

Faith And Opinion Romans 14:13-23

Which Matters

Often confronted with, "that's your opinion." Sometimes true, yet sometime we must show difference between faith and opinion.

All recognize a difference between the two.

However, because one's faith is another's opinion, and one's opinion is another's faith, must study to determine which should be which.

Let's look at this problem and examine inspired terminology which corresponds to our words faith and opinion.

Faith

One word, PISTIS, translated "faith" - primarily, firm persuasion, a conviction based on hearing (akin to Peitho, to persuade), used in NT always of faith in God or Christ, or things spiritual (Vine)

Vine's gives the following uses of PISTIS:

Trust, trustworthiness, what is believed, contents of belief, faith.

A ground for faith, an assurance, a pledge of fidelity, plighted (to bind by a pledge or promise) faith

We are basically concerned with what is believed, the contents of belief, the faith. - **Jude 3; Acts 6:7**

When we ask if something is a matter of faith, we mean is it a component of truth given by God to man.

Opinion

Several Greek words may be translated "opinion," but for our purposes let's look at just three.

KRINO Primarily meant to separate, select or choose so it is easily passed from that to "judge" Vine

Can mean to "form an opinion:" - **Luke 7:43; John 7:24; Acts 4:19; Romans 14:5**

"Opinion" may have the idea of separating something out and forming an estimation.

HEMERA Also trans. "judgment." "Man's judgment" - **1Corinthians 4:3**

Vine says: "is used of the present period in which man's mere judgment is exercised." So our word opinion might reflect, a little, something connected with man's day of judging.

GNOME Primarily "a knowing." Vine: "came to denote a mind, understanding." He says it is used of: (a) a purpose; (b) a royal purpose, a decree, mind (c) judgment, opinion; (d) counsel, advise.

Opinion, then, is something separated out by man, an estimation arrived at, yet belonging to the day of man's thinking, and so a human knowing or judgment.

For this reason, it always will have the air of uncertainty

Points And Problems Related To The Two

One problem is when article of faith, due to ignorance is treated as an opinion. (Ill.) Necessity of baptism; "That's just your opinion."; "You are judging." No, it is God's judgment - **Mark 16:16**

Another is opinion treated as an item of the faith. (Illustrate) Theory of Evolution: God created the heavens and the earth - **Genesis 1:1**

How Can We Make The Distinction?

Not always easy to distinguish between faith and opinion But the main method is simple. Articles of faith are proved by finding scripture which says so.

Paul shows Jews & Gentiles are under sin - **Romans 3:9-18**

Quotes (at least) 7 OT passages - **Psalms 14:1-3; 53:1; 5:9; 140:3; 10:7; 36:1; Isaiah 59:7**

Someone says that's not what passage means, we must compare scripture with scripture and inspect contexts to ascertain meanings.

To show opinion not matter of faith we must do two things

Put burden of proof on one holding opinion. If not in scripture it cannot be recognized as faith

Second means is to show scripture which contradicts the opinion. (Ex) "faith only" - **James 2:24**

Faith, Opinion, And Fellowship:

Possible to hold an opinion but have a good attitude about it. Neither teach or make a test of fellowship while continuing to study. - **Romans 14:1,10**

Then Paul taught the truth of the matter. - **Romans 14:15**

We can fellowship these individuals.

However, some teach opinions as truth and cause division. I don't care how harmless it seems, when it contradicts the doctrine of Christ, is being taught to the flock, and causes division, we cannot fellowship them. - **Romans 16:17; Titus 3:10**

Distinguish Then Apply

Though we may have difficulty from time to time, the Bible is understandable to those who diligently and patiently study it

May God grant that all honest and good hearts may turn from opinion to faith, separate faith from opinion, and act in a scriptural way in the face of both.

DLH