

Doctrine of the Weaker Brother

1. It is the will of the Lord that all Christians grow in grace and knowledge of our Lord Jesus Christ.
 - *2 Peter 3:18 But grow in grace, and in the knowledge of our Lord and Saviour Jesus Christ. To him be glory both now and for ever. Amen.*

2. In the quest for grace and knowledge, the heart finds spiritual maturity very illusive, and the sensitive soul despairs over this.
 - *Romans 7:24 O wretched man that I am! Who shall deliver me from the body of this death?*

3. Lest a person completely despair, gospel hope and confidence is offered that the heart will one day find victory over sin.
 - *Romans 7:25 I thank God through Jesus Christ our Lord. So then with the mind I myself serve the law of God; but with the flesh the law of sin.*

4. The Word of God recognizes that some Christians are more spiritually mature than others.
 - *Galatians 6:1 "...ye that are spiritual..."*

5. Those who are more spiritual have a responsibility to those who are less spiritually mature.
 - Be careful not to despise or treat with contempt a weaker brother. *Romans 14:3 Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*
 - Be engaged in a ministry of restoration. *Galatians 6:1 Brethren, if a man be overtaken in a fault, ye which are spiritual, restore such an one in the spirit of meekness; considering thyself, lest thou also be tempted.*
 - Be forgiving. *Ephesians 4:32 And be ye kind one to another, tenderhearted, forgiving one another, even as God for Christ's sake hath forgiven you.*
 - Be gracious to the weaker brother. *Galatians 6:2 Bear ye one another's burdens, and so fulfil the law of Christ.*
 - Be ready to receive a weaker brother. *Romans 14:1 Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

- Be careful not to destroy another person and thereby engage in sin. *1 Corinthians 8:11 And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? 12 But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ.*
6. There are several reasons why a Christian might be weak.
 - They are recently converted and are a new “babe” in Christ.
 - They are by nature legalist and need excessive rules and regulations to live by.
 - They are spiritually uninformed and so are doctrinally malnourished.
 - They are not exercising godly principles and need exhortation.
 - They may be full of pride and self-will.
 7. The cure for dealing with the weaker brother is found in love, as explained in 1 Corinthians 13.
 8. It is true that a weaker brother can become a tyrant if not dealt with properly. Usually a person who is weak in the faith is very critical of others. The Word of God rebukes the spirit of criticism.
 - *Romans 14:4 Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.*
 9. Despite the exasperation of dealing with a weak brother, it is the will of the Lord that Christians be tenderhearted, and longsuffering.