

THE EPISTLE OF PAUL THE APOSTLE TO THE
ROMANS

Lesson 18

The APPLICATION of the Righteousness of God:
The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties
(Romans 14:1-23)

THE STRUCTURE OF ROMANS

INTRODUCTION

(1:1-17)

PART 1: The REVELATION of the Righteousness of God (1:18 to 8:39)

PART 2: The VINDICATION of the Righteousness of God (9:1 to 11:36)

PART 3: The APPLICATION of the Righteousness of God (12:1 to 15:13)



(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)

Fulfilling our Christian **DUTY** takes knowing what to do, and doing it.

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(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)



(B) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties (14:1 to 15:13)

Living according to our Christian **LIBERTY** is more complicated. Our right to exercise our freedom in Christ always comes second to our duty to love our neighbor.

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(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)



(B) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties (14:1 to 15:13)

Paul's teaching on our Christian liberties divides into two parts:

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PART 3: The APPLICATION of the Righteousness of God

(12:1 to 15:13)

(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)

(B) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties (14:1 to 15:13)

1) **Principles** of Christian Liberty

(14:1-23)

2) **Practices** of Christian Liberty

(15:1-13)

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(B) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Liberties (14:1 to 15:13)



1) **Principles** of Christian Liberty

(14:1-23)

This is the subject of Romans Chapter 14

Paul has proven to anyone with a heart open to truth that man's righteousness is not dependent on keeping the works of the law.

Romans 10:4

⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Through the work of Christ, we are liberated from the law of righteousness. But in Romans 14, Paul shows that the end of that law does not free us from keeping the two great commandments.

Romans 10:4

⁴ For Christ is the end of the law for righteousness to every one that believeth.

Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:1

- ¹ Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations.

Paul begins with a word of instruction to Christians who know their liberties, but want to argue with others about them.



Romans 14:1

- ¹ **Him that is weak in the faith** receive ye, *but* not to doubtful disputations.

Paul's teaching on Abraham shows the difference between being "weak in faith" and "strong in faith."

Romans 4:19-20

- ¹⁹ And being not **weak in faith**, he considered not his own body now dead, when he was about an hundred years old, neither yet the deadness of Sara's womb:
- ²⁰ He staggered not at the promise of God through unbelief; but was strong in faith, giving glory to God;



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:1

¹ **Him that is weak in the faith** receive ye,
but not to doubtful disputations.

In this verse, to be weak in the faith is to stagger at the promise that righteousness comes only through faith in Christ.



Romans 14:1

¹ Him that is weak in the faith receive ye,
but not to doubtful disputations.

Doubtful disputations – arguments about things one is unsure about.

We should be gracious to Christians who are weak in the faith and not argue with them.



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:2

² For one believeth that he may eat all things:
another, who is weak, eateth herbs.

This chapter focuses on different attitudes among Christians about the observance of holy days and dietary (food) laws.



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:2

² For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth **herbs**.

Herbs = vegetables.

The issue is not a healthy diet. It is whether “the law of the Spirit of life in Christ Jesus hath made me free from the law of sin and death” (Romans 8:2).



Romans 14:3

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.

Worse than eating or not eating is to
turn away from a fellow Christian
whom GOD has received.



Romans 14:3

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.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

DESPISE

1. To contemn; to scorn;
to disdain; to have the
lowest opinion of.

Fools *despise* wisdom and
instruction. (Prov. 1:7)



Romans 14:4

4 **Who art thou that judgest another man's servant?**

to his own master he standeth or falleth.

Yea, he shall be holden [held] up:
for God is able to make him stand.

There is only ONE who has the right
to judge God's servant!



Romans 14:5a

⁵ One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day *alike*.

Paul now shifts from lawful foods to holy days in the Hebrew calendar.



Romans 14:5a

⁵ One man **esteemeth** one day above another:
another **esteemeth** every day *alike*.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

Esteem:

To set a value on, whether high or low; to estimate; to value.



Romans 14:5a

⁵ One man **esteemeth** one day above another:
another **esteemeth** every day *alike*.

“Some think one day is more
holy than another day, while
others think every day is alike.”
NIV



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:5b

⁵ Let every man be fully persuaded
in his own mind.

Every person should be free to follow
his own conviction according to his
measure of faith.



Romans 14:5b

⁵ Let every man be **fully persuaded** in his own mind.

This is another reminder to follow the good example of Abraham.

Romans 4:21

And being fully persuaded that, what he had promised, he was able also to perform.



Romans 14:6

⁶ He that regardeth the day,
regardeth *it* unto the Lord;
and he that regardeth not the day,
to the Lord he doth not regard *it*.

He that eateth,
eateth to the Lord,
for he giveth God thanks;
and he that eateth not,
to the Lord he eateth not,
and giveth God thanks.

The important thing is to glorify God
in all you do.



Romans 14:6

⁶ He that **regardeth** the day,
regardeth *it* unto the Lord;
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He that eateth,
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for he giveth God thanks;
and he that eateth not,
to the Lord he eateth not,
and giveth God thanks.

Webster's 1828 Dictionary

REGARD

1. To hold in respect and affection.
2. To observe with religious or solemn attention.



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:7-9

- 7 For none of us liveth to himself,
and no man dieth to himself.
- 8 For whether we live,
we live unto the Lord;
and whether we die,
we die unto the Lord:
whether we live therefore, or die,
we are the Lord's.
- 9 For to this end Christ both died, and rose,
and revived, that he might be Lord both of
the dead and living.

When Christ is the center of your life,
other things are less important.



Romans 14:10

¹⁰ But why dost thou judge thy brother?
or why dost thou set at nought [despise]
thy brother?
for we shall all stand before the judgment
seat of Christ.

Paul again reminds us that we ALL will
be judged by a much greater judge.



Romans 14:10

¹⁰ But why dost thou judge thy brother?
or why dost thou set at nought [despise]
thy brother?
for we shall all stand before the judgment
seat of Christ.

2 Corinthians 5:10

For we must all appear before
the judgment seat of Christ;
that every one may receive the things
done in his body,
according to that he hath done,
whether *it be* good or bad.



Despise Not

Romans 14:3

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not;

Judge Not

and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:

Why?

for God hath received him.

Look at the similarity in these verses.

Judge Not

Romans 14:10

But why dost thou judge thy brother?

Despise Not

or why dost thou set at nought [despise] thy brother?

Why?

for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Despise Not

Romans 14:3

Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not;

Judge Not

and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth:

Why?

for God hath received him.

Here are two very good reasons we should not judge or despise other Christians!

Judge Not

Romans 14:10

But why dost thou judge thy brother?

Despise Not

or why dost thou set at nought [despise] thy brother?

Why?

for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:11-12

- ¹¹ For it is written,
As I live, saith the Lord,
every knee shall bow to me,
and **every** tongue shall confess to God.
- ¹² So then **every one of us**
shall give account of himself to God.

The Great Judge will pass judgment
on us all.



Romans 14:11-12

- ¹¹ For it is written,
As I live, saith the Lord,
every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.
- ¹² So then every one of us
shall give account of himself to God.

This is from Isaiah 45:23:

I have sworn by myself,
the word is gone out of my mouth *in*
righteousness, and shall not return,
That unto me every knee shall bow,
every tongue shall swear.



Romans 14:11-12

- ¹¹ For it is written,
As I live, saith the Lord,
every knee shall bow to me,
and every tongue shall confess to God.
- ¹² **So then every one of us
shall give account of himself to God.**

The King James Study Bible

“Paul quotes Isaiah 45:23 to point out that a day is coming when every believer will give account to God concerning why he did or did not do everything. At this time the weaker and stronger brothers will give their own explanation to God for their practices.”



Romans 14:13

¹³ Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

Instead of judging each another, we should judge how our behavior affects those around us.



Romans 14:13

¹³ Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in *his* brother's way.

The King James Study Bible

“A **stumblingblock** is conduct that is offensive or causes shock to another. In this case it brings **an occasion to fall.**”



Romans 14:14

¹⁴ I know,
and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,
that *there is nothing unclean of itself:*
but to him that esteemeth [judges]
any thing to be unclean,
to him it is unclean.



Romans 14:14

¹⁴ I know,
and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,
that *there is nothing unclean of itself:*
but to him that esteemeth
any thing to be unclean,
to him *it is* unclean.

Do not remove this statement from
its context. Paul is speaking of
different foods and days.



Romans 14:14

¹⁴ I know,
and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,
that *there is nothing unclean of itself:*
but to him that esteemeth
any thing to be unclean,
to him *it is* unclean.

Remember what God said to Peter on
the rooftop in Joppa:

Acts 11:7-9

⁷ And I heard a voice saying unto me,
Arise, Peter; slay and eat.
⁸ But I said, Not so, Lord: for nothing
common or unclean hath at any
time entered into my mouth.
⁹ But the voice answered me again
from heaven,
What God hath cleansed,
that call not thou common.



Romans 14:14

¹⁴ I know,
and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus,
that *there is nothing unclean of itself:*

*but to him that esteemeth
any thing to be unclean,
to him it is unclean.*

No food can send a man to hell,
but if you think it is wrong to eat it,
you should not eat it.



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:15

¹⁵ But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably.

Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

You are at liberty to eat what you like, but you are not at liberty to offend other Christians.



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:15

¹⁵ But if thy brother be grieved with *thy* meat, now walkest thou not charitably.

Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.

Destroy not: don't be the reason he abandons the faith.



Paul gives more guidance about eating meat in 1 Corinthians 10:

1 Corinthians 10:25-27

- ²⁵ Whatsoever is sold in the shambles,
that eat,
asking no question for conscience sake:
- ²⁶ For the earth *is* the Lord's,
and the fulness thereof.
- ²⁷ If any of them that believe not
bid you *to a feast*,
and ye be disposed to go;
whatsoever is set before you, eat,
asking no question for conscience sake.

Paul gives more guidance about eating meat in 1 Corinthians 10:

1 Corinthians 10:25-27

- ²⁵ Whatsoever is sold **in the shambles**,
that eat,
asking no question for conscience sake:
- ²⁶ For the earth *is* the Lord's,
and the fulness thereof.
- ²⁷ If any of them that believe not
bid you *to a feast,*
and ye be disposed to go;
whatsoever is set before you, eat,
asking no question for conscience sake.

the shambles: a place where meat is
butchered and sold.

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- ²⁵ Whatsoever is sold in the shambles,
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asking no question for conscience sake:
- ²⁶ For the earth *is* the Lord's,
and the fulness thereof.
- ²⁷ If any of them that believe not
bid you *to a feast*,
and ye be disposed to go;
whatsoever is set before you, eat,
asking no question for conscience sake.

Whether you are at a marketplace or
at an unbeliever's feast, you are free
to eat whatever you are offered.

Paul gives more guidance about eating meat in 1 Corinthians 10:

1 Corinthians 10:28

²⁸ But if any man say unto you,
This is offered in sacrifice unto idols,
eat not for his sake that shewed it,
and for conscience sake:
for the earth is the Lord's,
and the fulness thereof:

The rules change when you are given
meat that was offered to idols.

Why? Because the person giving it
might think you are joining him in
eating to his god.

Paul gives more guidance about eating meat in 1 Corinthians 10:

1 Corinthians 10:31-33

³¹ Whether therefore ye eat, or drink,
or whatsoever ye do,
do all to the glory of God.

³² Give none offence,
neither to the Jews,
nor to the Gentiles,
nor to the church of God:

³³ Even as I please all *men* in all *things*,
not seeking mine own profit,
but the *profit* of many,
that they may be saved.

Our personal liberties in Christ come
SECOND to our duty to glorify God
and further the gospel message.

Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:16-18

- ¹⁶ Let not then your good be evil spoken of:
¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.
¹⁸ For he that in these things serveth Christ *is* acceptable to God, and approved of men.

We must be sure that we exercise our liberties with wisdom.



Romans 14:19-20

¹⁹ Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.

²⁰ For meat destroy not the work of God.

All things indeed *are* pure;
but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

Our chief interest in life should be to edify one another.



Romans 14:19-20

- ¹⁹ Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.
- ²⁰ **For meat destroy not the work of God.**

All things indeed *are* pure;
but *it is* evil for that man who eateth with offence.

How foolish and selfish it would be to upset the work of God over a piece of meat.



Romans 14:21

²¹ *It is good* neither to eat flesh,
nor to drink wine,
nor *any thing* whereby thy brother
stumbleth,
or is offended,
or is made weak.

The same rules about holy days and foods apply to the drinking of wine.





Of course no matter what you choose, there will always be someone who doesn't like it.

Matthew 11:18-19a

- ¹⁸ For John came neither eating nor drinking,
and they say,
He hath a devil.
- ¹⁹ The Son of man came eating and drinking,
and they say,
Behold a man gluttonous, and a winebibber,
a friend of publicans and sinners.

Romans 14:21

²¹ *It is good neither to eat flesh,
nor to drink wine,
nor any thing whereby thy brother
stumbleth,
or is offended,
or is made weak.*

The King James Study Bible

“If *flesh* had special significance in the early church, *wine* does today. The highest good is not in the use of liberty, but in the recognition of liberty and refraining from offense.”



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:22

²² Hast thou faith?
have *it* to thyself before God.
Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in
that thing which he alloweth.

Paul now brings this teaching on the principles of Christian liberty to a conclusion:



Principles of Christian Liberty (14:1-23)

Romans 14:22

²² Hast thou faith?
have *it* to thyself before God.
Happy *is* he that condemneth not himself in
that thing which he alloweth.

The strong in faith are free to
exercise their liberty before God with
a clear conscience.



Romans 14:23

²³ And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because *he eateth* not of faith: for whatsoever *is* not of faith is sin.

But those who are doubtful should not eat or drink anything that upsets their convictions, or their own heart will condemn them.



Romans 14:23

²³ And he that doubteth is damned if he eat,
because *he eateth* not of faith:

for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.

If you cannot do something with a clear conscience before God, then you should not do it.



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(A) The Righteousness of God Demonstrated in Christian Duties (12:1 to 13:14)

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1) Principles of Christian Liberty

(14:1-23)

2) **Practices** of Christian Liberty

(15:1-13)

UP NEXT

Questions to test your understanding of this lesson:

1. What are the two parts to Paul's teaching on Christian liberty?
2. What are the two parts of the Law of Moses that Paul focuses on in Romans 14?
(a) worship and idolatry (b) food and holy days (c) prayer and praise
3. Who is the only one qualified to judge God's servant?
4. According to Romans 14:3 and 10, what are two good reasons we should not judge or despise other Christians?
5. Which verse in Romans 14 has a quotation from Isaiah?
6. According to Romans 14:13, what should we JUDGE and NOT JUDGE?
7. According to 1 Corinthians 10:28, when should we NOT eat food offered to us?
8. According to Romans 14:19, what things should we "follow after"?
9. In Matthew 11:18-19a, why were people offended by John the Baptist? Why were they offended by Jesus?
10. According to Romans 14:22, how are we to show our faith in these things?

Each question is worth 10 points. Do NOT share your answers with other students.



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