Sermon: **Who are you to judge the servant of someone else?** (Romans 14.4)

Today opinions are important – election, Covid 19 and weird views that some have.

I have been reading book about the Reformation where so many opposed each other violently. TEXT.

We hold differing views on matters like vegetarianism, total abstinence, gambling/Lotto, the two referenda.

Those views might be held strongly, so much so that we find it hard to believe that sensible people could possibly think otherwise. It is easy, for instance for meat-eaters to despise vegetarians and for vegetarians to judge meat-eaters. TEXT.

Paul’s situation is of course quite different. Those who did not eat meat then was because all meat was honoured before gods before being sold. Days of the week – Jews kept Sabbath, should Christians? TEXT.

Easy for majority to rubbish and/or override the sensibilities of minority opinions, however conscientiously these positions are held. TEXT.

Easy for minority to take the moral high ground and bleat about unfairness. TEXT.

4 Important things to note:

* Welcome all (14.1) In church we are all different, some are a bit odd, but we work and live together.
* Make up your own mind (14.5) It’s easy to be tolerant when you have no strong opinions. Paul urges us to have them. Tolerance (not the same as giving in, or compromise) is no sign of weakness but of strength. It respects those who are different.
* Do whatever you do in honour of the Lord (14.6). Me & being teetotal – I can’t ‘get’ those who drink!
* We will have to give an account of ourselves to God, who is the only judge. (14.12). This means that our opinions should stand the test of God’s gaze. Anything that seems a bit suspect when we think of how God would react, probably is suspect. (ask the question “is my opinion or my reaction to the opinion of others loving”)

TEXT – we are no-one, but as God’s servants it is for God to sort out any of our wrong opinions/ attitudes/actions.

There’s nothing wrong with having and expressing firm views, but everything wrong with imposing them.