

Romans

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Romans 14: 7-12



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Vss. 7-9

- “For not one of us lives for himself...” This is Paul’s way of agreeing with John Donne that “No man is an island”. We deceive ourselves on at least two levels if we ever try to convince ourselves that we are free and independent beings, that we are dependent on no one and that we need no one. First, we need other people whether we care to admit it or not. We need the farmer who grows our food, the trucker who delivers it first to the packer and then to the store, and then the people at the store to make it available. We need the repairman, the power company people, and all the rest who make life bearable. Second, we cannot escape Christ. He knew us before we were born (Psalm 139:13; Jeremiah 1:5). He knows daily lives and orders our every single step (Psalm 37:23; Proverbs 16:9). And God and God alone knows our future. Jeremiah 29:11 says, “‘For I know the plans I have for you’, declares the Lord, ‘plans for welfare and not for calamity, to give you a future and a hope’”. Other scriptures pointing to God knowing our future include Isaiah 46:10; 1 Samuel 23:10-13; Isaiah 45:21-22; Romans 8:29, 11:2; and 1 Peter 1:2, 20.

- It has been said that we can no more escape Christ than we can escape our shadow on a sunny day. Even in death we cannot escape Him. “Whether we live or die, we are the Lord’s.” Death is not escape from Christ, but the door to Him. Sinner or saint, atheist or disciple, we will all stand before Him one day on the other side of death. So to attempt to live isolated for ourselves is pointless and immediately fails and to attempt to die alone is the same. It is God who has created us and we can escape Him neither in life or death.

Vss. 10-12

- The ultimate reason why the idea of not judging others runs throughout Scripture is that we are to be judged ourselves. Beyond the blindness to the log in our own eye as we complain about the speck in our brother’s eye and beyond the divisiveness that judging others brings when we lack the love of Christ in our hearts, there is a cold hard Truth that in the end we will all be judged by the only One who holds a legitimate position **to** judge! Here Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23, where God and God alone is to whom **every** knee will bow.

- Perhaps Paul has an image in his mind of the open courts of the Romans. Out in public, usually near the town’s forum where all the business of the community is practiced, there would sit the judgement seat. Here the Praetor Urbanus would sit and one by one, a person would be stood up before the him, standing

there alone, listening to the accusations against them, and then speaking alone to defend themselves. But Paul knew that this was not to be the scene as we stand before God. Yes, each of us will stand before God. It will not matter what family or nation we come from. Our accomplishments, medals, trophies, or laurels will make no difference. Naked we came into the world and naked we will stand before God. But we who know Christ as Savior will not stand alone. Job understood that, "Even now, behold, my witness is in heaven, and my advocate is on high..." (Job 16:19). 1 John 2:1 tells us, "My little children, I am writing these things to you so that you may not sin. And if anyone sins, we have an Advocate with the Father, Jesus Christ, the righteous...". When Christ tells us that He is with us **always** He truly means always and forever, even beyond death and the grave. He is there to stand with us before the judgement seat and declare that we are innocent of all charges, that our sin and guilt are wiped away. So that just as we came into the world naked and stand before God the same way, so too did we come into the world innocent and now because of Christ we stand before God the same way there too.