*Northwest Bible Church – June 5, 2005                Worship Service – Alan Conner***Rom. 14:1***“Judge Not!”*

**INTRO**
    Chs. 1-11 Doctrine: justification and vindication
    Chs. 12-15 Duty: practical application and exhortation
    Ch. 12 – consecration, relationships to other Christians

 Ch. 13 - Relationship with civil authorities; love; our time is limited in this world.
     Ch. 14:1 – 15:13 explain how believers should relate to each other in the church                     in light of certain controversial issues.

**I. WHO ARE THE “WEAK” AND THE “STRONG”?**
    A. Issues involved.

        1) Food (14:2).

        2) Days (14:5).

        3) Wine (14:17, 21).

        Two dangers in the church, two extremes: legalism and license.

    B. “Weak in the faith” (14:1).

        1) Meaning.

        2) Attitude toward the “strong.”

    C. “Strong” (15:1).

        1) Meaning.

        2) Attitude toward the “weak in the faith.”

    D. Paul sides with the strong in principle but condemns their attitude (14:14-15, 20; 15:1).

    E. Identifying the weak and the strong. The best solution is that the weak were mainly Jewish Christians (possibly some Gentile proselytes), and the strong were mainly Gentile Christians (with some Jews like Paul).

        1) Differences over the Jewish ceremonial law.

        2) Judgmental spirit is the main culprit.

**II. PAUL’S SOLUTION.**
    A. There must be an attitude adjustment:
            1) each be convinced in his own mind (v. 5, 22-23).
            2) don’t judge the servant of another (4). More attitude latitude.

    B. The strife between the Gentile and Jewish Christians was a violation of the gospel of Christ.

            They are both children of Abraham (Rom. 4:11).
            They are united in Christ (Rom. 3:29; 9:24; 10:12; 11:17: Gal. 3:28).

            We are NOT TO JUDGE each other.

    C. When is judging appropriate?

        We are to judge one another when there is sin in the camp.
        But Paul does not have sin in mind here. There are many GRAY AREAS, areas of Christian liberty wherein genuine believers will differ.

**III. WHY DO WE NEED TO UNDERSTAND THESE PRINCIPLES?**
    A. Combat a judgmental spirit Lk. 9:49-54 (sectarian spirit).

    B. Combat unnecessary division within the body

    C. Promote love and acceptance

    Application: this issue is very much applicable to us today.