



## The Legalistic or Weak Believer

The strong or mature believer is oriented to grace and the plan of God and operates in fellowship the vast majority of the time, in the power of the Holy Spirit. Rom. 14.

The weak believer is disoriented to grace, especially in the area of being in fellowship or in carnality and practices one or more forms of legalism. They feel that they need to confess and renounce or confess and be sorry or confess and vow.

The weak believer must not be confused with a new believer. The weak believer is strong on scruples, but ignorant of Bible doctrine, even though they may have been saved for many years. The weak believer, being ignorant of Bible doctrine and divine viewpoint, reverts to a soulish conscience as their norms and standards, just as they were before they were saved.

The weak believer operates on a criteria of feelings, emotion, traditions, and background instead of Bible doctrine. They have a series of responses found in any unbeliever of similar background - self-righteousness, tabooism, ascetism, and feelings of horror regarding certain sins.

For example, a weak believer upon finding unexpectedly that another believer has cigarettes laying on the kitchen table, thinks the worst of that individual and denounces him or her to others. The weak believer operates in the energy of the flesh, producing human good which they construe as production of divine good, so they are under a tremendous delusion.

The weak believer is not only legalistic, but is proud and critical of the strong believer - always judging them. The weak believer has a long proboscis (long nose) which they stick into the affairs of others by gossiping, maligning, and judging.

The weak believer generally sets up a mold and tries to squeeze everyone into it. In this way, they are bullies. The weak believer has a guilt complex, which makes them emotionally unstable. They are very sensitive and demand undue attention. They are easily moved to self-pity and generally operate on approbation lust from the old sin nature.

The weak believer is jealous of others and tries to discredit them. Therefore, they are constantly nitpicking and condemning the activities and projects of others. The weak believer, not being interested in Bible doctrine, is always interested in unusual experiences of an ecstatic nature.

The weak believer persists in being weak because of their rejection of grace, Bible doctrine, confession of sin, the filling of the Holy Spirit, and so on. A legalist can recover by getting back to grace. A weak believer can become strong through Bible doctrine.

The believer minus Bible doctrine cannot stand human prosperity. It makes them miserable. Prosperity only increases the folly of the ignorant believer. Folly is anything that the ignorant believer thinks or does contrary to doctrine, that is, human viewpoint activities in which they participate instead of learning doctrine at Bible class. Prov. 26.

Prosperity or honor hinders the believer minus doctrine. Like snow in summer, they get their eyes on unusual events, like rain in harvest, and their production is limited. The believer minus doctrine gets their eyes on self instead of keeping their eyes on the Lord. The results are obvious. If a believer does not respond to the Lord, they react to everything. Having nothing to feed their soul, they react to the Lord and they react from their soul to people.



The believer is to have a constructive ministry on earth, not destructive. The believer minus Bible doctrine creates a spiritual drought.

### **The Strong Believer's Responsibility to Weaker Believer**

The strong believer must accept the weak believer, but not their legalism or false doctrine. The weak believer is ignorant of doctrine and needs to be taught. The purpose of receiving the weak believer is to communicate doctrine to them, but not to accept their viewpoint.

Weak believers must be received by strong believers to receive doctrine and to grow. The weak believers must change opinions to conform to doctrine; therefore, they must hear doctrine. A weak believer is in perpetual carnality; therefore, useless. Weak believers need to confess their known sins to God the Father first for recovery of the filling of the Holy Spirit. The weak believer reacts to people. Strong believers respond to God.

The weak believer reacts in two ways. They will judge, criticize, and malign the strong believer. Alternatively, they may use the law of liberty of the more mature believer for an excuse to sin. 1 Cor. 8:10-11.

*"For if someone sees you, who have knowledge, dining in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, if he is weak, be strengthened to eat things sacrificed to idols? For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died." (1 Corinthians 8:10-11, NASB)*