

THE WILL OF GOD
Let Love Govern Your Liberty
Romans 14:13-23

Big Idea: Let love govern your liberty for the sake of your brother and the kingdom.

Who are the “weak” and who are the “strong”?

- > The weak were predominately Jewish Christians who did not eat meat and who observed special days.
- > The strong were predominately Gentile Christians who eat anything and who thought that all days were alike.

1. Let love govern your liberty for the sake of your brother (14:13-16).

When love governs our attitudes and actions . . .

- a. We will stop judging one another (v. 13a).

13a Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer,

Romans 14:10-12

10 Why do you pass judgment on your brother? Or you, why do you despise your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, “As I live, says the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.” 12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God.

- b. We will decide to never cause a brother to stumble (vv. 13-14, 21-23).

- > Love willingly forgoes all liberties that would cause a fellow believer to stumble (vv. 13b, 21).

13b but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.

Rom. 14:21

It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

- > Nothing is unclean in itself (v. 14a, 20b).

14a I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself,

20b Everything is indeed clean,

Matt. 15:11

It is not what goes into the mouth that defiles a person, but what comes out of the mouth; this defiles a person.

- > If someone acts against their conscience, then even if the act is not wrong, it is wrong for them because

they are not acting in accord with what they hold to be right behavior for a Christian (vv. 14b, 23).

14b but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean.

Rom. 14:23

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.

- c. We will not destroy the one for whom Christ died (vv. 15-16).

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. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil.

1 John 3:16

16 By this we know love, that he laid down his life for us, and we ought to lay down our lives for the brothers.

1 Corinthians 8:8–13

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. 9 But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. 10 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? 11 And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. 12 Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. 13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

d. We will keep our liberty to ourselves for the sake of others (v. 22).

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.

2. Let love govern your liberty for the sake of the kingdom (14:15b-18).**When love governs our attitudes and actions . . .**

a. We will live out the priorities of the kingdom (vv. 17-18).

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. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.

Romans 5:1–2

5 Therefore, since we have been justified by faith, we have peace with God through our Lord Jesus Christ. 2 Through him we have also obtained access by faith into this grace in which we stand, and we rejoice in hope of the glory of God.

(1) We are made righteous; therefore we will live righteous lives.

(2) We have peace with God; therefore we will live peaceful lives.

(3) We have joy in the Spirit; therefore we will live joyful lives.

b. We will pursue what makes for peace and mutual upbuilding (v. 19-20).

19 So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

20 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.

> Unity, is a kingdom value, it is more important than our individual preferences or rights.

1 Cor. 10:23

“All things are lawful,” but not all things are helpful. “All things are lawful,” but not all things build up. 24 Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.