

1) Accept rather than argue with weaker brethren who differ with you on minor issues (Romans 14:1).

¹ Welcome [PMM] anyone who is weak [PAP] in faith [πίστις],
[but don't argue about disputed matters [διαλογισμός, reckon up the reasons]].

2) Like don't judge another's diet for God owns, accepts, and empowers you both (Romans 14:2-4).

a.) ² One person believes [PAI] he may eat anything [AAN],

b.) [A] while one who is weak [PAP] eats [PAI] only vegetables.

1.) ³ One who eats [PAP] must not look down [PAM] on one who does not eat [PAP],

2.) [S] and one who does not eat [PAP] must not judge [PAM] one who does [PAP],

[G] because God has accepted [AMI] him.

⁴ Who are [PAI] you to judge [PAP] another's household servant?

Before his own Lord 1.) he stands [PAI] 2.) [A] or falls [PAI]. [P] And he will stand [FPI],

[G] because the Lord is able [PAI] to make [AAN] him stand [AAN].

3) Or days they worship on for you both thank the same Lord, and belong to Him (Romans 14:5-8).

[V] ⁵ One person judges [PAI] one day [to be more important than] another day].

[V] Someone else judges [PAI] every day to be the same.

Let each one be fully convinced [PPM] [in his own mind].

1.) ⁶ Whoever observes [PAP] the day, observes it [PAI] for the honour of the Lord.

2.) 1.) Whoever eats [PAP], eats [PAI] for the Lord, [G] since he gives thanks [PAI] to God;

2.) [S] and whoever does not eat [PAP], it is for the Lord that he does not eat it [PAI],

[G] and he gives thanks [PAI] to God.

[G] ⁷ For 1.) none of us lives [PAI] for himself, 2.) [S] and no one dies [PAI] for himself.

[G] 1.) [C] ⁸ If we live [PAS], [E] we live [PAI] for the Lord;

2.) [S] and [C] if we die [PAS], [E] we die [PAI] for the Lord.

[I] Therefore, a.) whether we live [PAS]

b.) [A] or die [PAS], we belong [PAI] to the Lord.

4) Don't judge one another as Christ is our Lord, and we are accountable to Him (Romans 14:9-12).

a.) [C] ⁹ Christ 1.) died [AAI] 2.) [S] and returned to life [AAI] [for this]:

[E] that he might be Lord [AAS] over both 1.) the dead 2.) [S] and the living [PAP].

b.) ¹⁰ But 1.) you, why do you judge [PAI] your brother or sister?

2.) [A] Or you, why do you despise [PAI] your brother or sister?

[G] For we will all stand before [FMI] the judgement seat of God.

[G] ¹¹ For it is written [RPI],

As I live [PAI], says [PAI] the Lord,

1.) every knee will bow [FAI] to me,

2.) and every tongue will give praise [FMI] to God.

[C?] ¹² So [E] then, each of us will give [FAI] an account [of himself] to God.

Sermon preparation worksheet

Passage: Romans 14:1-12

1. How has the author organised this passage? a) *An outline*, b) *Tools*, c) *The emphasis*.

- a) 1) Accept rather than argue with weaker brethren who differ with you on minor issues (Romans 14:1).
 - 2) Like don't judge another's diet for God owns, accepts, and empowers you both (Romans 14:2-4).
 - 3) Or days they worship on for you both thank the same Lord, and belong to Him (Romans 14:5-8).
 - 4) Don't judge one another as Christ is our Lord, and we are accountable to Him (Romans 14:9-12).
- b) I identified Romans 14:1-12 as discourse, and used grammatical syntax analysis. I took note of repeated words (judge, eat, day, live, die, the Lord, God, stand), verbs (especially the imperatives, welcome, must look down, must judge, be fully convinced), conjunctions (especially grounding for's and summation therefore's), and prepositions. Romans 14:1, is a thesis, don't argue about disputed matters. Romans 14:2-4 and Romans 14:5-8, are examples of disputed matters, diet, days, yet for both we're not to judge because God has accepted him, and we belong to the Lord. Romans 14:9-12, is the gospel motivation and application, don't judge one another as Christ is our Lord, and we are accountable to him.
- c) Stop judging weaker brethren on minor issues because you both belong to Christ who is Lord and judge of all.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage? a) *Literary*, b) *Historical*, c) *Cultural*, d) *Biblical*.

- a) In Romans 13:8-14, believers are command to love one another. In Romans 14:13-23, believers are told not to put a stumbling block before one another. This matters because, the command to love, and the command to consider, are grounded in the reality that Christ is our Lord, and we are accountable to Him.
- b) Romans was written to church comprised of Jewish and Gentile believers. Jewish believers grew up under the Law of Moses, and were accustomed to dietary restrictions and the observance of special days. Gentile believers came from pagan backgrounds, and had no restrictions or observances. This matters because, these disputable matters were not trivial squabbles. The Jewish believers felt they were preserving God's Law. The Gentiles felt they were guarding gospel freedom. Paul calls on them to acknowledge their shared identity in Christ.
- c) In the Roman world, to eat meat sacrificed to an idol or to abstain from it carried religious weight. To observe a day or ignore it marked you as a member of a particular group. This matters because, culture insisted that allegiance was proved by practice. But Paul says allegiance is not proven by what you eat or what day you keep, but whether you live for, die for, and belong to the Lord.
- d) Romans 14:11 cites Isaiah 45:23. In Isaiah, this is a declaration of Yahweh's exclusive deity and universal judgment. No other gods. No other judges. Every knee. Every tongue. All will bow. All will confess. He is the Lord before whom we stand. This matters because, to judge a brother on disputable matters is blasphemous, as judgement belongs to the Lord.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

Stop judging weaker brethren on minor issues, for Christ alone is your Lord and Judge of all.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

The gospel is explicitly stated in Romans 14:9. Christ's death and resurrection were purposeful. That He might be Lord of all. This Lordship has two implications that directly address the issue of judging. First, because He is Lord, we belong to Him. Second, because He is Lord, He alone is Judge. The gospel doesn't just save us from sin, it reorders us relationally. It places every believer under the same Lord. And summons every tongue to confess the same Judge. Therefore, to judge a brother is to functionally deny Christ's exclusive right to the judgment seat. The gospel creates a new family where all stand or fall before the same Master, and where no one is authorised to sit in the Master's chair.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

Stop judging your brother as if you're Christ.

6. What applications will you make? a) *To believers*, b) *To unbelievers*.

- a) Identify one disputable matter, a worship preference, a political view, a personal conviction, where you have silently judged a brother. This week, instead of rehearsing your judgment, pray for him by name and thank Christ that he belongs to the same Lord as you. Next time you see him, instead of avoiding him, thank him for something. Find a way to build a bridge where you once built a wall.
- b) You stand judged already, not by a brother, but by the Christ whose seat you have usurped. Today, step down from the judge's chair, bow your knee to Him, and confess Jesus as your Lord and Saviour.

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) *Sermon outline*, b) *Sermon title*.

b) Why can't I stop judging other Christians?

- a) 1) We judge because we turn our personal convictions into universal commands (Romans 14:1)
- 2) We judge because we forget whose house we live in (Romans 14:2-4)
- 3) We judge because we have forgotten who sits in the only chair that matters (Romans 14:5-8)
- 4) So, step down from the bench and bow the knee alongside everyone else (Romans 14:9-12)

Pray

Read Romans 14:1-12

¹ Welcome anyone who is weak in faith, but don't argue about disputed matters.

² One person believes he may eat anything, while one who is weak eats only vegetables. ³ One who eats must not look down on one who does not eat, and one who does not eat must not judge one who does, because God has accepted him. ⁴ Who are you to judge another's household servant? Before his own Lord he stands or falls. And he will stand, because the Lord is able to make him stand.

⁵ One person judges one day to be more important than another day. Someone else judges every day to be the same. Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. ⁶ Whoever observes the day, observes it for the honour of the Lord. Whoever eats, eats for the Lord, since he gives thanks to God; and whoever does not eat, it is for the Lord that he does not eat it, and he gives thanks to God. ⁷ For none of us lives for himself, and no one dies for himself.

⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord; and if we die, we die for the Lord. Therefore, whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord.

⁹ Christ died and returned to life for this: that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living. ¹⁰ But you, why do you judge your brother or sister? Or you, why do you despise your brother or sister? For we will all stand before the judgement seat of God. ¹¹ For it is written, As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God.

¹² So then, each of us will give an account of himself to God.

Introduction

The Christians who annoy you most are probably not outside the church. They are inside. They sing differently. Who vote differently. Who hold convictions that make your jaw clench. And you judge them for it. Silently. Righteously. Relentlessly. Someone must sit in the judgment seat. The question is who.

Paul writes to a fractured church. Jewish believers guarding dietary laws. Gentile believers guarding gospel freedom. Both convinced they are right. Both wondering if the other is even saved. Paul lifts their eyes to Christ. And calls on them to stop judging your brother as if you're Christ.

Turn with me to Romans fourteen.

1) We judge because we turn our personal convictions into universal commands (Romans 14:1).

The apostle begins with a command. ¹ **Welcome**. The word means to receive someone into your home. Into your life. Into your affection. Christ had full knowledge of your weaknesses. Yet He received you anyway. Now hear the call to receive one another in the same way.

Who are we welcoming? Anyone who is **weak in faith**. This is not unsaved weakness. These are believers. They belong to Christ. But their conscience is not yet fully formed by the gospel. They carry baggage from their past. For the Jewish believer, the baggage was the Law of Moses. Dietary restrictions. Sacred days. For the Gentile believer, the baggage was pagan idolatry. Meat sacrificed to idols. Paul calls this weakness. Not sin. Not heresy. A tender conscience. A sensitive soul, still learning what freedom in Christ means.

What do we do with these weak brothers? **don't argue about disputed matters**. The Greek means do not reckon up the reasons. Don't line up your arguments. Don't build your case. Don't cross-examine the man as if you are prosecuting him. The matter is disputed. Believers can disagree. We don't have to die on every single hill. This isn't about the deity of Christ. The authority of Scripture. The gospel itself. This is about food. And days. This is disputable.

The welcome mat extends farther than your comfort zone. It reaches the brother who reads a different Bible translation. The sister who parents with a different philosophy. The believer whose political convictions make you wince. Disputed matters. Not the faith once delivered. Preferences. Convictions. Conscience. Paul says, *Welcome*. Do not argue. Receive them now. Not after they change to what makes you comfortable.

Two men stand at the church door. One raises their hands when he sings. One keeps their hands in their pockets. One votes green. One votes blue. When you decide who gets a warmer welcome. That is the sin. You turned personal conviction into universal command. Because the door does not belong to you. The house does not belong to you. You are also a guest. The Owner already welcomed them. Your job is to welcome whom He has welcomed.

And so the point is simple. Stop judging your brother as if you are Christ. Receive one another precisely where disputable matters divide us. Because Christ alone is the standard.

But if we are not the standard, then whose house are we living in anyway?

2) We judge because we forget whose house we live in (Romans 14:2-4).

We have been reading Leviticus. Dietary laws. Clean and unclean. Jonathan asked, What do we do with the law now? For Jewish believers in Rome, that was the question of their day. They grew up under Moses. Dietary restrictions were part of their identity. Then Gentile believers arrive. Eating pork. Eating meat sacrificed to idols. No guilt. The Jewish believer thinks, That is sin. The Gentile thinks, That is freedom.

This is not trivial. Judaizers say, *Keep the law to be saved*. The Jewish believer believes they are protecting the gospel. The Gentile believer believes they are guarding gospel freedom. Both are convinced. Both wonder if the other is even saved?

Paul does not settle the diet. He lifts their eyes from the plate to the house.

One eats. One does not. To the eater, do not look down on one who does not eat. Do not despise. To the non-eater, do not judge one who does. Do not condemn. Why? Because God has accepted him. Past tense. Settled. Before you met him, God welcomed him home. Your judgment is obsolete.

Then the question. ⁴ Who are you to judge another's household servant? The word is οἰκέτης. A house slave. A family member. But not your family. He has his own master. You do not walk into another man's house and evaluate his servants. You do not rearrange his furniture. You do not rebuke his children. The house is not yours.

Before his own Lord he stands or falls. And he will stand. Not because he is strong. Not because his diet is correct. He will stand because the Lord is able to make him stand. Your brother does not stand by your approval. He stands by his Master's power.

Two children in a home. One sets the table with forks on the left. One sets it with forks on the right. The father accepts both. He does not favour one. He does not evict one. The table is set. The meal is served. The children belong to him. You are not the father. You are also a child.

And so the point is simple. Stop judging your brother as if you are Christ. Our acceptance of one another flows from God's prior acceptance of each. For Christ alone is Lord and Judge.

But if we belong to the same household, why do we still draw lines in the sand?

3) We judge because we have forgotten who sits in the only chair that matters (Romans 14:5-8).

Paul moves from the plate to the calendar. From what you eat to what you honour. Sacred days. Holy festivals. Sabbaths. For the Jewish believer, God Himself engraved these. For the Gentile believer, they were irrelevant. New moons meant nothing. Feast days felt foreign. One man marks the seventh day. Another sees Tuesday as simply Tuesday.

Paul does not settle the calendar either. He does not say, *You are right, and he is wrong*. He says something far more radical. Let each one be fully convinced in his own mind. Fully convinced. Not uncertain. Not apologetic. Not ashamed of your conviction. Hold it. Honour it. But do not impose it.

Why? Because the observance is not for you. ⁶ Whoever observes the day, observes it for the honour of the Lord. The eater eats for the Lord. The faster fasts for the Lord. Both give thanks to God. The plate is not the point. The calendar is not the point. The direction of the heart is the point. Are you living for the Lord? Are you thanking the Lord? Then you are not living for yourself.

Here is the diagnosis of our judgment. We have forgotten that we live and die before one audience only. ⁷ For none of us lives for himself. No one dies for himself. You think you live for your reputation. You think you die for your legacy. You do not. ⁸ If we live, we live for the Lord. If we die, we die for the Lord. Whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. Belong. No performance required. No need to impress. No need to defend. We belong to the Lord. Whether we live or die.

Picture a courtroom. One bench. One chair. One Judge. You enter and see someone else sitting in the chair. That is absurd. That is rebellion. That is what we do when we judge a brother on disputable matters. We climb into the seat. We pick up the gavel. We render a verdict. But the chair is not empty. And you are not the Judge.

Picture a home. A father sits at the head of the table. His children gather. One brings a dish. Another brings a different dish. The father does not favour the one with the kosher meal. He does not reject the one with the barbecued ribs. He welcomes both. He thanks both. They are his. They belong to him. The meal is not the measure of their sonship. The father is.

And so the point is simple. Stop judging your brother as if you are Christ. Your brother does not live for you. He lives for the Lord. He does not die for you. He dies for the Lord. He belongs to Another.

But if we all belong to the same Lord, why do we keep checking each other's plates?

4) So, step down from the bench and bow the knee alongside everyone else (Romans 14:9-12).

Paul now drives the stake. He takes us to the cross. He takes us to the empty tomb. He takes us to the final judgment. And he asks two questions that strip us bare. Why do you judge your brother or sister? Why do you despise your brother or sister? The questions hang in the air like smoke. There is no defence. There is no explanation. There is only the silence of exposed guilt.

⁹ Christ died and returned to life. For what purpose? That he might be Lord over both the dead and the living. Lord of all. His death purchased that Lordship. His resurrection sealed it. He holds the keys to death and life. He holds the gavel of final judgment. The chair is His. Not yours. Not mine. His alone.

And then the citation from Isaiah. As I live, says the Lord, every knee will bow to me, and every tongue will give praise to God. This is not a suggestion. This is not a possibility. This is a divine decree. Every knee. Yours. Mine. The brother you judge. The sister you despise. Every knee. Every tongue. All will bow. All will confess. He is the Lord.

Picture the scene. The great courtroom of God. The bench is occupied. The light is unbearable. The books open. And there you stand. Not judging. Not despising. Not pointing. You stand. And beside you stands the very brother you condemned. He bows. You bow. He confesses. You confess. The same Lord receives the same praise from both your lips. The great judgment seat of God exposes the absurdity of your little judgment seat in your heart.

Paul says, ¹² Each of us will give an account of himself to God. Himself. Not his brother. Not his sister. Himself. Your account will not include a single paragraph about what that other believer ate. Or which day he honoured. Or how he voted. Or where he worshipped. Your account will be about you. Your heart. Your knees. Your tongue. Your Lord.

So step down from the bench. The chair is not empty. It never was. Christ died for that seat. Christ rose for that seat. He alone is Lord. He alone is the Judge. And He summons you to bow. Not to judge. To bow. Alongside everyone else.

And so the point is simple. Stop judging your brother as if you are Christ. Because Christ alone is Lord, and to Him alone every knee will bow.

And so we arrive at the final question. If we will all give an account to God, does that change how we treat one another today?

Connect to the gospel

⁹ Christ died and returned to life for this: that he might be Lord over both the dead and the living. The gospel is not merely fire insurance. It is not merely forgiveness. The gospel is a transfer of ownership. Christ died. Christ rose. And He did it with a purpose. That He might be Lord. Lord of the dead. Lord of the living. Lord of all.

This Lordship has two edges. And both cut against our judging.

First, because He is Lord, we belong to Him. Not to ourselves. Not to our tribe. Not to our party. Not to our tradition. We belong to Him. The eater belongs to Christ. The faster belongs to Christ. The one who honours the day belongs to Christ. The one who sees every day as the same belongs to Christ. You do not own your brother. You did not buy him. You did not die for him. Christ did. He paid the price. He holds the title deed. Your brother is not yours to judge. He belongs to Another.

Second, because He is Lord, He alone is Judge. The judgment seat belongs to Him. He alone sits in the chair. He alone holds the gavel. He alone sees the heart. He alone knows the motives. He alone evaluates the service. And He alone will render the verdict. Not you. Not me. Him.

The gospel does not just save us from sin. It reorders us relationally. It places every believer under the same Lord. Every knee will bow to Him. Every tongue will confess Him. Not to your preferences. Not to your convictions. Not to your interpretations. To Him. The gospel summons every tongue to confess the same Judge. And it summons every knee to bow to the same Lord.

So, to judge a brother on disputable matters is not merely unkind. It is not merely divisive. It is blasphemous. It functionally denies Christ's exclusive right to the judgment seat. It usurps His throne. It steals His gavel. It climbs into His chair.

The gospel creates a new family. A family where all stand or fall before the same Master. A family where no one else sits in the Master's chair. A family where we bow together. Or we do not bow at all.

Stop judging your brother as if you're Christ.

If this is true, how then must we live?

Believers

Identify one disputable matter. One. A worship preference. Hands raised while you stand silent. A political view. The brother who voted opposite to you. A personal conviction. How they educate their children. How they spend their Sunday. Pick one. Name it. Name him. Name her.

This week, instead of rehearsing your judgment, pray for him by name. Not that God would fix him. Not that he would see things your way. A prayer of thanksgiving. Thank Christ that he belongs to the same Lord as you. Thank Christ that he was bought with the same blood. Thank Christ that he will bow to the same King. Pray until your judgment thaws into gratitude.

Next time you see him, instead of avoiding him, thank him for something. Find something genuine. His smile. His faithfulness. His kindness to his children. His prayer at the meeting. Thank him. Build a bridge where you once built a wall. Not a sermon. Not a lecture. A sincere word of thanks.

Stop judging. Start building. The chair is not yours. The family is not yours. The Lord is his Lord. And yours. Act like it.

Unbelievers

You have been sitting in a seat that does not belong to you. You have judged the church and found her wanting. You have judged Christians and pronounced them hypocrites. You have sat in the judge's chair. And you have rendered your verdict.

But the chair was never yours. You stand judged already. Not by a brother. Not by the church. By Christ. The One whose seat you usurped. The One whose judgment you now face.

He died. He rose. He is Lord. Lord of the dead. Lord of the living. Lord of you. Every knee will bow to Him. Yours will too. The only question is when. Will you bow now, in repentance and faith? Or will you bow then, in judgment and terror?

Today, step down from the judge's chair. You have sat there long enough. Bow your knee to Him. Confess with your tongue that Jesus Christ is Lord. Not a lord. The Lord. Your Lord. Admit you are not the Judge. Admit you need a Saviour. He received the weak. He received the strong. He will receive you.

Today. Not tomorrow. Step down. Bow the knee. Confess the Lord.

Conclusion

The Christians who annoyed you most are still here. They still sing differently. Still vote differently. Still hold convictions that make your jaw clench. And you still notice. That has not changed.

What has changed is the seat you occupy. You have spent this hour in **Romans 14**. You have seen your judgment for what it is. You have traced it back to its roots. You judge because you turn your convictions into universal commands. You judge because you forget whose house you live in. You judge because you have forgotten who sits in the only chair that matters. And you have heard the summons. Step down from the bench. Bow the knee alongside everyone else.

The judgment seat belongs to Another. He died for that seat. He rose for that seat. He alone is Lord. He alone is Judge. And He alone will receive the confession of every tongue. Your brother will bow. You will bow. The same Lord. The same praise. The same family.

So stop. Stop judging your brother as if you are Christ. Not because he will agree with you. Not because he will change. But because Christ is Lord. And you belong to Him. And so does your brother.

Amen.

The benediction

Philippians 2:10-11,

- ¹⁰ At the name of Jesus
every knee will bow –
in heaven and on earth
and under the earth –
- ¹¹ and every tongue will confess
that Jesus Christ is Lord,
to the glory of God the Father.

This is how I parse Greek verbs:

- I use a three-letter combination in square brackets (e.g. [PMI] for Present, Middle, Indicative) after a verb, which I underline.
 1. First letter indicates the tense. Tense deals both with time and kind of action.
 2. Second letter indicates the voice. The relation of the subject or agent to the action.
 3. Third letter indicates the mood, participle, or infinitive.
- Tense:
 - P: present, continuous or linear action.
 - I: imperfect, continuous action in the past.
 - F: future, both progressive and punctiliar action.
 - A: aorist, expresses punctiliar action that has happened.
 - R: perfect, represents an action that is complete but has an ongoing resultant state of being.
- Voice:
 - A: active, reflects the subject that performs the action.
 - M: middle, the agent participates in the results of the action.
 - P: passive, subject is being acted upon by someone or something else.
- Mood/participle/infinitive:
 - I: indicative, reality, that which is actually occurring.
 - S: subjunctive, likely to occur.
 - M: imperative, a command that is possible.
 - P: participle, participles are verbal adjectives that behave like a verb and an adjective..
 - N: infinitive, verbal nouns that use the preposition "to", and they can also be used with "ing".

This is how I indicate the function of conjunctions:

- I put a letter in square brackets before a clause to indicate a logical relationship.
 - [S] - SERIES, Each proposition makes an independent contribution to the whole (and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [P] - PROGRESSION, Each proposition is a further step toward a climax (then, and, moreover, furthermore).
 - [A] - ALTERNATIVE, Each proposition expresses an opposite possibility arising from a situation (or, but while..).
 - [W] [Ed] - WAY-END (ACTION-MANNER), Statement of an action and one which tells more explicitly what is involved in carrying out this action (in that, by).
 - [I] [I] - COMPARISON, Statement that clarifies an action or idea by showing what it is like (even as, as...so).
 - [-] [+] - NEGATIVE-POSITIVE, The relationship between two alternatives in which one is denied so the other is enforced, implicit in contrasting statements (not...but).
 - [Gn] [Sp] - GENERAL-SPECIFIC, Statement of a whole and one or more statements which set forth parts of the whole.
 - [Ft] [In] - FACT-INTERPRETATION, Statement and clarifying statement; does not set forth a distinguishable part of the preceding whole.
 - [G] - GROUND, Statement followed by the argument or reason on which it stands; supporting proposition follows the supported proposition (for, since, because).
 - [I'] - INFERENCE, Supporting statement followed by the conclusion drawn from it; supporting proposition precedes the supported proposition (therefore, wherefore, consequently).
 - [C] [E] - CAUSE-EFFECT (ACTION-RESULT), One action and another action which results from the first as an automatic consequence (that, so that, with the result that).
 - [C?] [E] - CONDITIONAL, Like cause-effect except existence of the cause is only potential (if...then, if, except...).
 - [M] [Ed] - MEANS-END (ACTION-PURPOSE), One action and another that is intended as the goal or purpose of the first (in order that, that, lest, to the end that).
 - [T] - TEMPORAL, Proposition and the occasion when it occurs (when, after, before).
 - [L] - LOCATIVE, Proposition and the place where it can be true (where, wherever).
 - [Adv] - ADVERSATIVE, Main clause that stands despite a contrary statement (although, yet, but, nevertheless).
 - [Q] [A] - QUESTION-ANSWER, Statement of question and answer to that question (question mark ?).
 - [S] [R] - SITUATION-RESPONSE, The relationship between a situation in one clause and a response in another.
 - [B] [L] - BILATERAL, A proposition which supports propositions in both directions, rarely used.

This is how I use colour highlighting:

- **Orange**: structure indicator, conjunctions, and prepositions.
- **Yellow**: verbs, Greek, and Scripture reference.
- **Green**: keywords.
- **Red**: repeated words.
- **Pink**: imperatives.
- **Blue**: main idea.

On my sermon preparation sheet, these are the questions and an explanation:

1. How has the author organised this passage?

- a) An outline: The author's organization (or structure) is a way of talking about the shape or form of a biblical passage. Beneath the surface of each passage is an underlying arrangement of material and a logic that the author has used to organize the passage. And each part of the passage has a role to play in that structure.
- b) Tools: Identify the text type, and any grammatical tools used to identify the structure.
- c) The emphasis: The structure will reveal an emphasis that the author is making.

2. How does the context inform the meaning of this passage?

- a) Literary context: How do the passage that comes before and the passage that comes after relate to your passage?
- b) Historical context: The historical situation or circumstances experienced by the first audience at the time when the book was written.
- c) Cultural context: The setting in the daily life of the people/characters in the book and how that will have been understood by the first audience. This is distinct from historical context in that it does not relate to a particular audience in a particular place at a particular time, but the details of life that the people/characters in the text had in common. Anything that requires extra-biblical knowledge should be treated skeptically.
- d) Biblical context: Is the author citing or alluding to some previously written Biblical passage? What connections could the author have reasonably expected his first audience to make.

3. What is the main point the author is arguing to his audience?

The author's main point is a way of talking about the aim of a passage as a whole. It can be descriptive or prescriptive. It is not simply a summary statement. But rather, it is the idea of which the author is trying to persuade his audience. As you work on articulating the author's argument, please keep in mind that it needs to be specific enough to the passage that it clearly comes from the particular passage (and not any other passage), it is for the first audience, it should be one single sentence that is both short and clear, and captures the argument of the passage.

4. How does this passage connect to the gospel of Jesus Christ?

What part of the gospel (the death and resurrection of Christ) is in view? Every part of the Bible, every passage of Scripture, in some way relates to the gospel of Jesus Christ. What parts of the passage connect to the gospel? The connection must be legitimate and textually driven.

5. What is the main point you will argue to your audience?

6. What applications will you make? a) To believers, b) To unbelievers.

The main point of a sermon is the fundamental statement of what you, as a speaker today, are trying to convince your audience today. It will certainly be intimately related to the author's main point for his original audience and it will consider the gospel connection. It should be well reasoned and, perhaps, articulated as the result of proof (so depending on premises and building arguments).

7. What is your sermon title and your preaching outline? a) Sermon outline, b) Sermon title.

On my sermon preparation sheet, this is how questions relate to one another:

- 1 a) should be driven by the text.
- 1 c) should be driven from the outline in 1 a).
- 2) should be directly relevant to 1 c).
- 3) cannot be disconnected from 1 c), and should be clarified by 2).
- 4) must be found in the text.
- 5) cannot be disconnected from 3), and should be driven by 4).
- 6) should flow from 5).
- 7) should structurally relate to 1 a), and make the argument in 5).