

Romans-Chapter 14

Rom 14:1 As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions.

As a part of the Gentile's idolatrous worship practices the eating of these meats was a continuation of the sacrifice that was made at their temples. If a weak brother or sister in Christ saw another eating such meat they might consider it as a part of idol worship, not being able to discern that it was just meat fit to consume for the nourishment of the body.

Chip Foster- Watchman Magazine-4/14/11

- **weak in faith-** This would have been a newly converted saint who recently came to the understanding that there is only one true **God** and that those idols that meats were sacrificed to were mere creations of men. Those same meats offered for sale in the market place were known as such and either he would feel that it was permitted to worship the idols they were offered to, or his conscience **would not** allow him to purchase them thus distinguishing him from the brother who had been a **Christian** for some time who **would**. To him, meat was meat.

1Co 8:10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? **11** And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom **Christ** died. **12** Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their **conscience when it is weak**, you sin against **Christ**.

Today it might be the same as going to a restaurant that serves alcoholic beverages. Just eating there may not be a sin but to a newer convert it might well be enough to "wound" his "weak conscience".

- **welcome-** **Gk.4355-** *to take to oneself, that is, admit (to friendship or hospitality).* Sometimes cliques develop with the more knowledgeable brethren in some and the less understanding in others. Such is not to be. We are all equal in **Christ**. From the newest convert to the oldest saint. How else can the younger be taught but by the elder.

- **quarrel over opinions-** We are to receive those who are "weaker" (*in this case, newer*) in their knowledge of the gospel without trying to change their ideas on matters pertaining primarily to that of opinion. To force a debate, on faithful **babes in Christ**, to submit to ideas (*obviously not doctrinal teachings*) that are of a personal judgment is strictly forbidden. When opinions don't match up with doctrine we **are** to intervene. Too often there are those within congregations who stalk newer members in order to make them part of their "*clubs*" when it comes to opinion or doctrines they pass off as opinion.

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Rom 14:2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables.

- The meat eating brethren were not to try to force the vegetarian brethren to eat meat even though he understood that meats offered to idols were just that, meats offered to a piece of wood or other substance that was used to make a dumb idol.

1Co 12:2 You know that when you were pagans you were led astray to mute idols, however you were led.

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Rom 14:3 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.

- Not only is the stronger Christian, who eats both meats and vegetables, to acknowledge and receive his weaker counterpart, with whom he may not agree, into the fellowship, the weaker one has to understand that his opinion on being a vegetarian is not to put a rift between them, thinking less of his more carnivorous brethren. God accepts both! They were to be sensitive to each other's "opinions".

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Rom 14:4 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.

- Those who were doing the unscriptural judging of others were assuming the role that only Christ is to take since He was the One Who died giving only Him that authority. The correct context of others in the Lord's church are considered as being the servant (*Gk.3610- a fellow resident*) of God and as such are **not** to pass judgment (*Gk.2919- condemn*) according to each other's "opinions".

Jas 4:12 There is only one Lawgiver and Judge, He Who is able to save and to destroy. But who are you to judge your neighbor?

The word for "servant" here is "*οικετης*" (*punctuation on the second syllable*). This is significant because of the implication being in the context. In Rom 1:1; 6:16-17, 20 the word for "servant" is "*δουλος*" which means "a slave" and not "fellow resident" thus showing here the equality that exists between Christians in God's eyes.

- **Master**- *Gk.2962*- supreme in authority: -God, Lord, master. It is God Who ultimately decides who stands or falls when it comes to matters of opinion. Especially when an opinion is made a test of fellowship. Both the stronger and the weaker in their respective judgments will be upheld (*Gk.2476- establish*). And if God will not pass judgment on matters of personal opinion (*not doctrinal truth here because the truth contains no opinion, only fact*) then as His creation we are not to do otherwise.

- **stand**- *Gk.2476*- to stand: -establish. Since the Lord is able (*Gk.1415- powerful or capable*) to establish each Christian, the weak and the strong, the one is not to bind his own opinion on the other.

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Rom 14:5 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.

Col 2:16 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. **17** These are a shadow of the things to come, but the substance belongs to **Christ**.

- The two men in question here are a **Jewish Christian** and a **Gentile Christian**. The **Jewish** convert was fully convinced in his own mind that the feasts, especially the Passover, under the **Old Covenant** were still to be kept in order to keep his conscience clear (*as long as he didn't bind them on the church*). He had been raised up recognizing them and all of a sudden putting them aside would feel uncomfortable. Especially the sabbath where he was always taught that working on the sabbath was an offense to **God** to the point of making it punishable by death (*Ex 31:14*) if anyone did any manual labor on **Saturdays**. Just like a newly converted person who came out of a denomination that celebrated Christmas and Easter all their lives and now find out that those holidays don't really have the sacred meaning to them that they were brought up believing. In this case the **Gentile** convert didn't see anything to the old **Jewish** feasts because he wasn't brought up as a **Jew** thus he would esteem all days alike and still be fully convinced in his own mind on it. When **Paul** wrote to the church at Colossae he reminded them that the substance (*Gk.4983- body [as a sound whole]*) belongs to Christ (*Col 2:17*), meaning that they were all, **Jew** and **Gentile** alike, brethren because of their baptism having made them part of the same family of **God** (*Gal 3:26-28*).

Gal 4:3 In the same way we also, when we were children, were enslaved to the elementary principles of the world (*the Mosaic law*). **4** But when the fullness of time had come, **God** sent forth **His Son**, born of woman, **born under the law**, **5 to redeem those who were under the law**, so that we might receive **adoption as sons** (*Gk.5206- [figuratively Christian sonship in respect to God]*).

- Although written by **Paul**, he still kept some of the feasts and rituals that he was brought up on but mainly for the purpose of winning some of the **Jews**.

1Co 9:20 To the **Jews** I became as a **Jew**, in order to win **Jews**. To those under the law I became as one under the law (though not being myself under the law) that I might win those under the law. **21** To those outside the law (**Gentiles**) I became as one outside the law (not being outside the law of **God** but under the law of **Christ**) that I might win those outside the law. **22** To the weak I became weak, that I might win the weak. I have become all things to all people, that by all means I might save some.

“The end of this verse says we are to make decisions we are comfortable with when dealing with matters of opinion.”

Brad Price

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Rom 14:6 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.

- observes- Gk.5426- to exercise the mind, that is, entertain or have a sentiment or opinion: -set the affection on. “*φρονων την ημεραν*”- Thayer: “to regard a day, observe it as sacred”. (Pg. 658)

- in honor of the Lord- “What is being done is done with a good conscience and no one is guilty of sin.” Brad Price

- The one who eats- This is speaking of the stronger brother who eats meats (v. 2).

1Ti 4:1 Now the Spirit expressly says that in later times some will depart from the faith by devoting themselves to deceitful spirits and teachings of demons, 2 through the insincerity of liars whose consciences are seared, 3 who forbid marriage and **require abstinence from foods that God created to be received with thanksgiving** by those who believe and know the truth. 4 For **everything created by God is good**, and **nothing is to be rejected if it is received with thanksgiving**, 5 for it is **made holy by the word of God and prayer**.

- the one who abstains- This is speaking of the weaker brother who is a vegetarian. He too is to receive his food “with thanksgiving... For it is made holy by the word of God and prayer”.

Rom 14:7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself.

“Christians belong to someone else-Jesus Christ. We belong to the Lord because He has bought us.” “This means there is more to our life than our day-to-day existence. God holds the deed to our soul.” Brad Price

Rom 14:8 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.

- we- Referring to the weak and strong brethren, we all belong to the Lord. Along with being owned by Christ because He bought us with His blood, He not only owns us in this life, but in the life to come. Our deaths should be as faithful saints in order for His ownership to continue after this life is passed when He presents us to His Father.

1Co 15:24 Then comes the end, when He delivers the kingdom to God the Father after destroying every rule and every authority and power.

“Only our owner (the Lord) can make rules regarding matters of opinion. God has ruled that in matters of opinion we get to decide what is right for us.”

Brad Price

Rom 14:9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, that He might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.

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- For to this end- There is a reason that **Christ** came to this earth to experience humanity, suffer, die and be resurrected.

Rom 6:9 We know that **Christ**, being raised from the dead, will never die again; death no longer has dominion over **Him**.

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- that He might be Lord- **Lord**- **Gk.2961**- to rule. In the kingdom promised to **Him** (**Dan 7:14**) **Jesus** as her head (**Eph 5:23**) has all authority (**Mat 28:18**) over those who have died and gone into paradise and those who are alive and remain faithful until **His** coming again. (**1 Thes 4:15-18**)

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- of the dead and of the living- (**See Lk 16**) Can someone rule over a lifeless corpse?

“Since the dead can only be “ruled over” if they are conscious, this verse teaches that people are conscious after death.”

Brad Price

Mat 22:31 And as for the resurrection of the dead, have you not read what was said to you by God: **32** 'I am the God of Abraham, and the God of Isaac, and the God of Jacob'? He is not God of the dead, but of the living."

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Rom 14:10 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 [Christ];

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- judgment- **Gk.2919**- to *distinguish*, that is, to *decide*; by implication to *try*: -call in question. When matters of opinion are in discussion, neither the weaker nor the stronger brother's opinion out ranks the other's. And calling each other in question on such is not only wrong but forbidden.
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- despise- **Gk.1848**- A variation of **Gk.1847** (to *make utterly nothing of*, that is, *despise*) and meaning the same: -contemptible, least esteemed. One brother, for whatever reason, looked down upon another. It might have been for racial (*Jew/Gentile*) or for religious reasons (*having to do with “holy days” or meats*) but whatever it was, **Paul** addressed it here since it must have been a specific problem within the church at Rome at that time.
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- we will all stand- All classes. Since **Christians** are servants of **Christ**, as servants we have no authority over each other, no matter what societal plain we may be on. We are all equal in **God's** sight and as such we are to be the same in each other's since we are not above **God**. The difference between brethren will come out at the final judgment of **Christ** when **He** separates the sheep from the goats (**Mat 25:32-33**).

Gal 3:28 There is neither **Jew** nor **Greek**, there is neither slave nor free, there is no male and female, for you are all one in **Christ Jesus**.

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Rom 14:11 for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God."

- it is written- Paul here quoting Isaiah 45:23.

Isa 45:23 By **Myself** I have sworn; from **My** mouth has gone out in righteousness a word that shall not return: "To Me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear allegiance."

- every knee- Not just the **Christian**, but every agnostic, atheist, Buddhist, Hindu, Muslim etc. will acknowledge, and in reverence submit to, **Jesus' Lordship** and deity. There will then be no choice that exists now.
- tongue- Gk.1100- by implication a *language* (specifically one naturally unacquired). Whether speaking of individuals and their own individual voices or nations around the world with their different languages, every human of every language will appear at the judgment to be judged.

- confess- Gk.1843- to *acknowledge* or (by implication to *assent*) *agree fully*. Thayer: to profess, i.e., to acknowledge openly and joyfully to one's honor, i.e. to celebrate, give praise to. If it is not done in this life when there is opportunity to do so before men, it will be done before **God** when there will be no turning back. Why else is it so necessary now? If it wasn't, then all who profess **Christ** through obedience to **His** will and who suffer trial and tribulation will have done it all for nought.

Php 2:11 and every tongue confess (*Gk.1843*) that **Jesus Christ** is **Lord**, to the glory of **God the Father**.

Mat 10:32 **So everyone who acknowledges** (*Gk.3670- to assent, acknowledge. Thayer: to profess one's self the worshipper of one*) **Me before men, I also will acknowledge before My Father Who is in Heaven, 33 but whoever denies Me before men, I also will deny before My Father Who is in Heaven.**

Rom 14:12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- account- Gk.3056 (logos)- something *said; reasoning* (the mental faculty) or *motive*. We will only be responsible for ourselves on that day. If our sins haven't been covered by the blood of the **Lamb**, our motives will be exposed for what they truly are; sinful.

2Co 5:10 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.

Rom 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.

"Let us no longer have the habit of criticizing one another." Robertson

- stumblingblock- Gk.4348- a *stub*, that is, (figuratively) *occasion of apostasy*.
- hindrance- Gk.4625- A “scandal”; a *trap stick (bent sapling)*, that is, *snare* (figuratively *cause of displeasure or sin*).

“Here the snare was based upon “eating habits” (*Exegetical Dictionary of the New Testament, 3:249*); i.e. the eating of foods which made some uncomfortable.” “Paul used food to illustrate his point.”

Brad Price

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Rom 14:14 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.

- persuaded- Gk.3982- to *convince* (by argument, true or false); to *assent* (to evidence or authority), to *rely* (by inward certainty): -trust, yield.
- in the Lord Jesus- Paul, who understood the concept of “clean” and “unclean” meats, here states that now as a Christian (*having been baptized into Christ*) things changed under Christ’s authority to which he yielded.

Rom 7:1 Or do you not know, brothers--for I am speaking to those who know the law (*Jewish converts*)--that the law is binding on a person only as long as he lives?

Mar 7:18 And He said to them, "Then are you also without understanding? Do you not see that whatever goes into a person from outside cannot defile him, since it enters not his heart but his stomach, and is expelled?" (Thus He declared all foods clean.) (*Gk.1033-food [literally or figuratively], especially [ceremonial] articles allowed or forbidden by the Jewish law.*)

- nothing is unclean- (*1 Tim 4:1-5*)

Act 10:13 And there came a voice to him: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." 14 But Peter said, "By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean." 15 And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common."

“Anyone who taught that some forms of food had to be avoided taught a demonic doctrine.”

Brad Price

- in itself, but- Jewish converts were so ingrained with the Old Covenant system of clean and unclean foods that they were having a very difficult time understanding that it was finally permitted for them to eat things like pork. Likewise, the Gentile converts who, from childhood, ate meat that was offered to idols. But allowance was to be made for them both for “conscience sake”.

“Paul said if people thought it was wrong to eat certain foods, it was wrong (wrong for them, not everyone else). People were to live in such a way that they could have a clean conscience.”
Brad Price

1Co 10:29 I do **not mean your conscience, but his**. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience?

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Rom 14:15 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.

- One of the outward signs that a person was **Jewish** and set apart from all other nations was the law, only to **Israel**, that animals declared unclean (*from Gen 7 on*) were to be avoided to the point of not even touching them (*like the tree of the knowledge of good and evil- Gen 2:17*) lest they become defiled (*Lev 7:21*). With such conviction in a law that was ingrained into the minds of a people from cradle to grave, it would have taken some time to accept such a drastic change. He same could be said about the **Gentile** who was brought up with the understanding that to eat any meat offered to an idol would only have been a continuation of its worship. **Paul** was reprimanding those brethren who understood the truth in this matter but then flaunted that knowledge buy eating said meats in an open, unloving manner.

McGuiggan (p. 395) asked an excellent question: “What will we take in exchange for a brother’s soul? Would it be food? Drink? Money? Being right? What is so valuable that it destroys the soul of another Christian? We cannot run roughshod over fellow brethren and please God.”

- destroy- Gk.622- *to destroy fully(reflexively to perish, or lose)*, literally or figuratively: -perish. The use of this word by **Paul** only shows how grave a matter it would be if a weak brother is lost because of a strong brother taking his liberties for granted. **Christ** did not just die for the more knowledgeable, more affluent members of the church any more than **He** did for those who were/are less esteemed. It would be the height of arrogance to think otherwise.

The true responsibility of the strong members in the church is to carry along, even protect, those who are newer to the faith but without condescension. The only way a babe in **Christ** might mature is to start out on the milk of the word (*Heb 5:13*). Just as you can’t force feed a newborn baby to eat steak, a newly converted **Christian** should not be expected to grasp the knowledge expected of the mature saint.

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Rom 14:16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil.

“Any Christian who is truly strong will defend, protect, and compassionately love those who are weak. The strong have liberties, but if these rights crush and hurt a son or daughter of God, or would subject our life to ridicule and slander from the unsaved, it is better to abandon the freedom.”
Brad Price

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Rom 14:17 For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

- The kingdom (*church*) can be harmed when those outside in the world witness wrongdoing going on within and could get the impression that our faults are no different from those of any other religious establishment. That's why **opinions** on certain foods or **other** abrasive topics are not of what the kingdom is to consist. That's not what she was designed for.
- righteousness- Gk.1343- *equity* (of character or act); specifically (Christian) *justification*: -righteousness. Webster defines equity as: fairness, impartiality, justice. This is especially necessary of the **Christian** whose sins have been expunged. He/she is to be fair, just and impartial (*in a godly way*) toward fellow saints no matter how far they are in their walk. This is to be a hallmark of the church.
- peace- Gk.1515- *peace* (literally or figuratively); by implication *prosperity*. The only way the church can thrive/prosper is if members "live peaceably with all". (*Rom 12:18*) This cannot be possible when opinions are used as a test of fellowship.

Mat 5:9 **Blessed are the peacemakers: for they shall be called sons of God.**

- joy- Gk.5479- *cheerfulness*, that is, *calm delight*: -gladness. An outward sign of the **Christian** is to be this cheerfulness because of our knowing the scheme of redemption. Once we understand the cost we were spared by **Jesus'** coming it should give us a sense of appreciation that those outside **must** see. Just because the world (*and sometimes our individual lives*) is in such a bad shape we, as **Christians**, are to always be outwardly positive knowing of the home that awaits us because this is not all there is.
- in the Holy Spirit- Only those who are in **Christ** enjoy the fellowship with all of its fruits located here. One being the "down payment" (*guarantee -Eph 1:14*) on that heavenly home that awaits the just at **His** coming.

Eph 1:9 making known to us the mystery of **His** will, according to **His** purpose, which **He** set forth in **Christ 10** as a plan for the fullness of time, to **unite all things in Him**, things in **Heaven** and things on earth. **11 In Him we have obtained an inheritance**, having been predestined according to the purpose of **Him Who** works all things according to the counsel of **His** will, **12** so that we who were the first to hope in **Christ** might be to the praise of **His** glory. **13** In **Him** you also, when you heard the word of truth, the gospel of your salvation, and believed in **Him**, **were sealed with the promised Holy Spirit, 14 Who is the guarantee of our inheritance until we acquire possession of it**, to the praise of **His** glory.

Gal 5:22 But the fruit of the **Spirit** is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness, **23** gentleness, self-control; against such things there is no law. **24** And those **who belong to Christ Jesus** have crucified the flesh with its passions and desires. **25** If we **live** (*Thayer: to be actuated by the Spirit [pg. 270]. If we have been put to action...*) by the **Spirit**, let us also

walk (*Gk.4748- to march in [military] rank [keep step], that is, [figuratively] to conform to virtue and piety: -walk [orderly]*) by the Spirit.

- Not everyone who is in the Spirit lives accordingly. By our fruit we are known (*Mat 12:33*).

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Rom 14:18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

“For he who serves Christ in these things is well-pleasing to God, and approved by men” (*MKJV*). When we set aside the eating and drinking issues (*and other non-spiritual issues*) and focus on the real nature and purpose of the body of Christ (*righteousness, peace and joy as defined above*), not only are we voluntarily serving Christ but we are well pleasing to God.

- serves- *Gk.1398- to be a slave to (literally or figuratively, involuntarily or voluntarily): -be in bondage, (do) serve (-ice)*.
- approved by men- This isn't necessarily just speaking of other Christians but does include them. When a believer has his mind set on the above qualities he is automatically going to carry such over into the secular arena of his life. He will be a better citizen, neighbor, employee, etc. because of his service to God. Thus others will be impressed by his good nature having been used to the “norm”.

Heb 13:20 Now may the God of peace Who brought again from the dead our Lord Jesus, the great Shepherd of the sheep, by the blood of the eternal covenant, **21** equip you **with everything good** that you may do His (*God's*) will, working in us that which is **pleasing in His sight, through Jesus Christ, to Whom** be glory forever and ever. Amen.

- Even though this next verse is a qualification necessary for the eldership, it is also one that every Christian, man and woman, should aspire to.

1Ti 3:7 Moreover, he must be **well thought of by outsiders** (*outside the church*), so **that he may not fall into disgrace**, into a snare of the devil.

- Of course not everyone will respect our actions. There are those who become jealous of our good work ethics and the moment they find out of our profession of faith (*Christianity*) they begin to slander that precious Name. Especially in this age of “tolerance”.

1Pe 4:14 If you are insulted for the Name of Christ, you are blessed, because the Spirit of glory and of God rests upon you.

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Rom 14:19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

- So then- With it settled, then, that we are to be well pleasing in God's sight and have such a positive, Christ-like nature as to impress those of the secular world, our constant pursuit is to be for coherence within the body, the church.

- pursue- Gk.1377- to *pursue*; by implication to *persecute*. The same Greek word “having a different but still intense meaning” (Brad Price) is used by Jesus in the following verses to show how important this pursuit for peace truly is.

Mat 5:10 "Blessed are those who are **persecuted** for righteousness' sake, for theirs is the kingdom of Heaven. 11 "Blessed are you when others revile you and **persecute** you and utter all kinds of evil against you falsely on My account. 12 Rejoice and be glad, for your reward is great in Heaven, for so they **persecuted** the prophets who were before you.

Mat 5:44 But I say to you, Love your enemies and pray for those who **persecute** you,

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- There are certain things that promote peace within the brotherhood that are permitted. But some might not be. We are to never compromise truth in order to promote peace or lift someone out of despair by accepting certain opinions, as doctrine, that go against scripture. That would only be promoting the lie. If abstention from certain spiritually legal acts promote peace then so be it. But peace just for the sake of peace doesn't settle anything either. And encouraging a fellow **Christian** by accepting a lie could risk someone's eternal soul.

Examples: Accepting someone into the fellowship who is in an unscriptural marriage or who has been withdrawn from by a sister congregation without restoration, or putting “feelings” over needed/necessary admonishment, just to name a few.

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Rom 14:20 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.

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- For- Gk.1752- *on account of*: -because, for (cause, sake), by reason of. Paul is here making a point that something so trivial shouldn't be the cause of destroying a weaker brother's faith (*the work of God*).

Joh 6:28 Then they said to Him, "What must we do, to be doing the works of God?" 29 Jesus answered them, "**This is the work of God, that you believe in Him Whom He has sent.**"

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- clean- Whether meats that were offered to idols or considered unclean under the Levitical law, Paul here affirms that indeed (Gk.3303- *truly*) there is nothing “that God created” that cannot be consumed as long as it is “received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For everything created by God is good, and nothing to be rejected, if it is received with thanksgiving, for it is made holy by the word of God and prayer” (1 Tim 4:3-5).

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- but- Here is the condition that comes with eating anything that would have been “considered” unclean by a weaker brother. (*To the Jewish convert it would have been pork, to the Gentile convert it would have been meat that was offered to idols.*) Knowingly offending a brother who has less knowledge of the truth concerning this (*or any*) issue (*of offense*), one would be considered wrong (Gk.2556- *depraved, or injurious*) because he does so if it makes another

stumble- (*Gk. 4348- occasion of apostasy: -offence, stumbling [-block,{-stone}]*), i.e., to his own peril. The Lexham English Bible translates this “who eats and stumbles in the process”.

“If we are willing to give our life for a fellow Christian, will we not also surrender some rights if this helps another child of God?”

Brad Price

Joh 15:12 "This is My commandment, that you love one another as I have loved you. **13** Greater love has no one than this, that someone lay down his life for his friends. **14** You are My friends if you do what I command you.

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Rom 14:21 It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

- **to drink wine-** (Thayer: new wine [pg.442]) This would have been the new “unfermented” wine (*Gk.3631*) but since there was no outward distinction between new and old wines, other than the appearance of the skins they were in, some might have mistaken the one for the other and been offended. Paul (*here and in other passages*) had taught concerning the drinking of alcohol as being sin. (*Eph 5:18; 1 Tim 3:3,8; Titus 1:7; 2:3*) This only confirms that teaching.

Mat 9:17 Neither is **new wine** put into old wineskins. If it is, the skins burst and the wine is spilled and the skins are destroyed. But **new wine** is put into fresh wineskins, and so both are preserved."

1Th 5:22 Abstain from every form (*Gk.1491- a view: -appearance*) of evil.

- In conclusion, Paul states that no matter what the issue that would cause a brother to stumble, lose faith or be offended, we should immediately cease from practicing it. Even if we know we are not going against Holy writ (*like when drinking “grape juice” that only looks like wine*).

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Rom 14:22 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.

So whatever you believe about these things, keep it between yourself and God.

God’s Word

- If we are morally convicted concerning an **opinion** (*not doctrine here*) we are to keep it between ourselves and God (*like purchasing groceries from a store that sells alcohol for instance. Some may think it to be wrong but others are okay with it.*). This would eliminate any contention that it might bring by expressing, even to the point of promoting, it to other brethren.

The person who does what he knows is right shouldn't feel guilty. He is blessed.

God’s Word

- Blessed- Gk.3107- *supremely blessed; by extension fortunate, well off*. The same Greek word is used by Jesus in His sermon on the mount in Mat 5. Here it suggests that a Christian with a clean conscience is very fortunate because he doesn't do things that **he feels** to be morally wrong. If he did practice doing those things his conscience would convict him.

Jas 1:5 If any of you lacks wisdom, let him ask God, Who gives generously to all without reproach, and it will be given him. 6 But let him ask **in faith, with no doubting** (*with conviction*), for the one who doubts is like a wave of the sea that is driven and tossed by the wind. 7 For that person must not suppose that he will receive anything from the Lord; 8 he is a **double-minded** (*Gk.1374- two spirited, that is, vacillating [in opinion or purpose]*) man, **unstable in all his ways**.

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Rom 14:23 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.

- When a Christian wavers over an opinion on an act that he feels could possibly condemn him, and continues to do it anyway, he condemns himself (v. 22). Why? Because he continues involving himself in an action that, in his **own** mind, he understands to be sinful. We were all given a conscience for the purpose of convicting us when we do wrong. There are some though, through constantly sinning, "*whose consciences are seared [with a hot iron- KJV]*" (1 Tim 4:2). If we do those things that we feel, and are personally convicted that, are wrong (*but really aren't*) we sin. Sooner or later we will begin to do those things that really are sinful but with a clear conscience. Once we give up the conscience anything we do will be accepted in our own eyes.

Pro 30:12 There are those who are clean in their own eyes but are not washed of their filth.

1Ti 1:5 The aim of our charge is love that issues from a pure heart and a **good conscience** and a sincere faith.

- We are commanded to have a good conscience (*based on truth*). If we don't know the truth on any given subject we are to search it out since He has already given us "the perfect" (1 Cor 13:10) to find it.

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