Me!" In other words, "Peter, you make sure you have made Me Lord of your life. Let Me worry about John." Whenever I hear believers condemning other Christians because of something they disagree with, something that is not essential or forbidden in the Word, I feel like saying, "**What is that to thee? Follow Christ! Let Him be the Lord!**" ([Bible Exposition Commentary](#))(Bolding added)

**AND HE WHO EATS NOT, FOR THE LORD HE DOES NOT EAT, AND GIVES THANKS TO GOD: kai o me esthion (PAPMSN) kurio ouk esthie (3SPAI) kai eucharistei (3SPAI) to theo:**

- Matthew 14:19; 15:36; John 6:28; 1Corinthians 10:30,31; 1Timothy 4:3, 4, 5

Vegetarians also honor the Lord when they eat, and they, too, give thanks to God. To count every moment absolutely devoted to God, and therefore holy in the highest sense, is the very essence of the new life in Christ

**J Vernon McGee** quips that "It is not what is **on the table**, but what is **in the heart** that is noted by God. It is the heart attitude that conditions Christian conduct." (See [Thru the Bible Vol. 43: The Epistles Romans 9-16](#))

Paul's indisputable point here is: people with opposing viewpoints on non-essentials can both be perfectly right with God. We need to take this to heart.

Two of the most famous Christians in the Victorian Era in England were Charles Spurgeon and Joseph Parker, both mighty preachers of the gospel. Early in their ministries they fellowshiped and even exchanged pulpits. Then they had a disagreement, and the reports got into the newspapers. Spurgeon accused Parker of being unspiritual because he attended the theater.

Interestingly enough, Spurgeon smoked cigars, a practice many believers would condemn. In fact, on one occasion someone asked Spurgeon about his cigars, and he said he did not smoke to excess. When asked what he meant by excess, he waggishly answered, "No more than two at a time."

Who was right? Perhaps neither, perhaps both! Better yet would be to realize that the two could disagree and both be in the will of God. (see another anecdotal story about Spurgeon under the note for Ro14:22).

**Wayne Barber** - Ro 14:6 - I want you to know the greater responsibility to celebrate Christ moment-by-moment, day-by-day, falls upon the more mature believer. The context is clear. Those of us who may understand grace and have come further along than others in our own congregation and in our own city have the greatest responsibility in this. Listen to what some great mature believers have said over the years. **Ignatius**, who was martyred for the faith in 115 A.D., said, "Those who were concerned with old things have come to newness of confidence, no longer keeping Sabbaths but living according to the Lord's Day on whom our life as risen again through Him depends." **Justin Martyr**, who was martyred about 168 A.D., said, "How can we keep the Sabbath who rest from sin all the days of the week." Yet, even with that maturity, Paul says that we are not to use our freedom under grace to become a stumbling block to a weaker brother. In **1 Corinthians 8** Paul says, "But take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols? For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died. And thus, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. (1Cor 8:9, 10, 11, 12) You know, this gets into several very, very complicated areas, doesn't it? You know there are balancing principles. Whatever you do, you do not cause your brother to stumble. I have people coming to me all the time and say, "Do you think it is alright in scripture to drink wine?" I think sometimes people listen to me say something, but they don't hear it. They just can't wait for an opportunity to ask me that question after it is over with. "Is there a verse in scripture that says you can't drink wine?" No, there really isn't. It just says don't get drunk with it. But there is another principle in Romans 14, and I want to tell you something straight out, friend. If you are using your freedom under grace to cause a brother to stumble, you had better get that stuff out of your house because you are sinning against God. I say that on the authority of Romans 14. That is not an opinion coming from this preacher. Don't we live in a day of the weaker and stronger brother? I am telling you, they are on every corner. And what God is saying is, "Don't you dare use your freedom under grace to become a stumbling block to someone else." (Romans 14:1-6)

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**Steven Cole** - In these non-essential matters, your motive is crucial: Do what you do for the Lord.

Romans 14:6: "He who observes the day, observes it for the Lord, and he who eats, does so for the Lord, for he gives thanks to God; and he who eats not, for the Lord he does not eat, and gives thanks to God."

The recurring phrases here are, "for the Lord" and "gives thanks to God." As believers, we belong to the Lord and we live for the Lord. Our aim is always to please Him. If you observe a special day as holy, such as Christmas or Easter (neither of which are commanded in the Bible), you should do it as unto the Lord. If you don't feel compelled to observe special days, you still should live every day as unto the Lord. The same applies to feasting or fasting: you should do it as unto the Lord with a thankful heart. It's your motive that matters. Unlike the pagans, who do not honor God or give Him thanks (Rom. 1:21), believers live for God's glory with thankful hearts.

When Paul says (Ro 14:7-8), "For not one of us lives for himself, and not one dies for himself; for if we live, we live for the Lord, or if we die, we die for the Lord; therefore whether we live or die, we are the Lord's," he means that all of life, including dying, is to be lived with a God-ward focus. When you get saved, Jesus becomes your Lord. You recognize that He is the sovereign over your circumstances. Nothing happens to you apart from His kind and loving will. Nothing, whether "tribulation, or distress, or persecution, or famine, or nakedness, or peril, or sword," can separate us from the love of Christ (Rom. 8:35). So, rather than living to please ourselves, as we did before we met Christ, now we live every day for Him (2 Cor. 5:9, 15). Since He has all of our days numbered (Ps. 139:16), when it comes time to die, we die for Him.

By the way, this means that suicide is never right. God is the sovereign over life and death. As believers, we should want to glorify Him in our dying as much as we have glorified Him by our lives. The Puritans used to talk about "dying well." They did not have modern medications to dull their pain, but they wanted to glorify God in their suffering and with their dying breath.

To come back to the principle of our motives in these non-essential matters, here's how it applies. You ask, "Can I go to a movie that contains profanity, sexual immorality, or violence?" The answer is, "Can you go to that movie 'for the Lord'? Will going there help your relationship with Him? Will it glorify Him?" You ask, "What kind of music should I listen to?" "Which TV programs and how much TV should I watch?" "How should I spend Sundays?" "Which Bible-believing church should I join?" "How should I spend my free time?" Apply this principle to any non-essential matter where the Bible does not give a direct command: Can I do it for the Lord and His glory? Your motive is crucial. ([Why We Should Not Judge Others Romans 14:5-12](#))