



THE RESPONSIBILITY TO LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP (part 1)

Romans 14:13-23

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Our Church community and fellowship is built on Jesus Christ alone and we get to experience His grace today. Christ frees us to enjoy all the good gifts that God has graciously given on those who trust in Him. In Romans 14, we looked at the Danger of Criticism and how Paul gives four reasons why all believers should lovingly receive other believers: 1) God Receives All Believers 2) The Lord Sustains Each Believer 3) The Lord is Sovereign Over All Believers 4) The Lord Alone will Judge Every Believer.

Today, we continue with chapter 14 and realize we are not obligated to exercise every freedom we have in Christ. The greater our love and spiritual maturity, the less important those freedoms will be to us. And the more willing we will be to set them aside for the sake of best serving the Lord & having good biblical fellowship with other believers.

Romans 14:13-23

“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. **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. **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. **16** So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. **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. **18** Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. **19** So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding. **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. **21** It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. **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. **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.”

1. Don't CAUSE Your Brother to STUMBLE. (v10-13)

“Live as people who are free, not using your freedom as a cover-up for evil, but living as servants of God.” **1 Peter 2:16**

2. Don't GRIEVE Your Brother (v14-15a)

“For I did not receive it from any man, nor was I taught it, but I received it through a revelation of Jesus Christ.” **Galatians 1:12**

Understanding our Conscience

“They show that the work of the law is written on their hearts, while their conscience also bears witness, and their conflicting thoughts accuse or even excuse them”

Romans 2:15

- CONSCIENCE is a device that God has given to every human being to REACT to His law.
- Conscience doesn't know when to CONVICT or CONFIRM what we do if our foundation of belief is NOT based on the Law of God.
- Our FREEDOM in Christ Has an AFFECT on Others.

*“For I am sure that neither death nor life, nor angels nor rulers, nor things present nor things to come, nor powers, **39** nor height nor depth, nor anything else in all creation, will be able to separate us from the love of God in Christ Jesus our Lord.”*

Romans 8:38-39

*“Let love be genuine. Abhor what is evil; hold fast to what is good. **10** Love one another with brotherly affection. Outdo one another in showing honor.”*

Romans 12:9-10

*“Owe no one anything, except to love each other, for the one who loves another has fulfilled the law.” **Romans 13:8***

THE RESPONSIBILITY TO LOVE AND FELLOWSHIP (part 2)

“I do it all for the sake of the gospel, that I may share with them in its blessings.”

1 Corinthians 9:23

*“So it is not the will of my Father who is in heaven that one of these little ones should perish.” **Matthew 18:14***

3. Don't DEVASTATE Your Brother (v 15b)

*“This is good, and it is pleasing in the sight of God our Savior, **4** who desires all people to be saved and to come to the knowledge of the truth. **5** For there is one God, and there is one mediator between God and men, the man Christ Jesus, **6** who gave himself as a ransom for all, which is the testimony given at the proper time.”*

1 Timothy 2:3-6

4. Don't FORFEIT Your Witness (v 16-19)

“For it has seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us to lay on you no greater burden than these requirements: **29** that you abstain from what has been sacrificed to idols, and from blood, and from what has been strangled, and from sexual immorality. If you keep yourselves from these, you will do well. Farewell.” **Acts 15:28-29**

*“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. **24** Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor. **25** Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience. **26** For “the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.” **27** If one of the unbelievers invites you to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on the ground of conscience. **28** But if someone says to you, “This has been offered in sacrifice,” then do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience— **29** I do not mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's conscience? **30** If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks? **31** So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.” **1 Corinthians 10:23-31***

Ways we can exercise freedom is with two considerations:

- Our freedom may bring DIVISION on the church.
- God's kingdom is not a matter of FOOD and DRINK, but of the BLESSINGS of grace.

Salvation through Jesus Christ

The single most important decision you could ever make is to receive Jesus Christ as your Savior and Lord. The Bible says, all have sinned and fall short of God's glory and we don't deserve eternal life because the wages of sin is death. Yet through God's love, only Christ gives us eternal life by grace through faith... it is a gift of God. God's word says, That 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. The Bible says to REPENT of your sins, BELIEVE in Jesus thereby receiving His forgiveness. And identify with Christ and start living a new life in obedience to God by being BAPTIZED.