

LAW VERSUS GRACE (47)

QUESTION #52 – What are some of the major gray area issues in our day?

In all reality, not much has changed since the days of the early church:

(Modern Day Gray Area Issue #1) - Drinking wine versus not drinking wine.

(Modern Day Gray Area Issue #2) - Going to certain places versus not going to certain places.

(Modern Day Gray Area Issue #3) - Eating certain foods versus not eating certain foods.

(Modern Day Gray Area Issue #4) - Observing special religious services versus not observing special religious services.

QUESTION #53 – What are some other contemporary gray area issues in our day?

1) Playing cards; 2) Going to a movie; 3) Wearing makeup; 4) Having a beard or moustache; 5) Dancing; 6) Slacks for women; 7) Hair style; 8) Certain types of music; 9) Going to the opera; 10) Going to a concert; 11) Going to a play; 12) Going to a ball game.

QUESTION #54 – Does the Bible teach that abstaining from any gray area issue or participating in any gray area issue actually make us any more or less spiritual?

This question is directly answered in Scripture and the answer is **NO!** (**Rom. 14:17-18; I Cor. 8:8**). The gray area, in and of itself, is not an issue of a greater or lesser spirituality.

QUESTION #55 – According to God's Word, who actually are the strong believers and who are the weak believer's?

When one carefully studies the Bible, one soon discovers that the answer to this question turns out to be just the opposite of what most people think, believe and teach.

- 1) The strong believer is the one who is strong in his faith and knows the Word of God and realizes he has total freedom in Jesus Christ to partake or not partake of whatever the Bible does not forbid. The strong believer is the one who knows about his liberty and when it comes to gray areas, has no scruples about using his liberty (**Rom. 14:2; I Cor. 8:10**).
- 2) The weak believer is the one who is weak in his faith and does not really know the Word of God and does not realize the total freedom he has in Jesus Christ. The weak believer is one who thinks that he is more spiritual by abstaining or refraining from certain gray area practices. This is the believer who has all kinds of scruples when it comes to gray areas (**Rom. 14:2; I Cor. 8:9-10**).

LAW VERSUS GRACE (48)

QUESTION #56 – What exactly determines whether a believer is strong or weak?

The determining factor is one's faith and knowledge of God's Word and God's doctrines (**I Cor. 8:7, 10; Rom. 14:17**).

QUESTION #57 – What are the major dangers that the strong and weak believers face?

Danger Category #1 - The two main dangers of the strong believer:

(Danger #1) - The strong believer can look down or hold in contempt the weak believer.
Rom. 14:3b

(Danger #2) - The strong believer may cause a weak believer to stumble. **Rom. 14:21;**
I Cor. 8:10, 13

Danger Category #2 - The two main dangers of the weak believer.

(Danger #1) - The weak believer may spend their life judging the strong believer. **Rom. 14:3b**

(Danger #2) - The weak believer stands in danger of stumbling. **Rom. 14:21; I Cor. 8:10**

Danger Category #3 - The one main danger of both the strong and the weak believer.

The one main danger of both believers is that they stand in danger of sinning against each other (I Cor. 8:12; Rom. 14:23). Sinning against another brother or sister is very serious business.

QUESTION #58 – What are the key Biblical principles to keep in mind concerning gray areas?

- 1) We have absolutely no right to judge others regarding gray area issues. **Rom. 14:3-4**
- 2) Each individual will give his own account to God. **Rom. 14:4; 10-12**
- 3) God fully accepts the person in Christ regardless of the gray area. **Rom. 14:3-4**
- 4) Each believer does have liberty to indulge if his conscience does not condemn him.
Rom. 14:14, 22b
- 5) Each believer should abstain from indulging if his conscience does condemn him.
Rom. 14:14, 22b
- 6) If a strong believer is near a weak believer who can stumble, the strong believer should forfeit his liberty for the sake of the weak believer. **I Cor. 8:13; Rom. 14:21**
- 7) Gray area matters should be kept private between the believer and God. **Rom. 14:22**