

# Discovery Group - Community Foundations

## (2) Freedom & Love in God's Family

### **A**ccountability

Share how your obedience commitment from last week went, and who you shared with.

### **B**ible: Romans 14:1-23

Read *passage* aloud & someone retell in their own words

- What do we learn from this passage about God?
- What do we learn from this passage about people?

Read the *article* on the next page.

- What do we learn from the passage about freedom & love in God's family?
- How does the statement, "none of us lives for ourselves alone..." (v 7) summarize this entire passage?
- How can we live by our convictions before God while not causing another to stumble?

### **C**ommit

What is Jesus calling you to do in *obedience* this week?

Who can you *share* this with? Who can you reach out to in order to make disciples?

*Abide*: Read and meditate on the following passages this week:

Galatians 5:1-26

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

## Freedom & Love in God's Family

This passage deals with the very practical matter of what some might call gray areas in our faith. Actually, what this passage *really* addresses is how we love one another in the family of the Father. There are some behaviors that are clearly condemned in scripture, and there are some that are directly commanded. However, believers in every culture will encounter what Paul refers to as 'disputable matters.' For the Romans, disputable matters included whether or not to eat meat and whether or not one day is more sacred than another. The tricky thing, of course, was not discovering who was right. *The point is to determine how to love one another well.*

Believers are called upon to develop lifestyle convictions within the parameters of God's Word and to live by them. Mature believers are those who experience more freedom. They eat meat with a clear conscience. However, the key idea is that "none of us lives for ourselves alone..." (v 7). A few observations regarding 'disputable matters' may be helpful. Keep in mind that this discussion is for activities for which there are no clear biblical instructions. When the Bible is clear on an issue, the only response is unconditional obedience.

- (1) Greater faith leads to more freedom.
- (2) Loving one another is a higher priority than being right.
- (3) Those with less freedom are not to judge those who exercise more freedom. Nor are the ones with more freedom to treat with contempt those who experience less freedom.
- (4) It is possible for an activity to be completely fine for one believer but a sin for another. The difference is faith. "One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables... If anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean" (v 2, 14).
- (5) It is possible for one to cause his brother to stumble as he exercises a freedom in an area in which his brother is not free. This is a sin against family.
- (6) It is better for a more free brother to deny himself rather than to do something that would distress a fellow believer. Love is the key.
- (7) The goal is maturity, which will be manifest in greater freedom. A person who is weak can grow and begin to experience greater freedom.