

because he saw you eat it, even though the food in itself is not unclean, or offensive to God, he is a doubtful eater and cannot give thanks to God. Also, it will pain his overly sensitive conscience for you to do what he wrongly considers as sinful. If our example upsets our brother and could cause him to fall into sin, and possibly to perish out of Christ, it would be better to not let your freedom with your food, he thinks to be unholy, destroy him by your eating. The important thing for us as Christians, is not meat and drink, but righteousness and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. (Romans 14:15-19).

Romans 14:20LB - *Don't undo the work of God for a chunk of meat. Remember, there is nothing wrong with the meat, but it is wrong to eat it if it makes another stumble.* Romans 14:21 - *Nor to drink wine.* The Bible gave the New Testament Christian two major laws regarding wine (Gk. *oinos*), which included unfermented and fermented fruit of the vine: (1) the law of abstinence from fermented wine (Proverbs 23:31); (2) the law of Christian love, which causes a person to abstain from what might lead others to harm (Romans 14:21). Due to the customs of the times, intoxicating beverages and drunkenness were prevalent, and it was better to refuse a drink of even unfermented wines than to drink something that might cause another weaker Christian to partake of strong fermented wine and expose them to harm and drunkenness. (Ref. I Timothy 5:23).

FOURTEENTH STUDY

PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY

DON'T CRITICIZE EACH OTHER (Romans 14:1-12)

Paul is instructing the Roman believers about the treatment of a new brother who wants to join them, even though his faith is weak. They are instructed not to criticize him, or pass judgment on his thoughts, even though his faith is weak, and he has different ideas of what is right and what is wrong concerning: (1) What to eat and drink (Romans 14:2-6; Colossians 2:14-17; I Timothy 4:1-6); (2) With whom to eat (Acts 11:3; I Corinthians 5:9-12; II Timothy 3:7-13; Jude 12); (3) Where to eat (I Corinthians 8:4-13; 10:15-23; 11:17-22); (4) Where to buy meat (I Corinthians 10:25); (5) What day to keep as the Sabbath (Romans 14:5,6; Galatians 4:9-11; Colossians 2:14-17); (6) Whether or not to be circumcised (Acts 15:1-24; Romans 4:11; I Corinthians 7:19); (7) Whether or not to keep the law of Moses (Acts 15:1-11; II Corinthians 3:6-15; Galatians 4:21-31; Ephesians 2:15; Colossians 2:14-17; Hebrews 7:18; 8:6-13; 10:9); (8) Customs to observe and what to wear I Corinthians 11:4-16; I Timothy 2:9-11; I Peter 3:3-4).

1. Not only are we not to judge believers, but what other people group are we instructed not to judge in Romans 14:4? _____

2. To whom is *another man's servant* accountable?

(Romans 14:4) _____

Each believer is God's servant and is responsible to God personally. God is able to make them do as they should. So let Him tell them whether they are right or wrong (Romans 14:4). It is not up to us to get them straightened out, that is left to the one in authority.

3. Fill in the blanks:

For none of us _____ and no man _____.

For whether we _____, we _____; and whether we _____, we _____: whether we _____ therefore, or _____, we _____ (Romans 14:7,8).

4. What reason does Paul give in Romans 14:9, to prove that we are the Lord's? _____

In our self righteous attitudes we judge our brothers and "look down" on them, and we ourselves do the same things; *For with what judgment (criticism) ye judge, ye shall be judged: and with what measure ye mete (hand it out) it shall be measured to you again (Matthew 7:2).* --*For we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ. For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to Me, and every tongue shall confess to God. So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God (Romans 14:10-12).*

WALKING IN LOVE (Romans 14:12-23)

Whether we are weak or strong in the Lord, we are instructed not to judge one another anymore. We must get rid of our critical attitude of judging others.

1. In Romans 14:13b, Paul, in his "play on words," goes on to tell us what we should judge. What is it? _____

I know and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean of itself (Romans 14:14).-- Paul, here, could be referring to Jesus' teachings, with which he no doubt was familiar, from in Mark 7:14-23. Paul is speaking of meats or food.

There is nothing unclean (defiled or unholy) of itself; but to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean.

2. Put Romans 14:15-17 in your own words. _____

If another person can still be found who is bothered by what you eat because he regards it as unclean; you are not acting in love if you eat it in front of him or he finds out you ate it. If he were to eat it