

Salt Church

Romans 14:1-10

“For the Sake of Unity”

May 17, 2026

The Greatest Book Ever Written

David and Cindy (June 6-14)

Recap

Romans 13:11-14

¹¹ This is all the more urgent, for you know how late it is; time is running out. Wake up, for our salvation is nearer now than when we first believed. ¹² The night is almost gone; the day of salvation will soon be here. So remove your dark deeds like dirty clothes, and put on the shining armor of right living. ¹³ Because we belong to the day, we must live decent lives for all to see. Don't participate in the darkness of wild parties and drunkenness, or in sexual promiscuity and immoral living, or in quarreling and jealousy. ¹⁴ Instead, clothe yourself with the presence of the Lord Jesus Christ. And don't let yourself think about ways to indulge your evil desires.

- **We closed out chapter 13 with Paul's call to urgency.**
 - We don't have much time left
 - Our days are getting shorter and shorter
 - Stop playing games with your faith
 - Stop drinking milk and mature in your faith so that you can grow by eating the meat of the word.

- Put on the full armor of God because whether you want to admit it or not, you are at war with spiritual beings that you cannot see.
 - Learn how to use the sword of God's word for it is the weapon that the enemy cannot defeat.

Now, Paul transitions from this call to war into the strategy of war.

- The 1st step
 - Uniting the army of God
 - So, Paul begins by addressing the things that divide the church in his day.
 - Let's look at it together

Romans 14:1-10

1 Accept other believers who are weak in faith, and don't argue with them about what they think is right or wrong.

- In the Greek:
 - "Don't argue about debatable things"
- **Observations:**
 - Paul's command through the Holy Spirit is **to accept or receive the weaker believer.**
 - Meaning that **there are stronger or more mature believers and that is reasonable to admit.**
 - For the more mature believer the admonishment is to be careful when you pass judgement because you do not want to discourage your weaker brother or sister.

- This is not to say that we shouldn't teach truth but we should consider our delivery.
 - **It's like dealing with a child that means well, it is easy to discourage those who believe something that is wrong.**
 - This is where the value of discipleship comes into play.
 - **When you build into someone else,**
 - they give you permission to speak into their lives because
 - they know that you come from a position of love.
 - Whereas when you receive someone new, they may not understand your motive.

² For instance, one person believes it's all right to eat anything. But another believer with a sensitive conscience will eat only vegetables.

- We must remember the context in which this was written.
 - A lot of the new Christians were fresh out of Judaism which had many dietary laws.

Key Aspects of Old Testament Food Laws

- **The laws are mainly listed in Leviticus 11 and Deuteronomy 14.**
- **Clean Land Animals:** Must have a split hoof and chew the cud (e.g., cows, sheep, goats).
- **Unclean Land Animals:** Pigs, camels, rabbits, and rodents.
- **Seafood Rules:** Must have both fins and scales (e.g., salmon, tuna).

- **Forbidden Seafood:** All Shellfish (shrimp, crab, lobster) and catfish.
- **Birds & Insects:** Scavenger birds (vultures, ravens) are forbidden.
 - Chickens (**especially fried chicken**) are acceptable!
 - Most insects are forbidden, with exceptions like locusts. (John the Baptist)
- **Blood & Fat:** Consumption of blood is prohibited, and specific fat portions were restricted.
- **Meat and Dairy:** Dietary laws also prohibit cooking or consuming meat and dairy together. (No cheese on your cheese burger)

The whole point of the 613 laws of the Old Testament was that God's people were to set apart from the rest of the pagan world.

- This was deeply entrenched in the Jewish people and still is for the orthodox Jew.

Okay Pastor, how do we know that we have been set free from the dietary laws?

- **Acts 10**
 - Peter is praying about noon time and God shows him in a vision.
 - In this vision a sheet falls from Heaven and on the sheet are all kinds of animals that were forbidden by the Old Law to eat.
 - God's command to Peter is to kill and eat.
 - Peter's response was "never Lord" because he did not want to be guilty of sin because he would be eating something that was unclean.

- God says to Peter, **“Do not call unclean what I have made clean.”**

- This may not be a big deal to you **but it should be.**
- For Gentiles were once considered “unclean” but because of **what God has done,**
- **What Jesus has done,**
- **and what the Holy Spirit is doing** non-Jews can now be clean.

Back to Romans 14:2

²For instance, one person believes it’s all right to eat anything. But another believer with a sensitive conscience will eat only vegetables.

- There was still some hesitation within the converted Jews.
 - That’s okay, “be patient with them”
 - It is not a sin to eat what was once forbidden but **it is a sin if you look down on those who haven’t made peace with the truth.**
 - **Why?**
 - Because God has accepted them.
 - **But in the same way, the weaker brother has a responsibility to accept the truth once it is presented.**
 - So, you see all of us have a responsibility in this and the responsibility is this:
 - **Truth is King!**

Unity is often a matter of accepting Truth

- And remembering each of us are at different stages of maturity.
 - Be patient with each other
- Understand Satan loves to use things like this to divide the body of Christ.

We continue:

3 Those who feel free to eat anything must not look down on those who don't.

- ***In the Greek it is “do not despise or cast out as nothing”***
 - ***Or reduce as nothing***
- The point is not to write a person off because of their level of maturity.
- I do have people in my life who believe it is a sin to eat anything that is not Kosher.
 - And **it is a sin for them** to eat something that they believe causes them to sin (**More on this in a moment**)
 - I am not sure what they do with **Acts 10 or Romans 14.**

And those who don't eat certain foods must not condemn those who do, for God has accepted them.

- **Both has a responsibility** before the Lord to not condemn each other!
- **“For God has accepted them”** is a key phrase.
 - The judgement here is more than the act of eating, **it is a judgement of the motive of the heart.**
 - Only God knows what is going on within the heart.

- But it is true that ***“the overflow of the heart will spill out of the mouth.” (Jesus)***
 - That “overflow” will also produce the fruit of action.
 - This is why knowing the truth is so important.
 - How silly of us to judge someone for sin when the Bible clearly says that it is not a sin.
 - When this happens the only sin is the wrong judgement.

Paul continues:

4 Who are you to condemn someone else’s servants? Their own master will judge whether they stand or fall. And with the Lord’s help, they will stand and receive his approval.

- We have no right to judge someone else’s servant.
 - Why?
 - Because we are judging the motive of their heart not their action.
 - We know this because the action of eating or not eating is not a sin.
 - It’s the motivation of the action that people judge.
 - Often the motivation behind the judgement is pride.

What is the goal of verse 4?

And with the Lord’s help, they will stand and receive his approval.

- God is at work and with His help they will stand and receive His approval.

5 In the same way, some think one day is more holy than another day, while others think every day is alike. You should each be fully convinced that whichever day you choose is acceptable.

- A few weeks ago I told you that it was a sin to ignore the command of the a sabbath rest.
- After that sermon someone came to and asked about that statement.
 - He said that he had been taught that we were no longer obligated to that command.
 - We talked about the fourth commandment
 - I said to him “if we were allowed to ignore one of the ten then we could reason that we could ignore all ten.”
 - Then I reminded him of todays scripture which deals with this very command.

The misconception is that Saturday “The Sabbath” is the Lords day.

- Some say that Sunday is the Lords day because that is the day that He rose from the dead.
 - The Bible says that everyday belongs to the Lord.
 - Paul through the Holy Spirit says pick a day to worship Him in a special way in which you do no ordinary work and you spend time with the Lord.

Jesus said these words about the Sabbath

Mark 2:27-28

²⁷ Then Jesus said to them, “The Sabbath was made to meet the needs of people, and not people to meet the requirements of the Sabbath. ²⁸ So the Son of Man is Lord, even over the Sabbath!”

- **What’s the point Pastor?**

- The point is simple:
 - Every day is Holy unto the Lord
 - **Your body, mind, and spirit, need a day of rest.**
 - 1 day out of 7 God commands you to rest.
 - But make no mistake we should treat every day as **a holy day unto the Lord.**

Paul continues:

⁶ Those who worship the Lord on a special day do it to honor him. Those who eat any kind of food do so to honor the Lord, since they give thanks to God before eating. And those who refuse to eat certain foods also want to please the Lord and give thanks to God.

- All of that is worship
- Did you notice how you honor God by eating and not eating?
 - Both honor God, not by the food but the by giving thanks in both situations.

Paul has much to say about this matter in 1 Corinthians 10

1 Corinthians 10:23-33

²³ You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not everything is good for you. You say, “I am allowed to do anything”—but not

everything is beneficial. ²⁴ Don't be concerned for your own good but for the good of others.

- *That is the key motivation for the child of God.*

²⁵ So you may eat any meat that is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience. ²⁶ For “the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.”

- A lot of the meat sold in the market had been offered as a sacrifice to false gods and God's people were struggling with that issue.
- Why?
 - In their obedience they were witnessing to non-believers who would invite them into their homes.
 - They struggled because the Apostles had instructed them not to eat meat that had been offered to idols.
 - So, now what do we do?
 - Do we ask “Was this meat sacrificed to an idol?”
 - If it was, do we offend our lost friend?
 - What do we do?

Paul continues:

²⁵ So you may eat any meat that is sold in the marketplace without raising questions of conscience. ²⁶ For “the earth is the Lord's, and everything in it.”

- Don't participate in pagan worship
- Don't worry about what is sold in the market
 - But there is a caveat to this rule:

Romans 14:23

²³ But if you have doubts about whether or not you should eat something, you are sinning if you go ahead and do it. For you are not following your convictions. If you do anything you believe is not right, you are sinning.

- Do you remember earlier when I said that eating something that God had made clean could be sin for someone if it bothered their conscience?
 - This verse is why I said that.
 - We need to be fully convinced that **what we are doing or eating and drinking is not a sin** otherwise it becomes a sin if our conscience is not clear on the matter.

We continue in 1 Corinthians 10

²⁷ If someone who isn't a believer asks you home for dinner, accept the invitation if you want to. Eat whatever is offered to you without raising questions of conscience. ²⁸ (But suppose someone tells you, "This meat was offered to an idol." Don't eat it, out of consideration for the conscience of the one who told you. ²⁹ It might not be a matter of conscience for you, but it is for the other person.) For why should my freedom be limited by what someone else thinks? ³⁰ If I can thank God for the food and enjoy it, why should I be condemned for eating it?

- **Time and place matter**
 - **People matter**
 - **Your conscience matters**
 - **So, what do we do?**
 - **Verses 31-33 has the answer:**

³¹ So whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do it all for the glory of God.³² Don't give offense to Jews or Gentiles or the church of God. ³³ I, too, try to please everyone in everything I do. I don't just do what is best for me; I do what is best for others so that many may be saved.

- *That is the whole point of our motivation!*

Back to Romans 14

⁷ For we don't live for ourselves or die for ourselves. ⁸ If we live, it's to honor the Lord. And if we die, it's to honor the Lord. So whether we live or die, we belong to the Lord. ⁹ Christ died and rose again for this very purpose—to be Lord both of the living and of the dead.

- ***Jesus is Lord over all***
 - He is over those of us still **on this planet**
 - He is over those who have **left this planet**
 - **Therefore we live for the glory of the Lord and we die for the glory of the Lord.**

These next two questions are very important for us to answer:

¹⁰ So why do you condemn another believer? Why do you look down on another believer?

- What is your motivation for condemnation of another believer?
- Why would you look down on another believer?
 - **Did you notice this questions relate only to believers?**
 - **Why?**

- Because *it is not important if non-believers are divided.*
- It is paramount to God that believers are united.
 - Satan knows this!

When we condemn another believer or look down upon another believer we judge their hearts.

- Keep in mind Paul is not saying that we can't judge action.
 - Murder is sin
 - Stealing is sin
 - Lying is sin
- To look down upon another is motivated by pride
 - Listen to what the Apostle Paul said about being judged in 1 Corinthians 4

1 Corinthians 4:3-5

*³I care very little if I am judged by you or by any human court; indeed, I do not even judge myself. ⁴My conscience is clear, but that does not make me innocent. It is the Lord who judges me. ⁵Therefore judge nothing before the appointed time; wait until the Lord comes. He will bring to light what is hidden in darkness and will expose **the motives of the heart**. At that time each will receive their praise from God.*

- **It is the motive of the heart that is most important to God.**
 - For the heart determines the attitude
 - The attitude determines the decisions
 - The decisions determine the actions

- The actions determine the future.

Paul closes today's teaching with a reminder of how it all ends for both the believer and the non-believer.

Remember, we will all stand before the judgment seat of God. ¹¹ For the Scriptures say, "As surely as I live," says the Lord, "every knee will bend to me, and every tongue will declare allegiance to God."

Every knee will bow and every tongue will confess that Jesus is Lord!

Lets pray