

Hidden Hills Sovereign Grace Baptist Church
Wednesday Sermon

Date: November 3, 2021

Text: Romans 14:1-23

Scripture Reading: Romans 14:1-23

Subject: The law of love concerning doubtful things

In verses 8 through 14 of the 13th chapter, we considered these things:

1. That we are taught to owe no man anything, but to love one another because love is the fulfilling of the law.
2. That love works no ill to our neighbor.
3. That is high time to awake out of sleep because our salvation is nearer than when we first believed. Let us put on the armor of light.
4. That we are to walk honestly as children of the day and not in rioting and drunkenness, not in chambering and wantonness, not in strife or envying.
5. That we are to put on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lust of it.

Now, we come to chapter 14, verses 1 through 23.

Romans 14:1 (KJV) *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.*

Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, -- That brother or sister who is weak, unlearned, feeble, unskilled in the faith – perhaps young in the faith or because of God’s providence has not yet learned. These bring to the church a huge history of learning – from their parents; from their companions; from their teachers; and from their feelings. Parents, companions, teachers, and our

emotions did not always teach us and train us in the truth of God's word.

But not to doubtful disputations. – A dispute is an argument or a condemnation. A harsh and angry denunciation of a brother or sister in relation to things not morally wrong, but where he may have a very honest, but unlearned conscience which will only tend to confirm him more and more in his doubts. To denounce and abuse him will be to confirm him. To receive him affectionately, to admit him to fellowship with us, to talk freely and kindly with him, to do him good, will have a far greater tendency to overcome his unlearned conscience.

Romans 14:2 (KJV) *For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eateth herbs.*

We all know this is true. Think of it generally. It could be applied to almost anything in terms of the good we eat or WILL NOT eat.

Romans 14:3 (KJV) *Let not him that eateth despise him that eateth not; and let not him which eateth not judge him that eateth: for God hath received him.*

This is the essence of this chapter. Whether we believe certain things about foods, and eat or eat not, let us not despise or judge our brother who does not believe precisely as we do about food.

Romans 14:4 (KJV) *Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.*

On the subject of foods, God forbid that we should judge our brother who does not as we do. God has accepted him and is able

to make him stand – just as he makes us stand.

Romans 14:5 (KJV) *One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind.*

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One man esteemeth one day above another: another esteemeth every day alike. – The converted Jew believed that the special days appointed in Moses's law, were holier than other days, and that they should still be observed.

Galatians 4:10 (KJV) *Ye observe days, and months, and times, and years.*

Colossians 2:16 (KJV) *Let no man therefore judge you in meat, or in drink, or in respect of an holyday, or of the new moon, or of the sabbath days:*

On the other side, the believing Gentiles were of the opinion, that the difference in days under the Old Testament was now ceased, and they (the text says) esteemed or approved of all days. The word *alike* is not in the original, but it is aptly supplied by our translators.

Let every man be fully persuaded in his own mind. -- Let every man be satisfied as to the grounds of his practice; let him act by his own and not another man's, judgment and conscience; let him be so fully assured in his own mind of the lawfulness of what he doth, as to find no doubting or scrupulous hesitations in the doing of it; let him be able to say as the apostle himself does,

Romans 14:14 (KJV) *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

Romans 14:6 (KJV) *He that regardeth the day, regardeth it unto the Lord; and he that regardeth not the day, to the Lord he doth not regard it. He that eateth, eateth to the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eateth not, to the Lord he eateth not, and giveth God thanks.*

This shows us that God's children can and do have differences of opinion about food and days – but both serve the LORD and give him thanks.

Romans 14:7-8 (KJV) *For none of us liveth to himself, and no man dieth to himself. 8 For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; and whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's.*

For none of us liveth to himself, -- *To live to ourselves* is an evidence that we are strangers to godliness. And if it be the great motive of our lives to live at ease,--to gratify the flesh, to gain property, or to be distinguished in places of fashion and amusement--it is evidence that we know nothing of the power of that gospel which teaches us *to deny ourselves, and take up our cross daily.*

And no man dieth to himself. -- Everything is done and suffered with reference to God's will. In our conduct, in our property, in our trials, in our death, we are *God's*; to be disposed of as he shall please. In the grave, and in the future age, we shall be equally his. This is the great principle on which *all* Christians live and act, we should be kind and tender towards others, though in some respects they differ from us.

Romans 14:9 (KJV) *For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that he might be Lord both of the dead and living.*

This speaks of believers, whether dead or alive; for though Christ is Lord of all, as God and Creator, yet his appearing to be Lord by his dying, rising, and living again, can only have respect to them for whom dying he has abolished death, and destroyed Satan; whom he has redeemed from sin, and delivered from this present evil world.

So having freed them from those other lords which had the dominion over them, shows himself to be their one and only Lord: and by rising again from the dead, ascending to heaven, and sitting at the right hand of God, all creatures and things being subject to him, he is made or declared both Lord and Christ; and living again, and continuing to live for ever, he appears to have the keys of hell and death; and will open the graves, and raise his people from them, and judge both quick and dead, those that will be found alive at his coming, and such as he will cause to rise from the dead then; till which time, the apostle suggests, the decision of these differences about food and days was to be left to each as he was persuaded in his own mind. In the mean time the saints are to cultivate peace and love among themselves.

Romans 14:10 (KJV) *But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.*

This is the very reason that you and I ought not to judge our brothers and sisters about food and observance of days. We shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 14:11 (KJV) *For it is written, As I live, saith the Lord, every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.*

For as it is written, -- Isaiah 45:23 (KJV) I have sworn by myself, the word is gone out of my mouth in righteousness, and shall not return, That unto me every knee shall bow, every tongue shall swear.

Romans 14:12 (KJV) *So then every one of us shall give account of himself to God.*

Every one of us shall (with no exceptions) give account of himself (or herself) to God.

Romans 14:13 (KJV) *Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.*

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: -- That is, that in light of what we have read, that we no longer pass a sentence on those who differ with us regarding food and days.

But judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way. -- God forbid that we should cause our brother to stumble over things indifferent (things neutral, as to good or evil. Things that are, in themselves indifferent, and are not rendered evil by the prohibition of law.)

Romans 14:14 (KJV) *I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him it is unclean.*

I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that there is nothing unclean of itself: -- As for the apostle's own sense and judgment about the distinction of meats, his conscience had been taught of the Lord that no food is unclean of itself.

But to him that esteemeth anything to be unclean, to him it is unclean. -- There is no moral distinction in creatures for food, there is nothing in any of them that can morally defile a man by eating them.

1 Timothy 4:1-5 (KJV) *Now the Spirit speaketh expressly, that in the latter times some shall depart from the faith, giving heed to seducing spirits, and doctrines of devils; 2 Speaking lies in hypocrisy; having their conscience seared with a hot iron; 3 Forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from meats, which God hath created to be received with thanksgiving of them which believe and know the truth. 4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing to be refused, if it be received with thanksgiving: 5 For it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

If a brother or sister's conscience is untaught by scripture and they believe that some food is unclean – then to them it is unclean.

Relate a personal experience with a relative about this (Aunt Flora).

Romans 14:15 (KJV) *But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat, now walkest thou not charitably. Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died.*

But if thy brother be grieved with thy meat (food), ***now walkest thou not charitably.*** – Consider the Apostle's words to the Corinthian Church.

1 Corinthians 8:8-13 (KJV) *But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse. 9 But take heed lest by any means this liberty of yours become a stumblingblock to them that are weak. 10 For if any man see thee which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idol's temple, shall not the conscience of*

*him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; **11** And through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died? **12** But when ye sin so against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, ye sin against Christ. **13** Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will eat no flesh while the world standeth, lest I make my brother to offend.*

Destroy not him with thy meat, for whom Christ died. – We can greatly weaken and offend our brothers and sisters with our attitudes about food. God forbid that we should do this – to a brother or sister for whom Christ died.

Romans 14:16-17 (KJV) *Let not then your good be evil spoken of: **17 For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; but righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.***

Let not then your good be evil spoken of: -- That which you esteem to be right, and which may be right in itself. You are not bound by the ceremonial law. You are free from the yoke of bondage. This freedom you esteem to be *a good*--a favour--a high privilege. And so it is; but you should not make such a use of it as to do injury to others. Do not so use your Christian liberty as to give occasion for railing and unkind remarks from your brethren, so as to produce contention and strife, and thus to give rise to evil reports among the wicked

For the kingdom of God is not meat and drink; -- The peculiarities of the kingdom of God, or of the church of Christ on earth, do not consist in observing the distinctions between food and drink. Hence it is said in [Col 2:16](#), "Let no man judge you in meat or in drink."

But righteousness, and peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost. -- The kingdom of grace lies in righteousness and true holiness, in

which the new man is created; in truth and uprightness in the inward parts, where the laws of God are put and written; and in peace of conscience, arising from the blood and righteousness of Christ; and in that spiritual joy and comfort the Holy Ghost produces.

Romans 14:18 (KJV) *For he that in these things serveth Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men.*

For he that in these things serveth Christ -- That is, in righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Ghost.

Is acceptable to God, -- from whom he derives all his peace, joy, and comfort.

And approved of men. -- Men will *approve* of such conduct; they will esteem it to be right, and to be in accordance with the Christian life. He does not say that the wicked world will *love* such a life, but it will commend itself to them as such a life as men *ought* to lead.

Romans 14:19 (KJV) *Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another.*

Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, -- O brothers, we don't want to follow things which foster quarrels and dissension among us – but peace.

2 Corinthians 13:11 (KJV) *Finally, brethren, farewell. Be perfect, be of good comfort, be of one mind, live in peace; and the God of love and peace shall be with you.*

Ephesians 4:3 (KJV) *Endeavouring to keep the unity of the Spirit in the bond of peace.*

...follow after *things wherewith one may edify another*. –

Know and hold in practice those things which build up one another
– things which strengthen their faith in Christ.

Romans 14:20 (KJV) *For meat destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eateth with offence.*

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For meat (food) ***destroy not the work of God.*** -- the peace of the church of Christ, which is both the will and work of God; peace is what he calls his people to, and what he himself is the author of; and may be destroyed, and sometimes is, by trifling things as food and days.

All things indeed are pure; -- That is, all sorts of food, without any distinction, may be eaten; there is nothing common or unclean, every creature in itself is good, and every Christian may lawfully eat thereof, with moderation and thankfulness.

But it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. -- Though pure in itself, yet it may become an occasion of sin, if another is grieved by it. It is evil to the man who pursues a course that will give offence to a brother; that will pain him, or tend to drive him off from the church, or lead him away into sin.

With offence. -- So as to offend a brother, such as *he* esteems to be sin, and by which he will be grieved.

Romans 14:21 (KJV) *It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby thy brother stumbleth, or is offended, or is made weak.*

Amen! This is the lesson of this chapter.

Romans 14:22 (KJV) *Hast thou faith? have it to thyself before God. Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth.*

Hast thou faith? Have it to thyself before God. – Remember the subject and context. Food and days. Do not impose your faith or opinion on others. Be satisfied with cherishing the opinion, and acting on it in private, without bringing it forward to produce disturbance in the church.

Happy is he that condemneth not himself in that thing which he alloweth. – When one doth not inwardly condemn himself, for doing that against his conscience. which he openly allows or practices: such a one is happy in this respect, because he is free from those terrors that torment those who act against their consciences. Reminder: Consciences can and should be taught and strengthened by the Holy Scriptures in their context.

Romans 14:23 (KJV) *And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith: for whatsoever is not of faith is sin.*

And he that doubteth is damned if he eat, -- Anyone is condemned in his conscience if he has doubts about what he is eating or drinking. Why is that?

Because he eateth not of faith: -- What a man does doubtfully, he does sinfully.

For whatsoever is not of faith is sin. – That is, concerning food and drink.