

# STUDY GUIDE ON WEAKER BROTHER

Virgil Warren, PhD

Relating to our brothers and sisters in Christ would be easier if we were all at the same stage of growth in understanding and virtue and if we all viewed things the same way. As a matter of fact, we are not all equally strong and do not see things alike. We must learn to make allowance for differences in order to keep the unity of the faith in the bond of peace and to avoid stumbling and discouragement.

Passages helpful in relationships to weaker brothers include Romans **14:1-15:9**; 1 Corinthians **8**; **10:23-11:1**; Galatians **6:1-2**; Ephesians **4:13-16**; and 1 Thessalonians **5:14**.

1. Who is a weaker brother? (See particularly 1 Corinthians **8:9-13**.)
2. In what ways may a weaker brother be weaker?
3. Is there any way in which all Christians can be classified as weaker brothers?
4. What issues do the contexts of the weaker-brother passages mention?
5. What kind of issues must stronger brothers concern themselves about in their influence on weaker brothers (Romans **14**; 1 Corinthians **8:4-10**)?
6. How would our behavior differ if an erring weaker brother was witnessing our actions, an opinionated stronger brother, or an objecting person outside the church? Choose an appropriate example and carry it through the three possibilities. Where does the responsibility lie in these differing cases (1 Corinthians **10:23-32**)?
7. What issues today might fall in the same category as the eating of meats offered to idols?
8. What are some problem areas that you would not put in the same category as eating meats offered to idols? Why would you not put them there?
9. What principles and truths operate in weaker brother issues?
  - a. Romans **14:3-4, 10-13, 22**
  - b. Romans **14:6, 8-9**; 1 Corinthians **8:4-7**; **10:25-26**
  - c. Romans **14:7, 16**; 1 Corinthians **10:24**
  - d. Romans **14:14, 20b**; 1 Corinthians **10:23a**
  - e. Romans **14:17-18, 20a**; 1 Corinthians **8:8**
  - f. Romans **14:19**; 1 Corinthians **8:1-3**; 1 Corinthians **10:23b**
  - g. Romans **14:20c, 23**
  - h. 1 Corinthians **8:9-11, 13**; **10:29, 32**
  - i. 1 Corinthians **8:12**; **10:27-28, 30**
  - j. Romans **14:6-9**; 1 Corinthians **10:30-31**
10. Is there any contradiction between the Jerusalem circular (Acts **15:20-21, 28-29**) and Paul's teaching on the eating of shamble meat (1 Corinthians **8**)?