

THE EPISTLES TO THE ROMANS

ROMANS 12:1-15:13, THE PRACTICE OF RIGHTEOUSNESS

INTRODUCTION

A. Outline of Romans

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 - 1) Principles of Christian liberty (14:1-23)
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 - b) Do no harm to other Christians (14:13-23)
 - 2) Practices of Christian liberty (15:1-13)

B. Comments on Romans 14:12-23

1. Paul addresses the tendency of both strong and weak Christians to cause harm to one another.
2. John Witmer, *In this section Paul warned against causing other Christians to stumble (hindering their spiritual growth) by asserting that one is free to live in accord with convictions not shared by other believers.*
3. As noted by Douglas Moo, Paul uses a chiastic structure in this section with the emphatic point being that Christians are not to destroy God's work in the lives of others:
 - A1 - A warning about stumbling blocks (13b)
 - B1 - Nothing is unclean in itself (14a)
 - C1 - A warning against destroying one for whom Christ died (15b)
 - C2 - A warning against destroying the work of God (20a)
 - B2 - All things are clean in themselves (20b)
 - A2 - A warning against causing another believer to stumble (21)
4. John Stott on the distinction between sections 1-12 and 13-23, *The argument moves on, however, from how the strong should regard the weak to how they should treat them, that is, from attitudes (not despising or condemning them) to actions (not causing them to stumble or destroying them).*
5. Douglas Mangum, *Rather than reacting judgmentally, believers should ...seek the good of one another, determining not to cause one another spiritual harm by the exercise of their freedom.*

ROMANS 14:13-23, PRINCIPLES OF CHRISTIAN LIBERTY - DO NO HARM

A. Christian liberty is governed by love for others (13-18)

1. Christians are not to discourage other believers (13), *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.*
 - a. *Therefore*
 - 1) Paul will give a new twist to his exhortation in verses 1-12 and verses 13 may be considered the conclusion to verse 10-12.
 - 2) Matthew 7:1, *Judge not, that you be not judged.*
 - 3) William Newell, *Here now is indeed a field for judging! and it is ourselves, not our brother, which we are to judge!*
 - 4) Paul exhorted Roman Christians in verse 1-12, not to judge one another and now, he adds the exhortation not to harm one another.

- b. *pass judgment...decide*
- 1) Each verb is the same word in Greek which has the primary meaning, *to judge*.
 - 2) The second usage can mean *to determine* or *decide*.
 - 3) Paul uses a play on words to declare to the strong to not judge the weak but to make the judgment to not do harm to the weak.
- c. *stumbling block*
- 1) It means *an obstacle placed in someone's way*.
 - 2) 1 Corinthians 8:9, *But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.*
 - 3) Leviticus 19:14, *You shall not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block before the blind, but you shall fear your God: I am the LORD.*
 - 4) Thomas Constable, *The stronger brother's liberty might retard the weaker brother's progress as he walks the Christian path. It might set him back temporarily or even do permanent damage to his sensitive conscience.*
- d. *hindrance*
- 1) It means *that which causes someone to sin, enticement, temptation*.
 - 2) It is the Greek word from which *scandalous* is derived.
 - 3) Matthew 16:23, *But he turned and said to Peter, "Get behind me, Satan! You are a hindrance to me. For you are not setting your mind on the things of God, but on the things of man."*
 - 4) Thomas Constable, *The stronger brother's liberty might even constitute a temptation for the weaker brother to sin. It might tempt him to go beyond his stronger brother's behavior and cast off restraint in moral as well as amoral matters.*
- e. **Comments**
- 1) C. E. B. Cranfield, *In this second part of the verse Paul turns to a fresh aspect of the subject under discussion, namely, the effect one's conduct may have on one's brother...*
 - 2) John Witmer, *...a Christian should judge himself and his actions so that he does not place a stumbling block...in his brother's way...*
 - 3) Douglas Moo, *...he (Paul) is thinking of the possibility that the "strong" believers' exercise of liberty might create pressure on the "weak" believers to do what their consciences were telling them not to do and so fall into sin and potential spiritual ruin.*
 - 4) Warren Wiersbe, *The strong Christian has spiritual knowledge, but if he does not practice love, his knowledge will hurt the weak Christian. Knowledge must be balanced by love...Knowledge plus love helps the weak person grow strong.*
 - 5) William Barclay, *...a great many things are not essential parts of life and conduct but belong to what we might call the extras of life. It is Paul's conviction that we have no right to give offence to those who are more scrupulous about such things by doing them ourselves, or by persuading them to do them.*

2. Christian liberty must not be used to hurt those with differing opinions (14-16)

- a) The issue of food is a preference not a principle (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.***
- 1) The principle is that nothing is unclean in itself.
 - a) Scripture references
 - 1] Mark 7:15, *There is nothing outside a person that by going into him can defile him, but the things that come out of a person are what defile him.*
 - 2] Acts 10:15, *And the voice came to him again a second time, "What God has made clean, do not call common."*
 - 3] 1 Corinthians 8:8, *Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.*
 - b) Comments
 - 1] C. E. B. Cranfield, *concerning nothing is unclean in itself, He (Paul) is not thinking of men's actions, attitudes, desires, thoughts, etc., but only of the resources of the created world which are available for men's use.*
 - 2] John Stott, *Although the strong are correct, and he shares their conviction because the Lord Jesus has endorsed it, they must not ride roughshod over the scruples of the weak by imposing their view on them.*

- 3] Grant Osborne, *The laws of clean and unclean were no longer necessary since Christ fulfilled or completed their purpose in the divine scheme of things. Paul realized this both through his experience of Christ and through Christ's teaching about the law (Matt 5:17–20; Mark 7:19).*
 - 4] Douglas Mangum, *No mere opinion on man's part, or even the silence of conscience, can make right what God has declared to be wrong. But it does mean that even a human activity—in the present case eating meat a person considers to be unclean—is wrong for those who consider it to be wrong.*
- 2) It is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.
- a) Scripture references
 - 1] Acts 10:13-14, And there came a voice to him: “Rise, Peter; kill and eat.” But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.”
 - 2] 1 Corinthians 8:7, *However, not all possess this knowledge. But some, through former association with idols, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.*
 - b) Comments
 - 1] Thomas Constable, *Many still regarded the Jewish dietary laws as God's will for them. Is it any wonder that many Christians even today mistakenly think that the Mosaic Code constitutes their rule of life?*
 - 2] C. E. B. Cranfield on ceremonial law being fulfilled in Christ, *these are other believers who have not clearly understood this, and for them, not yet having been given this inward liberty, to neglect the literal obedience of the ritual law is wrong.*
 - 3] Douglas Moo, *...Paul wants the “strong” in faith to recognize that people cannot always “existentially” grasp such truth (concerning ceremonial law)—particularly when it runs so counter to a long and strongly held tradition basic to their own identity as God's people.*
 - 4] Grant Osborne, *The exercise of freedom is not always the best way to go, for it can seriously damage another Christian with a different conscience.*
- b. A Christian should be willing to subject his liberty for the sake of another Christian's well-being (15-16)
- 1) Choose the well-being of others over your personal freedom (15a), ***For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love.***
 - a) 1 Corinthians 8:13, *Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *When one person sees another doing what his own conscience condemns, it grieves him or causes him pain.*
 - c) Douglas Moo, *...by insisting on exercising your freedom to eat food, you bring pain to your fellow believer and thereby violate the cardinal Christian virtue of love.*
 - d) John Stott, *For love never disregards weak consciences. Love limits its own liberty out of respect for them.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *Christian freedom is also seen when we refrain from an action!*
 - f) William Barclay, *Life must be guided by the principle of love; and, when it is, we will think not so much of our right to do as we like as of our responsibilities to others. We have no right to distress another person's conscience in the things which do not really matter. Christian freedom must never be used as an excuse for riding roughshod over the genuine feelings of others.*
 - 2) Do no harm to other Christians (15b), ***By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died.***
 - a) 1 Corinthians 8:10-12, *For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.*
 - b) Thomas Constable, *When he then proceeds to do himself what his conscience condemns, he commits sin and experiences moral destruction...The stronger brother's conduct could destroy the weaker brother's walk with God permanently or just temporarily.*
 - c) Douglas Moo, *The eating of the “strong,” coupled with their attitude of superiority and scorn toward those who think differently, can pressure the “weak” into eating even when they do not yet have the faith to believe that it is right for them to do so...If Paul is not simply exaggerating for effect, perhaps he thinks that the “weak” in faith might be led by the scorn of the “strong” to turn away entirely from their faith.*

- d) John Stott, *Did Christ love him enough to die for him, and shall we not love him enough to refrain from wounding his conscience? Did Christ sacrifice himself for his well-being, and shall we assert ourselves to his harm? Did Christ die to save him, and shall we not care if we destroy him?*
 - e) When I put my freedom above another Christian's conscience, I am endangering the well-being of one for whom Christ died.
 - f) Some believe *destroy* speaks of eternal damnation which can't be true since Christ keeps those who are His. The word *destroy* can have a range of meanings. I believe in the context of Romans 14, *destroy* speaks to the opposite of *building up* which is *to tear down*. Note Romans 14:19, *So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding* and Romans 15:2, *Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.*
- 3) Do no harm to yourself (16), ***So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil.***
- a) Maintain a testimony of love toward others which can't be blasphemed.
 - b) Thomas Constable, *The good thing refers to the liberty to eat meat or to do anything amoral. People could legitimately speak of it as evil if it resulted in the fall of a brother.*
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...for the presence among Christians of such selfishness as would willingly risk causing a weak brother's spiritual ruin for the sake of a plate of meat would surely bring into disrepute not just the liberty of the strong but also the very gospel itself.*
 - d) Douglas Moo, *Paul is warning the "strong" Christians that their insistence on exercising their freedom in ceremonial matters in the name of Christ can lead those who are spiritually harmed by their behavior to revile the legitimate freedom that Christ has won for them.*
 - e) Grant Osborne, *Too many unbelievers say, "Why should I be a Christian? You don't get along with each other, so why should I think being a Christian will bring me peace and happiness?"*
3. Christian liberty pursues acceptance despite differing preferences (17-19)
- a. Christian liberty in perspective to the kingdom of God (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.***
 - 1) *for*
 - a) Paul looks back to verses 15 and 16.
 - b) He uses the kingdom of God as support against doing harm to brothers and sisters in Christ.
 - c) C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the kingdom of God...proof of the terrible absurdity of the strong Christian's readiness to bring about his weak brother's spiritual ruin for the sake of such a triviality as the use of a particular food and thereby to cause the gospel to be reviled by unbelievers.*
 - d) Thomas Constable, *The kingdom of God here refers to the sphere over which God rules and in which all believers live and operate...The primary issues in the lives of dedicated Christians should not be external amoral practices but the great spiritual qualities that the Holy Spirit seeks to produce in them.*
 - 2) *the kingdom of God*
 - a) It is not about preferences.
 - 1] It is not about the freedom to eat and drink or a decision of conscience not to eat or drink certain things.
 - 2] 1 Corinthians 8:8, *Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.*
 - 3] C. E. B. Cranfield, *It is not one's insistence on expressing one's freedom to eat a particular food which attests the presence of God's kingdom...*
 - b) It is about priorities.
 - 1] *righteousness*
 - a] It means *right-standing before God* as well as *right behavior*.
 - b] Romans 6:16, *Do you not know that if you present yourselves to anyone as obedient slaves, you are slaves of the one whom you obey, either of sin, which leads to death, or of obedience, which leads to righteousness?*
 - c] The kingdom of God is seen in those who are not only justified but pursuing sanctification.
 - d] Grant Osborne on righteousness, *It refers to both the justification of the believer and the righteous lifestyle that results (see 1:17; 3:21-26).*

- 2] *peace*
 - a] It carries the force of *right relationship with God and others*.
 - b] Galatians 5:22, *But the fruit of the Spirit is love, joy, peace, patience, kindness, goodness, faithfulness,*
 - c] Romans 12:18, *If possible, so far as it depends on you, live peaceably with all.*
 - d] Paul emphasizes both aspects of righteousness in these two words, right-standing with God and proper behavior toward fellow believers.
 - e] Grant Osborne, *Peace results from justification (5:1) and the presence of the Spirit in our lives (8:6, 14–17). Paul wants to replace the conflict and dissension at Rome with the peace of God. This will only come when the individuals who are at odds with each other turn their lives over completely to Christ and begin caring for each other.*
 - f] William Barclay, *The unrestrained freedom of Christian liberty is conditioned by the Christian obligation to live in a right relationship, in peace, with one another.*

- 3] *joy in the Holy Spirit*
 - a] Peace is tied to relationship to God but joy is in the sphere of (the work) of the Holy Spirit in the lives of believers.
 - b] Romans 15:13, *May the God of hope fill you with all joy and peace in believing, so that by the power of the Holy Spirit you may abound in hope.*
 - c] C. E. B. Cranfield, *The joy, which is a sign of the presence of God's kingdom, is specifically the joy given by God's Spirit, and it is to be carefully distinguished from any joy which is merely the temporary result of the satisfaction of one's own selfish desires.*
 - d] Grant Osborne, *Joy is the natural accompanying emotion to the presence of the Spirit in our lives. Even our trials are meant to produce an inexplicable joy as the Spirit takes over and turns everything around on our behalf (Jas 1:2–4; 1 Pet 1:6–7).*
 - e] William Barclay, *Christian joy is not individualistic; it is interdependent. Joy comes to Christians only when they bring joy to others, even if it costs them personal limitation.*

- b. The true measure of a man (18), ***Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.***
 - 1) Those accepted by God are those who serve Christ.
 - a) Romans 15:1-2, *We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves. Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.*
 - b) *Whoever thus serves*
 - 1] Paul is looking back to verse to emphasize the means of properly serving Christ.
 - 2] He who typifies the kingdom of God is the one who serves in *righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.*
 - 3] Thomas Constable, *Acceptance with God for Christians involves the stressing of these great kingdom graces rather than whether or not we engage in some amoral practice.*
 - 4] Douglas Moo, *It is only as the "strong" submit to Christ and the demands of his kingdom in this matter of ceremonial observances that they will meet with God's approval.*
 - 5] Warren Wiersbe, *Not the externals, but the eternal must be first in our lives: righteousness, peace, and joy...If each believer would yield to the Spirit and major in a godly life, we would not have Christians fighting with each other over minor matters.*

 - 2) Such individuals receive approval from others.
 - a) William Newell, *Let us ask ourselves, Does my walk please God? Is it approved in the hearts of men?*
 - b) C. E. B. Cranfield, *The Christian who serves Christ in the way indicated will not bring shame on the gospel by deserving the disapproval of men (whether his fellow-Christians or unbelievers), but will deserve (though, of course, he may not always receive) their approval.*
 - c) Douglas Moo, *...by following Christ in love and putting "righteousness, peace, and joy" ahead of "eating and drinking," the "strong," rather than being "blasphemed" by the "weak," will be esteemed by them.*
 - d) Grant Osborne, *The picture seems to be that people are testing them to see if they are deserving of condemnation or approval. When they serve Christ and bring peace into the community by following the leading of the Spirit, they win the approval of others.*

- c. A Christian's responsibility is not to pursue preferences but principles (19), ***So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.***

1) *So then*

- a) This introduces Paul's command to pursue what was stated in verse 17-18, Godly behavior not personal liberty to the harm of others.
- b) 2 Timothy 2:22, *So flee youthful passions and pursue righteousness, faith, love, and peace, along with those who call on the Lord from a pure heart.*
- c) 1 Peter 3:11, *let him turn away from evil and do good; let him seek peace and pursue it.*
- d) Grant Osborne, *The reality of God's kingdom in their midst calls for harmony between the diverse groups that make up the church.*

2) Paul lists two requirements appropriate for those in the *kingdom of God*.

a) Be a peacemaker.

- 1] Thomas Constable, *The things that make for peace in the context refer to practices that do not cause others to stumble and attitudes that are non-judgmental.*
- 2] Douglas Moo, This "peace," more clearly here than in v. 17, is horizontal: peace with other Christians. As v. 20 makes clear, Paul is still addressing the "strong": he calls on them to maintain the kind of attitude and behavior with respect to the matters of dispute in the Roman church that will foster harmony between the two factions.
- 3] Grant Osborne, *The strong have until now sacrificed peace for their Christian liberty.*

b) Be one who encourages others which strengthens the strong and the weak.

- 1] 1 Corinthians 10:23, *"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up.*
- 2] Ephesians 4:12-13, *to equip the saints for the work of ministry, for building up the body of Christ, until we all attain to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to mature manhood, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ,*
- 3] Thomas Constable, *Rather than tearing down we should do things that build one another up. For the strong this might be foregoing some legitimate amoral practice. For the weak it could be refraining from verbal criticism and judgmental thinking.*
- 4] Douglas Moo, *The strong believers will foster peace in the community by making the interests of the church as a whole their priority.*
- 5] Grant Osborne, *If the strong will work to build up the weak rather than flaunt their religious freedom in front of them, peace will be the natural consequence...The weak and the strong must stop focusing on winning the debate and center on building each other up in Christ to achieve peace and a united worship and joy in Christ.*
- 6] Warren Wiersbe, *Both the strong believer and the weak believer need to grow. The strong believer needs to grow in love; the weak believer needs to grow in knowledge. So long as a brother is weak in the faith, we must lovingly deal with him in his immaturity. But if we really love him, we will help him to grow. It is wrong for a Christian to remain immature, having a weak conscience.*

- B. Christian liberty is governed by respect for others (20-21), ***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. It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.***

1. Food is not more important than people.

- a. God the Father sent God the Son not to protect Christian liberty but to give everlasting life.
- b. *The work of God* can refer to both the individual and to the church, each of which is God's work.
- c. Romans 14:15, *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.*
- d. Robert Mounce, *While freedom is a right, it is not a guide for conduct. Love serves that purpose. Rights are to be laid aside in the interest of love.*
- e. C. E. B. Cranfield, *...Paul has in mind God's work in the weak brother, the new man He has begun to create.*
- f. Douglas Moo, *Paul is warning "strong" believers that they can seriously damage the church—destroy its unity and sap its strength—through their attitudes and actions toward the "weak."*

2. *Everything is indeed clean*
 - a. Paul's statement is made in a restricted sense.
 - b. C. E. B. Cranfield, *...the reference being not to such things as men's thoughts, desires and actions, but only to the resources of the created world which are available and appropriate for human consumption.*
 3. True Christian liberty demands love for others not personal preferences.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 10:23, *"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up."*
 - b. William Barclay, *A new age would dawn in the Church if we remembered that our rights are far less important than our obligations...Surely conscious limitation for the sake of others is the Christian approach. If we do not exercise it, we may well find that something that we genuinely thought to be permissible has brought ruin to someone else!*
 4. Christian liberty must not harm other believers.
 - a. 1 Corinthians 8:9, *But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.*
 - b. Grant Osborne, *The strong have the choice: they can eat it or not. It is up to them to resolve this issue, and Paul expects them to do what is best for the weaker believers and for the community as a whole.*
 - c. Thomas Constable, *We willingly alter our pace of walking while leading a small child by the hand so he or she will not stumble. How much more should we be willing to alter our Christian walk for the benefit of a weaker brother or sister in Christ whom we are leading.*
 - d. Grant Osborne, *The mature Christian will not do anything that can harm another believer spiritually.*
- C. Christian liberty is governed by faith in God (22-23)
1. Preferences must be subject to one's conscience (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.***
 - a. A strong Christian should not try to force his liberty on one with a differing conviction.
 - 1) Paul is speaking to the strong in verse 22 and to the weak in verse 23, in regard to *faith* (confidence).
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *He did not want his readers to force their convictions ("faith") about amoral practices on others. The strong believer can be happy in his private enjoyment of amoral practices because he knows that he is neither violating the will of God nor the conscience of a weak brother.*
 - 3) John Witmer, *A Christian must not insist on influencing a believer with tighter scruples to change his ways. It should be something "in his own mind" (v. 5), for he lives "to the Lord" (v. 8)...The principle is, "When in doubt, don't."*
 - 4) William Barclay, *Again and again, in every sphere of life, Christians are confronted by the fact that they must examine things not only as they affect themselves, but also as they affect other people. We are always in some sense one another's keepers, responsible not only for ourselves but for everyone who comes into contact with us.*
 - b. It is a blessing to have firm convictions.
 - 1) 1 John 3:21, *Beloved, if our heart does not condemn us, we have confidence before God;*
 - 2) C. E. B. Cranfield, *To be free from the sort of scruples which trouble the weak is in itself a precious gift. The inward freedom does not have to be expressed outwardly in order to be enjoyed: one may enjoy it in one's own inner life—a secret known only to oneself and God.*
 - 3) Douglas Moo, *...the "strong" should be content with the blessing God has given them in enabling them to understand the liberty that their faith provides them, without feeling it necessary to flaunt that liberty before their "weaker" fellow believers.*
 2. Preferences without trust is sin (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.***
 - a. Do what you believe is right for you.
 - 1) Paul shifts to proper behavior for the weaker brother with regard to his convictions.
 - 2) Thomas Constable, *The weak brother who eats something that he believes he should not eat stands condemned by his own conscience and by God (cf. Gal. 2:11).*
 - 3) John Witmer, *If a Christian eats food or does anything when he has doubts in his own mind as to whether it is right or wrong before God (one who is "weak" in faith, vv. 1-2), his action does not spring from (ek, "out of") his faith or trust in God and is therefore wrong.*

- 4) Douglas Moo, *...what brings God's condemnation is eating when one does not have the faith to believe that it is right to do it.*
 - 5) Grant Osborne, *God expects every one of his children to live up to the level of faith they have attained.*
- b. Actions not tied to conscience is sin.
- 1) Thomas Constable, *"Faith" here as in verses 1 and 22 does not refer to the teachings of Christianity but to what a person believes to be the will of God for him.*
 - 2) Robert Mounce, *Whatever is done without the conviction that God has approved it is by definition sin. God has called us to a life of faith. Trust is the willingness to put all of life before God for his approval. Any doubt concerning an action automatically removes that action from the category of that which is acceptable.*
 - 3) Herman Ridderbos, *For a Christian not a single decision and action can be good which he does not think he can justify on the ground of his Christian conviction and his liberty before God in Christ.*
 - 4) Warren Wiersbe, *Conscience is strengthened by knowledge. But knowledge must be balanced by love; otherwise it tears down instead of building up.*

CONCLUSION

- Paul encourages Christians to pursue Christian liberty without doing harm to other Christians in Romans 14:13-23. He will conclude this section in Romans 15 with another principle of Christian liberty which is to not please oneself.
- Grant Osborn, *The goal of the Christian life is not exercising our liberty at any cost but rather doing what will bring righteousness, peace, and joy to the people of God. The self-sacrificial surrender of rights for the sake of the kingdom will bring pleasure to God and win approval from those around us...In the movie Chariots of Fire, for the Olympic runner Eric Liddell it would have been wrong to eat out or play sports on Sunday. God honored his convictions, and living up to them gave him a power in running few possessed.*