

For Meat Destroy not the Work of God - Romans 14:13-23
First Southern Baptist Church - May 31, 2023

I. Don't Judge (13-16)

1. Coming out of the idea that every person has his/her own "master" (**verse 13**)
2. Don't judge (like a juror)
 - Do judge (discern - use wisdom)
3. This is your aim - don't put a stumbling block in front of someone
 - Two words:
 - A. Stumbling block
 - B. Occasion to fall
4. He reasons - nothing is unclean of itself (**verse 14**)
 - A. It's how you look at it
 - B. He was not saying... for example, that Marijuana is okay... it's just how you look at it
 - in our day
 - "everything is relative"
 - "perception is reality"
 - "unclean is unclean in the mind of the beholder"
 - so... murder is okay, it's just how you look at it
 - situation ethics
 - sin is not a matter of personal opinion
 - C. Rather he is saying in this case... the case of the feast days and the issue of meat sacrificed to idols
 - D. Also,... the same thing in two different situations will be "right" and "wrong"
 - Example: - right to witness/ share my faith
 - sometimes wrong to do it in front of the friends of the witness
 - E. A contrast
 - "I" know there is nothing wrong
 - "but" (**verse 15**) - if your brother is grieved
 - not a matter of just hurting - but "destroy" (strong language) - the word destroy should be understood in the sense of "ruin"
 - a defect in love is worse than a defect in knowledge
5. **If** your brother is "grieved"
 - Then**, you are walking uncharitably
 - A. Don't "destroy" him with your meat
 - B. Another take... avoid even the "appearance" of evil
 - C. Don't destroy the one "for whom Christ died"
 - *this is **extreme** love
 - D. "Charity" - love is the rule
 - note how he uses the "rule" here
 - E. There is a possibility that your good be "evil spoken of" (**verse 16**)
 - your "good" - your full freedom
 - our "rights" are not as important as our obligations

II. Broader Context (17-18)

1. The Kingdom of God is bigger than food laws and festival days (**verse 17**)
-begs the question what is the “kingdom of God”
2. It is:
 - A. Not food and drink
 - B. It is righteousness - right relationship with God
 - C. It is joy - between us and others
 - D. It is peace - a part of the fruit of the Spirit
*in the Holy Ghost
3. If you serve God in these things - you are acceptable to God (**verse 18**)
-and... approved of men

III. Therefore (verse 19-21)

1. “Let us therefore” (**verse 19**)
 - A. He sums up the whole argument
 - B. Follow the things that make for peace
Follow the things that will edify one another
 - C. “Follow” is “pursue” - keep on after it
-pursue that which builds up (edifies)
-a lot of people talk about peace but do not do the “things” that make for it
 - D. The “other” is in mind here
2. And... for meat destroy not your brother (**verse 20**)
 - A. All things are pure (translated... you may eat)
 - B. But “it is evil” to eat with offence
 - C. Don’t miss the contrast between “meat” and “God” - see all things in light of God’s work... what will this do for the work of God?
3. Furthermore (**verse 21**)
 - A. It is good neither to eat flesh or drink wine
 - B. Nor “any thing”
 - C. Whereby your brother:
 - stumbles
 - is offended
 - is made weak
 - D. *That takes in a lot of territory
 - E. An objection might be raised... so am I living to my brother?
-even Jesus “pleased not Himself” (15:3)

IV. Do you Have Faith (verses 22-23)

1. Do you have faith that this is okay? (**Verse 22**)
 - have it to yourself (privately)
 - Paul also advised that tongues be done privately
2. You’ll be happier if you don’t “condemn” yourself, in what you allow
3. If you follow a course of “freedom” that causes a brother to stumble you “condemn” yourself
4. On the other hand... he that doubteth is “damned” (**verse 23**)
 - “damned” is “condemned” - or judged (we judge ourselves)
 - if he eats... because he does not eat with faith

5. And whatever is not of faith is sin
-a definition of sin?

FF Bruce - *"It is good to be strong in faith and emancipated in conscience, but Christians are not isolated individuals, but members of a fellowship; it is therefore the responsibility of all, and especially of those who are stronger and more mature, to care for the well-being of the fellowship."*

Takeaways:

1. Be personally persuaded (5)
2. Don't be judgmental (13)
3. Don't be over occupied with trifles (19) - but edification
4. "Follow" that which makes for peace (19)
5. Don't use your liberty if it hurts others (19-21)

Three "Levels" of Romans 14 - Dale Moody

1. Weak level - need time and place
2. Strong level - consider others
3. Love level - Chapter 15