



October 3, 2010  
Maurice Stargell  
Lead Pastor - [Hope Church](#), Morrow, GA

## The Weaker Brother

Romans 14:1-13

### Getting Started

1. What is your favorite fall tradition?
2. Using a single word, how would you describe what it means to be 'family'?

### Digging Deeper

1. Read Romans 14:1-13 together - what word, phrase or sentence did you find most helpful, eye-opening or troubling? Explain.
2. Look at 1 Corinthians 14:13
  - a. Should we ever pass judgment on others?
    - i. Is there a particular kind of judgment that Paul is addressing? (see 14:3-4)
    - ii. If love is defined as giving someone what is best, give an example when it's loving to not judge someone AND when it's loving to judge someone?
  - b. What kind of stumbling blocks do we put in front of others? Read 1 Corinthians
    - i. Are there beliefs or behaviors that our church asks of people that appears to go beyond the Scriptures?
    - ii. Do you make demands of people to be met before you accept them as part of your inner circle of family and friends?
3. Read 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 together.
  - a. This is a passage about people who have the right beliefs but fail to love people. Those who were 'stronger' rightly told those who are 'weak' that eating food offered to idols was not harmful but failed to love those who struggled to buy into that belief.
  - b. Are there beliefs or behaviors that some Christian groups ask of people that appears to go beyond the Scriptures?
  - c. What about you and this group:
    - i. What are you trying to learn together?
    - ii. Are you learning this in order to better love people?
      1. Do you think hard about people?
      2. Does your group weep for people who are far from God?
  - d. Paul wrote verse 3 to help us keep our sanity in our failure to love people.

- i. The reason we don't love people is that we don't believe we're loved by God
- ii. Instead of boasting that we're loved by God, we boast in our thinking or morality
- iii. That boasting produces unloving thoughts and actions towards people
- iv. If we want to love people, the way forward is not to try harder but to give up. Give up boasting in our beliefs and behavior and learn to boast that God loves a sinner like me.

### **Ordinary Life, Gospel Intentionality**

1. Is there anything you need to do as a result of what you've learned this week?
  - a. Who in your life - someone who is not a Christian - have you failed to love well?
    - i. They don't think rightly about God - how are you tearing them down instead of tearing up over them?
    - ii. Their life has places that look nothing like Jesus - how are you keeping them at a distance instead of bringing them into your life that is marked by the life of God?
  - b. What beliefs and behaviors in your group are not fueled by love?
    - i. How are you going to figure this out?
    - ii. Remembering that truth and love, how can you rewire your group to think hard in order to love well?
  - c. The reason we are family is because we are loved by God.
    - i. What rhythm does our group need to create in order to remember this?
    - ii. What rhythm does our group need to create in order to live this out?