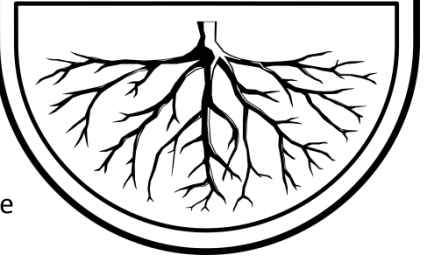




LIFE GROUP QUESTIONS

ROMANS 14:1-6

LIFE GROUPS



ICE BREAKER: How are you different from others in your generation?

1. Read Romans 14:1-6. What was your biggest takeaway from Sunday's sermon?
2. What are examples of closed-hand doctrines that are non-negotiable? Where are these doctrines seen in Scripture?
3. What are some open-hand doctrines that can easily lead to division? Why?
4. How could two Christians have different convictions and both be right?
5. What are potential temptations for those who are weak in the faith? What are potential temptations for those who are strong in the faith?
6. In what ways could diversity lead to division? In what ways can it be a witness the world?
7. What are some reasons why Christians don't want to share their personal convictions?
8. Read 1 Corinthians 1:10 & Ephesians 4:3. How can you personally protect the unity of the church?



CONTEXT AND CLARIFICATION

Question #2 In our New Members Class we discuss all of the closed-hand doctrines. I have included a link in the Life Group Leader email with the Southern Baptist Convention's Basic Beliefs. You can find them online and familiarize yourself with them.

Question #3 Some open-hand doctrines that can lead to division are only using one kind of Bible translation, how the church functions and practices the gifts of the Spirit, the style of worship music or how church members should dress. The example given in the sermon is whether a parent should chose home-school, private school or public school for their children. When it comes to dancing and the consumption of alcohol, we should refrain from preaching or teaching convictions rather than what God's word says. Paul touches the topic of alcohol later in Romans 14 (also addresses it in 1 Corinthians and 1 Timothy) and this may be a difficult topic in your Life Group. REMEMBER: Paul writes that these types of disagreements should never lead to division. Be sure to remind your group of that truth.

Question #4 Many black-and-white thinkers approach every decision they make as either right or wrong. Yet there are gray areas. God gives many commands in Scripture of what to do and what not to do, yet there are some decisions Christians need to make based off of the convictions the Lord has given to them individually. Can they do these things with a clear conscience? Remember that these are only referring to disputable matters.

Question #5 Someone who is weak in faith may fall into pride because they abstain in addition to becoming legalistic. Someone who is strong in faith may live a life that leads to excess and begin to devalue others and their opinions.



FURTHER STUDY

Psalm 133 (NIV)

¹ How good and pleasant it is when God's people live together in unity! ² It is like precious oil poured on the head, running down on the beard, running down on Aaron's beard, down on the collar of his robe. ³ It is as if the dew of Hermon were falling on Mount Zion. For there the LORD bestows his blessing, even life forevermore.

Ephesians 4:11-13 (NIV)

¹¹ So Christ himself gave the apostles, the prophets, the evangelists, the pastors and teachers, ¹² to equip his people for works of service, so that the body of Christ may be built up ¹³ until we all reach unity in the faith and in the knowledge of the Son of God and become mature, attaining to the whole measure of the fullness of Christ.

Colossians 3:13-14 (NIV)

¹³ Bear with each other and forgive one another if any of you has a grievance against someone. Forgive as the Lord forgave you. ¹⁴ And over all these virtues put on love, which binds them all together in perfect unity.

John 17:23 (NIV)

²³ I in them and you in me—so that they may be brought to complete unity. Then the world will know that you sent me and have loved them even as you have loved me.



1 Peter 3:8 (NIV)

⁸ Finally, all of you, be like-minded, be sympathetic, love one another, be compassionate and humble.

Ephesians 4:3 (NIV)

³ Make every effort to keep the unity of the Spirit through the bond of peace.

1 Corinthians 1:10 (NIV)

¹⁰ I appeal to you, brothers and sisters, in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ, that all of you agree with one another in what you say and that there be no divisions among you, but that you be perfectly united in mind and thought.

Romans 12:16 (NIV)

¹⁶ Live in harmony with one another. Do not be proud, but be willing to associate with people of low position. Do not be conceited.

1 Corinthians 10:23-33 New International Version (NIV)

²³ "I have the right to do anything," you say—but not everything is beneficial. "I have the right to do anything"—but not everything is constructive. ²⁴ No one should seek their own good, but the good of others. ²⁵ Eat anything sold in the meat market without raising questions of conscience, ²⁶ for, "The earth is the Lord's, and everything in it." ²⁷ If an unbeliever invites you to a meal and you want to go, eat whatever is put before you without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then do not eat it, both for the sake of the one who told you and for the sake of conscience. ²⁹ I am referring to the other person's conscience, not yours. For why is my freedom being judged by another's conscience? ³⁰ If I take part in the meal with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of something I thank God for? ³¹ So whether you eat or drink or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God. ³² Do not cause anyone to stumble, whether Jews, Greeks or the church of God— ³³ even as I try to please everyone in every way. For I am not seeking my own good but the good of many, so that they may be saved.

"A matter of conscience is a practice about which God has not specifically spoken in His word. He has not clearly forbidden it nor clearly commanded it. So it is possible to move to one of two wrong 'extremes' when it comes to 'disputable matters.' We must guard against thinking almost every area is a disputable matter of conscience, *and* against the view that hardly any area is a disputable matter of conscience." —**Timothy Keller**

