

Romans

Chapter 14

Romans 14:1-2

“As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables.”

Proper Attitude

- Paul in **Romans Chapter 12**, showed the practical steps of living and interacting with fellow believers in the body of Christ.
- In **Romans Chapter 13**, he gave believers practical steps of living and interacting with our governing authorities and our neighbors.
- Here in **Romans Chapter 14**, Paul demonstrates the **proper attitude** that we should have between fellow believers.
- “Everyone should look not to his own interests, but rather to the interests of others. Adopt the **same attitude** as that of Christ Jesus...”-**Philippians 2:4-5, CSB**
- As believers we should be periodically giving ourselves an **attitude check** to make sure **our attitude** is in line with **that of Christ Jesus**.

The Weak In Faith

- The context of these verses directs our **attitude** towards those who are the **weak in faith**.
- The **weak** believers are those who are **spiritually immature** in **matters of faith**.
- Everyone desires to be recognized as **mature** in the **faith**.
- Paul is referencing **meat, vegetables, and days (vs. 2)** of which were used in the sacrifices made to the pagan Roman gods.
- Today we don't necessarily wrestle in **matters of faith** over those particular items but we have our own **matters of faith** that divide believers today.

- In matters of **tradition** regarding church background or the nonexistence of having one and the churches teaching or lack thereof.
- In matters of **experience** regarding where we have originated and the troubles and trials we have lived through that may have affected our view of God.
- Spiritual maturity and having everyone think the **same as me** is not a requirement for fellowship.
- “Difference of belief and unity of believers are not inconsistent.”-Burroughs, Jeremy

- Paul advises that we are **not to quarrel over opinions (Vs.1)**.
- The word used for opinions in Greek is ***dialogismos***, which describes the thinking of a man deliberating with himself, a thought, or inward reasoning.
- A matter of **opinion** is the opposite of a matters of **faith**. **Matters of faith** have to do with the things **spoken in the Word of God** and that are commanded by Him to avoid or to walk towards.
- Matters of **opinion** are those that people express but are **not according to Word of God** and are usually rooted and grounded in tradition or in experience as stated above.

- “A fool takes no pleasure in understanding, but only in **expressing his opinion**.”-**Proverbs 18:2**
- **Expressing his opinion**: The Hebrew word for express here in **Proverbs 18:2**, “The verb occurs in *Hithpael* elsewhere only in connection with the drunken Noah indecently **uncovering himself** (**Genesis 9:21**).”-Waltke, Bruce
- Have nothing to do with **foolish, ignorant controversies**; you know that they breed **quarrels**. And the **Lord’s servant** must not be **quarrelsome** but kind to everyone”-**2 Timothy 2:23-24a**
- Paul advised young Timothy to have **nothing to do** or rather to participate in unwise and **immature controversies** since these **breed quarrels** and prove to be divisive among believers.
- “We who are **strong** have an obligation to bear with **the failings of the weak**, and not to please ourselves.”-**Romans 15:1**

- Instead of **quarreling** over our own **opinions** we are to **welcome** those who are **weak in faith** (**vs.1**).
- The **mature** believer should not have a **superior attitude** towards the **immature** believer nor the **immature** believer have **condemning attitude** towards the **mature** believer.
- The main and only reason we **welcome** each other is because God has **welcomed** each of us as proclaimed in **Romans 15:7**; we see that His **divine acceptance** is the basis by which we have been **welcomed**.
- “Therefore **welcome** one another as Christ has **welcomed** you, for the glory of God.”-**Romans 15:7**
- Those who are **mature in faith** recognize this truth in **Romans 15:7**.

- There seems to be an **improper attitude** of human concern in attempting to discover the things that happens with other people in the faith instead of focusing on the **Lord's work in our own life**.
- "Peter turned and saw the disciple whom Jesus loved following them, the one who also had leaned back against him during the supper and had said, "Lord, who is it that is going to betray you?" When Peter saw him, he said to Jesus, "**Lord, what about this man?**" Jesus said to him, "If it is my will that he remain until I come, **what is that to you? You follow me!**"-John 21:20-21
- "My friend, there are a lot of things that **you won't know**. There are many things that you don't **need to know**. There are things that are not your **business to know**. The important thing is **to follow Him**."- Wiersbe, Warren

- **Looking to Jesus** and not to others will give a believer a **proper attitude** in dealing with the differences that arise among believers.
- "We evangelicals are people of the Word: learning is what we do. Yet learning...promotes arrogance. Then there is our conviction that we have the truth, an **attitude** that easily collapses into the sort of pharisaical fault-finding".- Reeves, Michael
- "The supreme quality which the evangelical faith engenders (or should do) is **humility**...and yet evangelical people are often regarded as proud, vain, arrogant and cocksure".- Stott, John

- “John said to him, “Teacher, we saw someone casting out demons in **your name**, and we tried to **stop him**, because he was not following us.” But Jesus said, “Do not stop him, for no one who does a mighty work **in my name** will be able soon afterward to speak evil of me.”-**Mark 9:38-40**
- There are many that may be **different** in some aspect of their teaching or worship than how we may do it yet they still **proclaim the name of Jesus**.
- There is no neutral ground regarding one's orientation to Jesus. If a kingdom is **divided** it cannot stand (**Mark 3:24**).
- Although we may think it wrong because it is different; if they are doing it in **Jesus name** then they are **for Him not against Him**.

- Paul saw many men preaching Jesus from many motives some of them wrong yet he could rejoice that **Christ was preached** (**Philippians 1:15-18**).
- In the light of the gospel a person is confronted with the glory of the living triune God and in His light we are revealed as **truly sinful**; knowledge which should promote an **attitude of humility** in us.
- Paul said, “Wretched man that I am! Who will deliver me from this body of death? Thanks be to God through Jesus Christ our Lord! ”-**Romans 8:24-25a**

- The spiritually **mature** are **humbled** by the work of Christ for them and seek to please and **follow the Lord**.
- They seek to have the **same attitude of Christ** looking not to their **own interests** but the **interests of others**, bearing the **failings** of the weak, and **seek unity** among the Believing community.
- “Do nothing from selfish ambition or conceit, but in **humility** count others more significant than yourselves. Let each of you look not only to his **own interests**, but also to the **interests of others**”-**Philippians 2:3-4**
- “with all **humility** and gentleness, with patience, **bearing** with one another in love, **eager to maintain the unity** of the Spirit in the bond of peace.”-**Ephesians 4:2-3**

- Paul describes the person who **only eats vegetables**, although probably healthier than the one who **eats everything**, yet the vegetable eater is said to be **weak in faith**.
- The main thing that caused the vegetable eater to be **weak in faith** was his **legalistic attitude** or fear of being condemned for failing to keep the rules according to what the religious cultural standards considered to be right.
- “Undoubtedly these **weak** ones did not see themselves as **weaker**. It’s likely they thought they were the **strong ones**, and the meat-eaters were the **weak** ones. Legalism has a way of making us think that we are **strong** and those who don’t keep the rules the way we do are **weak**.”-Guzik, David

Romans 14:3-4

“Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, for God has welcomed him.

Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for the Lord is able to make him stand.”

Attitude of Judgment

- Paul in **Romans 14:3**, shows us what the **proper attitude** should be towards the **one who eats everything**, the mature believer, he must **not despise the one who abstains**.
- Likewise the **one who abstains**, the immature believer, should **not pass judgment** upon the **one who eats**.
- The attitude is to be the same for both the immature and mature believer to **not pass judgment** upon one another because **God has welcomed** both of them.-**Vs.3**

- It is a fallacy to assume that the simple solution is for the mature strong believer and the immature weak believer in **welcoming** one another would be to simply **persuade** each other in seeing the folly of their view.
- **Unity of fellowship** among the Believers is not to be based upon questioning and disputing one another with the result that we all adopt the same view.
- **Orthodoxy**, matters of doctrine, are fixed; **Orthopraxy**, matters of practice, are adaptable.
- The **immature** and **mature** are both assigned a place in the body of believers and we are instructed to **welcome** one another as brothers and sisters in the faith.

- “Let those of us who are **mature** think this way, and if in anything you **think otherwise**, God will **reveal** that also to you. Only let us hold true to **what we have attained**.”- **Philippians 3:15-16**
- Paul had an absolute trust in the ability of the Lord to deal with His people. He did not have the **attitude** that if he failed to persuade them they would then never be persuaded.
- In the Church today there are a lot of biases that cause harmful divisions among believers over **opinionated** things which develop into resentful and hurtful feelings towards one another.

- Paul isn't telling believers to remove their differences; he is telling them to have a **proper attitude** towards fellow believers that we may have a **disagreement** with because we are **all brothers and sisters in Him**.
- “Now I appeal to Euodia and Syntyche. Please, **because you belong to the Lord**, settle your **disagreement**”.- **Philippians 4:2, NLT**
- The main reason we should rise above our differences is because each believer is **God's servant and belongs to the Lord**.
- We need to remember to whom each person is responsible by leaving **judgment** to God **for the Lord is able to make him stand**.-**Vs.4**

- **Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? -Vs. 4**
- **Judgment** seems to be an important topic for Paul here in **Romans 14** since he addresses it four times, here in verses **3** and **4**, but also in verses **10** and **13**.
- And why do you **look** at the **speck** in your brother's eye, but do not **consider** the **plank** in your own eye? Or how can you say to your brother, 'Let me remove the **speck** from your eye'; and look, a **plank** is in your own eye? -**Matthew 7:3-4**
- The word for **plank** is a joist or a log that holds up the roof; and the word for **speck** is a particle, a chip or a **sliver causing an irritation** in one way or another.
- The word for **consider** means to observe by **fixing one's eyes** or mind upon someone or something.

- Jesus taught that believers should not look upon the **servant of another** with an attitude of irritation when we have issues of our own to fix our eyes upon and work on.
- It is a **common attitude** among believers to **judge** other believers by the religious cultural standard or tradition that makes us the most comfortable.
- Yet at the same time standing in **judgment** towards another religious cultural standard or tradition as being unacceptable before the Lord and the Church.
- This causes us to elevate an issue of taste, custom, or culture as the **standard for spiritual maturity**.

- When people look at themselves through the **lens of the Cross** and others through that same **perfect work of Jesus** it makes it unreasonable to **judge** anybody else or ourselves from the **human standards** of a culture or a tradition!
- But with me it is a very small thing that I should be **judged** by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even **judge** myself. For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not **justified** by this; but He who **judges** me is the Lord.”-**1 Corinthians 4:3-4**

- Ask ourselves what issues divide the Church today and then ask ourselves if the division is a matter of my **own opinion confirmed by others** with the same opinion or if the issue is **confirmed according to Word of God?**
- “How dare we reject a person whom God has accepted? Indeed, the best way to determine what our **attitude** to the other person should be is to determine what **God’s attitude** to them is. This principle is better than the golden rule [to treat others as we would treat ourselves]. It is safe to treat others as we would like them to treat us, but it is **safer still to treat them as God does**”. –Stott, John

Romans 14:5-6

“One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.

The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God”

Attitude Of Being Fully Convinced

- In the early Church there were various opinions concerning **days** of the week.
- There were three prominent views:
 1. Some saw the holy days of the Nation of Israel as being sacred to follow rigorously.
 2. Some saw special days within Roman culture as being holy.
 3. Some saw every day alike.
- “Therefore let **no one pass judgment** on you in questions of food and drink, or with regard to a festival or a new moon or a Sabbath.”-**Colossians 2:16**

- **Days** meant nothing in the sight of God for Paul and so Paul's **attitude** toward **days** was one of indifference.
- Paul knew, that, “These are a shadow of the things to come, but the **substance belongs to Christ.**”- **Colossians 2:17**
- Paul is exhorting each believer to think through their **attitude** towards days and meats that they partake.
- This is important: **Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.**-**Vs. 4**
- In other words each believer should **think through** their **attitude** about controversial things until he becomes **fully convinced** in their own mind about certain issues that may bring disagreements among believers.
- The word for **fully convinced** means to **fully know** and to be **able to prove**. **This proof should come through His Word.**

- The verb form for being **fully convinced** is in the present tense and passive voice.
- The passive voice describes the influence that being **fully convinced** is having upon our **attitude** and our soul of the person as we, "...grow up in every way into him".-**Ephesians 4:15**
- This convincing takes place as we continually learn and **grow in the grace and knowledge** of our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ."-**2 Peter 3:18**
- Old religious standards are replaced by new ones and even when the religious standard itself does not change the influence of our **attitude toward** the religious standard changes.

- How do we think this through and become **fully convinced** in our minds about certain issues, tastes, and customs?
 1. **What does the Bible say or is it a human viewpoint?**
 2. **Does the Bible forbid or permit some practice or does it leave it up to a matter of conscience?**
- It is only when that standard finds its source in the Word, the mind of Christ, that our confidence can transcend a human viewpoint
- "We are to seek to educate our conscience, and have the humility to acknowledge where we have been wrong."-Keller, Timothy

Attitude of Honor

- The most important thing in all matters is that our **attitude** should seek to **honor of the Lord** in all that we do.
- As believers we will come to varying opinions about what it means in practice about matters of faith but **submission to Jesus Christ's Lordship** is our primary goal.
- “He **must** increase, but I **must** decrease.”-**John 3:30**
- “It will not suffice to hold that there is One whom all ought to honor and adore, unless we are also persuaded that He is the fountain of every good, and that we must seek nothing elsewhere than in Him.”-Calvin, John

- When believer's have an **attitude of honor** towards the Lord it should produce a heart of **thankfulness** for the things in life that we receive from Him.
- In **Ephesians 5:18b;20**, this **attitude of thanksgiving** is seen as a direct result of the work of the Holy Spirit in us: **Be filled with the Spirit...giving thanks** always and for everything to God the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.”
- “If I partake with **thankfulness**, why am I denounced because of that for which I **give thanks**? So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to **the glory of God**.”-**1 Corinthians 10:30-31**
- “Let the word of Christ dwell in you richly, teaching and admonishing one another in all wisdom, singing psalms and hymns and spiritual songs, with **thankfulness in your hearts** to God.

- And whatever you do, in word or deed, do everything in the name of the Lord Jesus, **giving thanks** to God the Father through him.”-**Colossians 3:16-17**
- In **giving thanks to God** for His free gifts we recognize that we did not earn it or deserve it which is grace and all **honor** is due back **to the Lord** for His goodness to us!
- In **giving thanks to God** for His free gifts we are **thankful** with an **attitude of humility** that is a response to grace and again all **honor** is due back **to the Lord** for His goodness to us!
- “For it is all for your sake, so that as grace extends to more and more people it **may increase thanksgiving**, to the glory of God.”-**2 Corinthians 4:15**

Romans 14:7-9

“For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord.

So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living."

Life and Death

- The word **for** connects verses 7-9, to the previous statement: In **honor** of the Lord and giving **thanks** to God (Vs.6).
- As believers our **life** and our **death** the two things that are the most precious to each one of us are in the hands of the Lord.
- **We are the Lord's** and we belong to Him.
- Lord is in charge of our **life** and of our **death** and of our eternal life and eternal destiny; thus all honor and thanks are His and His alone.
- It is an illusion to believe that we are in control of anything about our **life** or our **death** thus maybe the **Lord** is in control also of the details that arise in our everyday struggle within the Church.

- **For none of us lives to himself, and no one dies to himself:** As believers we need to recognize that **no man is an island** unto himself.-**Vs.7**
- We are all interconnected through the Lordship of Jesus; **whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's.**-**Vs.8**
- **Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord.** It is not our place to take the place of the Lord in another's persons life.-**Vs.9**
- "There is only one lawgiver and judge, he who is able to save and to destroy. But **who are you to judge your neighbor?**"-**James 4:12**
- When we judge we are doing what only belongs to Jesus Christ **the Lord both of the dead and of the living.**-**Vs.-9**

Romans 14:10-12

"Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God;

for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.”

Judgment Seat

- But why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother?-Vs.10
- The use of both **judgment** and **despise** points us back to what Paul had spoken about in **verses 3-4**.
- The immature weak believer found it easy to **judge** his brother **judging** him as an unspiritual meat-eater-compromiser.
- The mature strong believer found it easy to **despise** his brother **judging** him as an uptight legalistic.
- Jesus Christ alone is worthy of praise and qualified to be the **Judge**; we are not.

- **Every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God** is a quote from **Isaiah 45:23**.
- Paul quotes **Isaiah** to highlight the truth that all people will have to appear before God and **give account of himself before God**.
- If we know this truth we should let God deal with our brother in Christ.
- The **judgment seat of God** is called the **bema seat** and is "... equivalent to the **judge's seat** in the Olympic Games. After each game, the winners came before the judge's seat to receive crowns for first, second and third places. Likewise, the Christian's works will be tested by fire, and he'll be rewarded for those which remain... The **judgment seat** of Christ is only concerned with a **Christian's rewards** and position in the kingdom, **not with his salvation**".-Smith, Chuck

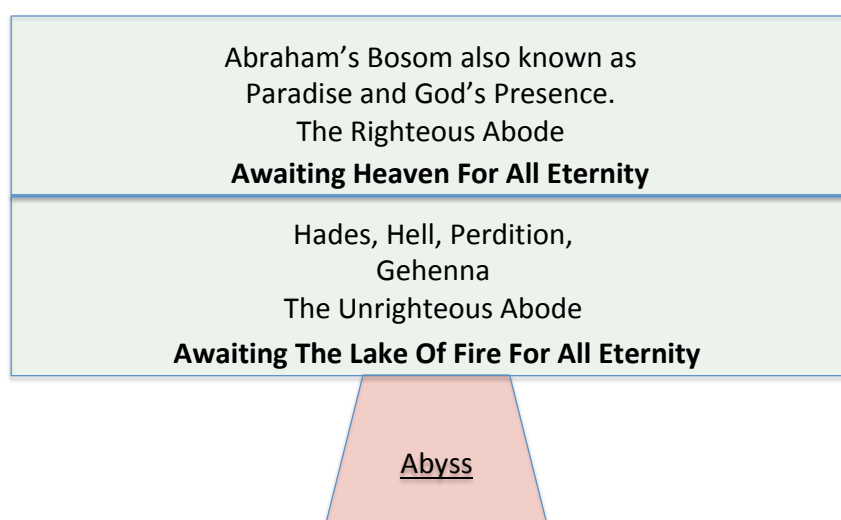
- "For no one can lay a **foundation** other than that which is laid, which is **Jesus Christ**...If the **work** that anyone has **built** on the foundation survives, he will **receive a reward**. If anyone's work is burned up, he will suffer loss, though **he** himself will be **saved**, but only as through fire."-**1 Corinthians 3:11;14-15**
- "For we must all appear before the **judgment seat of Christ**, so that each one may **receive** what is **due** for what he has done in the body, whether good or evil."-**2 Corinthians 5:10**
- "A great deal that is called Christian work may be only the energy of the flesh. It is not done for the glory of God at all. What motives actuate us [good or evil motives]? How do we feel if others are preferred before us? This is a good way to test ourselves as to whether what we are doing is for the Lord."- Ironside, H.I.

- “Then I saw a **great white throne** and him who was seated on it. From his presence earth and sky fled away, and no place was found for them. And I saw the dead, great and small, **standing before the throne**, and books were opened. Then another book was opened, which is **the book of life**. And the dead were judged by what was written in the books, according to what they had done...And if anyone’s name was not **found** written in the **book of life**, he was thrown into the lake of fire.”-**Revelation 20:11-12;15**
- “But because of your hard and impenitent heart you are storing up wrath for yourself on the **day of wrath** when God’s righteous judgment will be revealed. He will render to each one according to his works: to those who by patience in well-doing seek for glory and honor and immortality, **he will give eternal life**; but for those who are self-seeking and do not obey the truth, but obey unrighteousness, there will be **wrath and fury**.”-**Romans 2:5-8**

- We were told in **Romans 10:9-10**, “If you **confess** with your mouth that **Jesus is Lord** and **believe** in your **heart** that God raised him from the dead, **you will be saved**. For with the heart one believes and is justified, and with the mouth one confesses and is saved.”
- “So that at the name of Jesus every knee should bow, in heaven and on earth and under the earth, and **every tongue confess** that **Jesus Christ is Lord**, to the glory of God the Father.”-**Philippians 2:10-11**
- Jesus is the only One that we must **give an account** (vs.12) He is our Lord and the One only true **Judge**.
- For **every knee shall bow and every tongue shall confess** (vs. 11) that Jesus Christ is the Lord. If a person has confessed that **Jesus is Lord** and believes in his heart to live for Him as Lord then that person is saved and will **stand before the judgment seat of God**.-Vs. 10

<u>The Two Judgments Compared</u>	
2 Corinthians 5:10; Romans 14:10	Revelation 20:11,12, 13, 14, 15
Judgment Seat of Christ	Great White Throne Judgment
Only believers	Only unbelievers
Before the 1000 year reign of Jesus or immediately after death during the 1000 year reign	After the 1000 year reign of Jesus Before the New Heaven and Earth
Determines rewards for service. Rewards are not all equal.	Determines eternal judgment in the Lake of Fire

Where Do The Dead Go Today



**Luke
16:19-31**

Romans 14:13

“Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. ”

Proper Judgment

- **Judgment** and **decide** are the same word in the original Greek text.-**Vs.13**
- Paul says to not **pass judgment any longer** on our brothers and sisters in Christ but rather **decide never to put a stumbling block** in the way of a brother; the choice is ours to make.
- So Paul is saying do not **judge** others but instead make a **judgment** on your self regarding what your actions will be towards each other.
- “Here now is indeed a field for **judging!** and it is ourselves, not our brother, which we are to **judge!**”-Newell, William

- The Greek word for **stumbling block** is *proskomma* which describes **tripping up** of a believer causing him to sin.
- The word for **hindrance** is the Greek word *skandalon* which describes: A trigger of a trap on which the bait was placed when touched springs to entrap the animal. It **always denotes enticement**.
- “We might stumble or cause our brother to fall in two ways. We can discourage or beat them down through our **legalism** against them, or we can do it by enticing them to sin through an unwise use of our **liberty**.”-Guzick, David
- “But take care lest this **liberty** of yours somehow become a **stumbling block** to the weak.”- **1 Corinthians 8:9**

- “It was one thing for God to lay the stumbling stone of Christ in the path of his people (**Romans 9:33**). It is quite another for the self-consciously 'strong' to do so.”-Dunn, James
- The Lord Jesus Christ is a **stumbling block** to people who choose to remain in their sin by refusing to believe in Him and His offer of salvation. In this case He is a **Rock of offense** to their sinful lifestyle.
- “So the honor is for you who **believe**, but for those who **do not believe**, ‘The stone that the builders rejected has become the cornerstone’, and ‘A stone of **stumbling**, and a **rock of offense**.’ They **stumble** because they disobey the word, as they were destined to do.”-**1 Peter 2:7-8**

- “Whoever loves his brother abides in the light, and in him there is no cause for **stumbling**.”-**1 John 2:8**
- Love poured into our heart by the Holy Spirit creates the light of the Gospel in us of which there is no cause for **enticing** another believer to **stumble**.
- “Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is **freedom**.”-**2 Corinthians 3:17**
- The Holy Spirit directs all Believers including ourselves to **look unto Jesus** where the **true liberty** of the **Gospel** is given for us to grow in the grace and knowledge of the Lord.

- “For you were called to **freedom**, brothers. Only do not use your **freedom** as an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another. ”-**Galatians 5:13**
- Jesus had more **freedom** than anyone who ever walked this earth and yet He used His **freedom** through love to serve. This is the pattern as believers we are encouraged to follow.
- It is a fallacy to think that **freedom** is “the right to do whatever my heart desires.” Instead, **freedom** is given to do what we should do before God in service for others.
- “It is all too easy for people to place ‘ministry’ or “being right” above love in the body of Christ. We **must** do ministry, and we **must** be right, but we **must** do it all in love – if not in perfect actions, then following with proper repentance.”- Guzick, David

Romans 14:14-15

“I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. ”

Walk In Love

- Paul is fully **persuaded** and totally confident in what he claimed that **nothing is unclean in itself**. -Vs. 14
- Paul **knows** and was **persuaded** but it did not come from himself but is rooted **in the Lord Jesus**. -Vs. 14
- The **Lord Jesus** taught that the distinction between ceremonially clean and unclean food had ended (**Mark 7:15-23**).
- Jesus taught that it was not what goes **into** the body that defiles a person but what comes **out** of a person that defiles him.

- There are some foods that may not be good for you but it is not unclean in a religious sense.
- There simply is no moral or spiritual issues when it comes to the food that we eat.
- However Paul knew that for some their conscience speaks to them that **it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean**. -Vs.14
- In this case if your **brother is grieved** then don't use your liberty to **destroy the one for whom Christ died**. -Vs. 15
- "Conscience alone is not an infallible guide as to the right or wrong of a thing in itself; but to act against one's conscience, even when it is misguided, is always wrong." - Vine, W.E.

- An issue occurs when the mature believer who comprehends the liberty given to him in Christ does not **walk in love** but instead uses his liberty to hurt the immature believer with the things that are non-essential.-**Vs. 15**
- We can place a hindrance in a brother's way that can hurt him or worse a stumbling block that could cause him to turn from Christ.-**Vs. 13**
- We are reminded of the value of each believer **for whom Christ died**.-**Vs. 15**
- “The work of redemption that Christ has wrought for him is cancelled, and all that great and beneficent scheme is hindered of its operation by an **act of thoughtlessness**...on the part of a fellow Christian”-Sanday, William

Romans 14:16-19

“So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding

A Good Attitude

- The believer's liberty in Jesus is a **good** thing but if it is causing a weaker believer to be destroyed then our liberty could be **spoken of as evil**. -Vs. 16
- The Kingdom of God does not function based upon material things that concern issues like **eating** and **drinking**. -Vs. 17
- Paul clears the nonsense of all the traditions of men. The Catholic tradition of no-meat-on-Fridays and other traditions of who are only vegetarian.
- The **Kingdom of God** is **righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit** and these are the virtues that we should pursue with all of our heart as servants of the King.

- Believers are **acceptable to God** by **serving** His Son Jesus.-**Vs. 18**
- This **service** is not in the do's and do not's of **eating** or **drinking** but in **righteousness, peace, and joy**.
- Jesus said, "If any man **serve** Me, him will the Father honor" (**John 12:26**).
- "for it is God who **works in you**, both to will and to **work for his good pleasure**."-**Philippians 2:13**
- Now may the God of peace who brought up our Lord Jesus from the dead, that great Shepherd of the sheep, through the blood of the everlasting covenant, make you complete in **every good work to do His will, working in you what is well pleasing in His sight...**-**Hebrews 13:20-21**
- In **serving Christ**, God the Father, works in us to do His will and He works in us through the Holy Spirit that which is **acceptable to Him**.-**Vs. 18**

- Believers can rejoice in the liberty provided to us in Christ with a good attitude that **makes for peace** with others.-**Vs. 19**
- A good attitude looks towards a **mutual building up** of one another with the Gospel **acceptable to God and approved by men**.-**Vs. 19**
- **Pursue** in **verse 19**, means to strive hard towards a mark or a goal.
- "So let us **pursue** the things of peace and of helping others. There is no more direct and effectual path away from yourself...You must study the state and need of others, and **build up their need**."-Newell, William

Romans 14:20-21

“Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.”

A Bad Attitude

- "Christian history, alas, shows numerous examples of people utterly earnest about nonessentials, who have felt at liberty to break the unity of the Church for the sake of their particular fetish."-Hunter, A.M.
- It is a bad attitude to destroy the unity of the Church and **make another stumble** for the sake of our own liberty.-**Vs.20**
- During weight lifting if you try to get a person to lift too much weight before they are ready the muscle tissue can be injured; therefore rather than helping you can end up hurting and tearing down the muscle.
- Therefore let us determine to let the Holy Spirit do the His work in another believer's life and let us determine to not **do anything that causes your brother to stumble.**"-**Vs. 21**

Romans 14:22-23

“The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves.

But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.”

Faith Conviction

- Liberty should be a result of conviction and conviction is a result of **faith between yourself and God.**-Vs. 22
- “Now **faith** is the assurance of things hoped for, the **conviction** of things not seen.”-**Hebrews 11:1**
- **Faith** conviction needs to be defended by what the **Word of God** claims for our life.
- “So **faith** comes from hearing, and hearing through the **word of Christ.**”-**Romans 10:17**

- "... blessed is he who never judges himself in what he values, who has learned never to trust his own judgment regarding any value but ever **goes to God's Word** for God's judgment and regards as **valuable only** what that judgment approves!"-Lenski, Richard
- There are issues in our life that God may challenge us to give up but instead we go on **approving** them in our life and thus in doing so we **pass judgment on ourselves.**-Vs. 22
- **Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself (vs.22)** because that person seeks to **structure his life** according to what the **Word of God** proclaims.

- If a believer doubts and thinks in his own mind an issue is wrong for him to do then it would be wrong because it **does not proceed from faith**.-vs.23
- Paul concludes with the principle by which we can consider whether or not areas in our life are gray or not. If we can't do it out of **faith** in God and confirmed by His Word then it is **sin**.
- "Whatever is done without the conviction that God has approved it is by definition sin. God has called us to a life of faith. Trust is the willingness to put all of life before God for his approval. Any doubt concerning an action automatically removes that action from the category of that which is acceptable."-Mounce, Robert