



The Deep End wk8: Free Swim

Introduction: There is an inherent tension between freedom and responsibility. As Jesus followers, we are free from having to perform-from having to earn our standing with God. At the same time, we have a responsibility in our conduct to one another. The church works best when we honor each other in freedom, but sometimes that's easier said than done.

Discussion Questions

1. Can you think of a silly argument that you've had but at the time you were adamant about your side of the argument? Why do we sometimes care more about being right than potential damage to a relationship?
2. Read **Romans 14:1-4** What is something that might be a disputable matter? Can you always tell the difference between something that is disputable and something that is false teaching? What can you do when it's unclear?
3. Read **Romans 14:12-13** What is he talking about when he says we will give an account to God? He says instead of judging a brother, we should resolve not to be a stumbling block (paraphrased). Where have you seen unhelpful judgments between Christians? What was the effect of that judgment?
4. In Romans 14 and 15, Paul talks a lot about those with weak or strong faith. In the examples he gives, he describes those who see less restrictions as having stronger faith and those who embrace more restrictive practices as having weaker faith. What are the instructions to each? What do you think of those characterizations?
5. Read **Romans 14:22** What does it mean to not "condemn himself by what he approves?" There is also some instruction about keeping some things to ourselves. What is the point he is making?
6. Romans 16 lists 26 names. 21 we don't see anywhere else in scripture; 9 are women. What, if anything, can we glean from a list of individuals and some descriptions of their hard work?

Shaping Your Mind – *Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand. Romans 14:4*

Moving Forward – Live in both freedom and responsibility