



Gray Areas

Part II

ROMANS 14: 13 – 23

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SERIES: ROMANS: THE ROAD TO RIGHTEOUSNESS

Romans 14: 13 - 16

¹³ Therefore let us not judge one another anymore, but rather determine this—not to put an obstacle or a stumbling block in a brother's way. ¹⁴ I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself; but to him who thinks anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. ¹⁵ For if because of food your brother is hurt, you are no longer walking according to love. Do not destroy with your food him for whom Christ died. ¹⁶ Therefore do not let what is for you a good thing be spoken of as evil;

Romans 14: 17 - 20

¹⁷ for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. ¹⁸ For he who in this way serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. ¹⁹ So then we pursue the things which make for peace and the building up of one another. ²⁰ Do not tear down the work of God for the sake of food. All things indeed are clean, but they are evil for the man who eats and gives offense.

Romans 14: 21 - 23

²¹ It is good not to eat meat or to drink wine, or to do *anything* by which your brother stumbles. ²² The faith which you have, have as your own conviction before God. Happy is he who does not condemn himself in what he approves. ²³ But he who doubts is condemned if he eats, because *his eating is* not from faith; and whatever is not from faith is sin.

A Correct Judging. Vv. 13 - 16

- ▶ Being Judgmental in areas of conscience is wrong.
 - ▶ We are to use our best judgement in our conduct.
 - ▶ We must not cause a brother or sister to stumble.
- ▶ Paul declares nothing is unclean in itself.
 - ▶ This includes everything God created including food.
 - ▶ If one's conscience is violated then for him it is unclean.
- ▶ Our liberties and rights must be acted on in love.
 - ▶ We must modify our behavior in love.
 - ▶ Christ died for our brethren, do not destroy him by conduct that causes him to violate his conscience.

Kingdom Principles. Vv. 17 - 20

- ▶ Since we are in the kingdom live by kingdom principles.
 - ▶ It's not about what we eat or drink.
 - ▶ Righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.
 - ▶ This is how we serve Christ and are approved by others.
- ▶ We pursue peace and building up.
 - ▶ Don't tear down God's building (Christians)
 - ▶ Even what is clean, that we have liberty to do is not to be done if it brings offense to another conscience.

Good to Act in Love. Vv. 21-23.

- ▶ It is good to not do anything that causes a brother or sister to stumble.
 - ▶ Whether eating or drinking or other matters of conscience.
- ▶ Keep your convictions and a clear conscience.
 - ▶ There are some things that you may only be able to do in private to protect your brethren's conscience.
 - ▶ Never violate your conscience for once weakened you will be lead to spiritual ruin.
 - ▶ A life of faith requires a clean conscience, otherwise the door to sin is opened.

Conclusion

- ▶ The conscience is a valuable tool given by God and cannot be violated without severe consequences.
- ▶ We have great liberty in Christ, but our conduct is not to be governed by that liberty but by love.
- ▶ If our actions lead another to violate their conscience even in a gray area, we sin against God and them.
- ▶ God will grow and mature a weak conscience, but we are called on here to protect that weak conscience until God completes their maturity.