

# The Book of Romans

## VI. Paul *Directs* the **Believers** concerning their **Spiritual Life** and **Service** before **God** and **One Another** (12:1-15:13)

- A. He *Exhorts* them to *fully* **Commit** to **Serving** God, and **Living** according to **His will** (12:1-2)
- B. He *Explains* to them regarding the **Exercise** of the **Gifts** of **Grace** that have been **given them** (12:3-8)
- C. He *Expresses* what should **Characterize** their **Life** and **Service** as **Believers** (12:9-13:14)

## D. He *Encourages* them to **Accept One Another**, in spite of *Disputable Religious Convictions* (14:1-15:13)

- 1. *Accepting* those who have **different Dietary Convictions** (14:1-4)
- 2. *Acknowledging* those who have **differences** regarding **Days of Observance** (14:5-9)
- 3. *Admonishing* those who would show **Contempt**, and **Judge** their **Brethren** (14:10-12)
- 4. *Asserting* the **Priority of Love** in the **Practice of Religious Convictions** (14:13-23)
  - a. By *Refraining* from **Dietary Practices** that would **Hinder** or **Harm** another **Brother** (14:13-15)

<sup>13</sup> 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**.

<sup>14</sup> **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**.

<sup>15</sup> 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 **Messiah died**.

b. By **Recognizing** the **Priority** of the **Spiritual Welfare** of **Others**  
(14:16-18)

<sup>16</sup> Therefore **do not let** what is for **you** a **good thing**  
be **spoken of as evil**;

<sup>17</sup> for the **kingdom of God** is **not eating** and **drinking**,  
but **righteousness** and **peace** and **joy** in the **Holy Spirit**.

<sup>18</sup> For **he** who in **this way** serves **Messiah**  
is **acceptable** to **God** and **approved** by **men**.

c. By **Resolving not** to **Harm** the **Work of God** for the sake of  
**Dietary Freedom** (14:19-21)

<sup>19</sup> So then let us **pursue** the things which make for **peace**  
and the **building up of one another**.

<sup>20</sup> 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**.

<sup>21</sup> It is **good not** to **eat meat** or to **drink wine**,  
or to do **anything** by which your **brother stumbles**.

d. By **Retaining One's Faith** and **Convictions Personally** before  
**God** (14:22-23)

<sup>22</sup> The **faith** which **you have**, have as **your own conviction** before **God**.  
**Happy** is **he** who does **not condemn himself** in what **he approves**.

<sup>23</sup> But **he** who **doubts** is **condemned** if **he eats**,  
because **his eating** is **not** from **faith**;  
and whatever is **not** from **faith** is **sin**.

## Message Summary and Application

### Introduction

In our text tonight, **Rabbi Paul** continues his **exhortation** that believers  
should **not judge one another** in the practice of **personal religious**

**convictions** that are *disputable* (14:10-13a). Instead, they are to be **determined to not** “put an **obstacle** or a **stumbling block**” in the **way** of fellow **believers** (14:13b).

The **rabbi** then declared that with regard to **one’s diet**, **he believed** personally that **no food** was “**unclean in itself**.” However, to the **one** who **thinks** anything to be **unclean**, “**to him it is unclean** (14:14).”

For this reason, **Paul exhorts** those who are “**stronger**” in their **faith**, to **refrain** from their “**freedom**,” and from **dietary practices** that would **hinder** and **harm** another **brother** who **believed otherwise**.

**Paul** declared that “**walking in love**” towards **others** takes **priority** over **one’s personal faith** and “**freedom**” regarding *disputable* **dietary practices** (14:13-23)

## Personal Application

1. As *believers*, we should be **determined** in our **practice of faith**, to **not** put an **obstacle** or “**stumbling block**” in the **way** of another that would **hinder** or **harm** their **spiritual walk**. (14:13, 15, 21)
2. As *believers*, we should **prioritize** “**love**” and **concern** for the **well-being** of *others* over our **own personal desires**, and even some of our **own personal convictions**. (14:15, 13:8)

**Do nothing** from *selfishness* or *empty conceit*,  
but with **humility of mind** regard **one another** as **more important**  
than **yourselves**; do not *merely* look out for your **own personal interests**,  
but **also** for the **interests of others**. (Philippians 2:3-4)
3. As *believers*, we are to **recognize** that in the **sphere** of **God’s kingdom**, what takes **precedence** is **not** “**eating and drinking**,” but “**righteousness** and **peace** and **joy**” in the **Spirit** (14:17).
4. As *believers*, when our **focus** is on **loving others** (14:15), and the **spiritual priorities** of the **kingdom** (14:17), this is “**acceptable to God** and **approved by men** (14:18).”
5. As *believers*, we are to **pursue** the things that make for **peace**, and the “**building up**” of **one another** (14:19). We are **not** to “**tear down**” the **work of God** by **offending** and causing others to **stumble**, particularly with regard to **dietary practices** (14:20-21).

6. As *believers*, many of us *rejoice* in our faith, and the freedom we have in **Messiah** concerning **dietary practices**, and other **debatable religious practices**. However, rather than openly offend others, we are exhorted to have our **faith** and **convictions** “before God” *personally*, and **not publicly** (14:22).
7. Those of **us** who have **convictions** about not **eating certain foods**, as well **convictions** about the **observance of certain days**, should also feel **free** to **embrace** their “**faith**.” It is important to know that if **one** has “**doubts**” about the **eating** and **drinking** of things, and yet **does them**, this is not from (his) faith, and is sin (14:23).

### Closing Comments

*Other* “**Obstacles**” and “**Stumbling Blocks**”  
that “**Tear Down**” the Work of God