

Romans 14:1-21

Judging and Convincing

Romans 14:13- *“Then let us no more pass judgment on one another, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother”*

When I made the decision to surrender my life to Jesus for his safekeeping, I turned away from the Catholic Church, which is the rich heritage of my family. I left the Church because I needed to be certain in my own mind that my salvation rested on faith in Christ alone, not because of my membership in the Catholic Church.

I was young- not yet 21 years old- when I made this decision. Unfortunately, because of my youth, I became a critic of the Catholic Church and tried to convince my friends and family that they needed to turn away from the Catholic Church and simply accept Jesus as their Lord and savior.

It is true that the only way to God is through his son, Jesus Christ (John 14:6). However, my way of trying to convince and persuade people ended up counterproductive in some cases. As I reflect back on this passage from Romans, I am reminded that it is not my job to convince anyone of anything. My job is to simply speak the truth in love and let the Holy Spirit do whatever convincing is needed. Our obedience in living out day-to-day decisions and our examples of right and loving behavior, do far more to show people Jesus than trying to win a spiritual argument.

We do have the responsibility to name the name of Jesus and to proclaim him before the world, but it’s all in how we proclaim the name. Those highly visible Christians who are always judging others, and appearing to be always “against” something rather than for showing the love of Jesus to the world, are infecting the world with a weak form of Christianity, so that when the “real thing” comes along, they are inoculated against accepting it. This is an analogy that Mike Slaughter used years ago, and I believe that it is so very true!

Prayer: Father, help us to know when we are judging and not loving, and forgive us of trying to do the work of the Holy Spirit in our own strength. Amen.