

Romans 14:13-17

Regarding the Weaker Brother

1. Review of Context

- a. Two brothers in the faith, neither living to themselves, both do in service to the Lord.
- b. They believe differently about the Lord's instructions – bound or free?
- c. One as a Jew under law – wants to judge the other (b/c of weak understanding of grace)
- d. One as not under law – wants to neglect the other (b/c of his liberty)
- e. *"The law was given to judge such things!" "We are free from law and judgment!"*
- f. Rom 14:10 - At the judgment: 1) we will all give account, 2) it is the Lord that judges.

2. **14:13 - No Stumbling Blocks**

- a. Do we operate by law? or by liberty? – Paul shows a more excellent way ...
- b. *"let us not ... judge one another"* – Because the Lord will judge; all will give account.
- c. *"but judge this..."* - This rule/principle is to clear the brother's way for success at judgment.
- d. *"no man put a stumblingblock ..."* - The law was a burden - Acts 15:9-11, 23-29
- e. Law as a stumbling was removed by Christ - Rom 7:4,6,10:4, Eph 2:14-15, Col 2:14
- f. (This a different stumbling than when Israel stumbles over Christ- Rom 9:32-33, 1Pet 2:6-9)
- g. *"occasion to fall"* – fall from grace, fall from trusting the Lord – Rom 14:4, Gal 2:4,21, 5:2-4

3. **14:14 – The Weaker Brother Principle**

- a. "weaker brother principle" "stumbling block rule" "grace living" "mind of Christ" "charity"
- b. *"I know, and am persuaded by the Lord..."* – True grace doctrine makes us free. Gal 5:1
 - i. This does not change the doctrine/truth, but it does change our mind toward them.
- c. *"but... to him that esteemeth... to him it is..."* - Not to the Lord, but to him he sins-Jam 4:17
- d. The principle: Heed the weak conscience of others before using liberty for yourself.
 - i. One could fall into sin - see Rev 2:14 stumbling into idolatry and fornication, Jude 4
 - ii. Liberty can become a stumblingblock, too - Gal 5:13, 1 Cor 8:9
 - iii. See examples - Gal 6:2, 1 Cor 9:18-22, 10:23-32, Eph 5:27, Phi 2:3-5, Col 1:28
- e. This results in a willing sacrifice to build, grow, strength, benefit another, i.e. ministry.

4. **14:15-17 – Destroy Him Not**

- a. *"if thy brother be grieved..."* - Because he sees you and can be emboldened to sin.
- b. *"not charitably"* – Seeking to benefit others with the truth (not hurt them with truth).
- c. *"Destroy him not"* - Not his soul in hell, but his conscience to obey. His faith, testimony.
 - i. See an example of faith made shipwreck – 1 Tim 1:19-20, 2 Tim 2:15-18
- d. Truth: nothing is unclean. Truth: idolatry is a grievous sin. Both true but requires knowing.
 - i. Without knowing (faith), conscience can be defiled/destroyed - 1 Cor 8:7-11
- e. *"let not then your good be evil spoken of"* - By misunderstanding - 1 Cor 10:23-32, 1Th 5:22
- f. *"for the kingdom of God"* – The dominion and rule of God over all that is his.
- g. *"is not..."* – entered into, joined, defined, sanctified, or preached by what you eat.
 - i. You can choose to eat something else of the Lord's, or not judge for eating.
- h. *"righteousness, peace, joy"* – All come by faith – Rom 4:5, 5:1, 2 Cor 1:24, Phi 2:16-18
- i. *"in the Holy Ghost"* – Who dwells only in them that are the Lord's.