

## Romans 14:14-5:4

**Romans 14:14** - "I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean."

- "No food is unclean in itself" is confirmed in 1 Tim. 4:4, "everything God created is good" based on Genesis 1:31.
- Jesus said same in Mark 7:15-23 where Mark adds the comment that here Jesus declared all food clean.
- Peter knew this, but fell into bondage again in Acts 10:9-15 and, then again!, in Galatians 2:11-3:1

At issue here is how do we stand for the truth and integrity of our faith (assuming we are "the strong"), but yet not offend those who do not understand the Scriptures (doctrines, NT, etc.) and seemingly compromise to full teaching and life in Christ.

**Romans 14:15** - "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."

- Paul moves from granting the strong believer liberty to demanding the strong believer walk in love.
- This is the contrast of 1 Corinthians 8:1 - "Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that 'all of us possess knowledge.' This *'knowledge' puffs up, but love builds up.*"
  - **"Puffs Up"** - this word occurs only here in the NT. **φουσιοῖ (physioi) - meaning** "I inflate, puff up; pass: I am puffed up, arrogant, proud." And, 5448 *physiōō* (from *physa*, "air-bellows") – properly, inflate by blowing; (figuratively) swelled up, like an egotistical person spuing out arrogant ("puffed-up") thoughts.
  - **"Builds Up"** - this word is used 4x in the NT - **οἰκοδομεῖ (oikodomei)**. All in 1 Corinthians 10:23; 14:4 (2x) and here (8:1). It means "I build, build up, edify." And, "I erect a building, build"; fig. of the building up of character: I build up, edify, encourage. *oikodomēō* (from [3624](#) /*oikos*, "a house" and *domeō*, "to build") – properly, to build a house (*home*, edifice); (figuratively) to *edify* – literally, "*build* someone up," helping them to stand (be strong, "sturdy").

**Romans 14:16** - "So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil."

- "You" refers to the strong
- "As good" is the NT freedom in Christ and deliverance from the Law.
- Those speaking evil are the weak
- "Evil" is used to identify the NT doctrine of salvation in Christ apart from works. Salvation by works then is the evil and is blasphemy
- The point is going to be to advise the strong to keep their freedom private instead of flaunting it for the weak to mis-label as evil. Apparently this is not a compromise, but instead an attempt to maintain the peace, joy and unity in the congregation. This will provide an opportunity to encourage growth and understanding.

**Romans 14:17** - "For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit."

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ou gar estin hē basileia tou Theou brōsis kai posis alla dikaiosynē kai eirēnē kai  
17 οὐ γάρ ἐστιν ἡ βασιλεία τοῦ Θεοῦ βρῶσις καὶ πόσις ; ἀλλὰ δικαιοσύνη , καὶ εἰρήνη , καὶ  
not for is the kingdom - of God eating and drinking but righteousness and peace and  
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chara en Pneumati Hagiō  
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joy in [the] Spirit Holy  
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- Not a matter of your freedom of eating and drinking things that do not matter (because they are material and fleshly), but what matters is the fruit of the Spirit which allows for growth and edification.
- Joy and Peace are both listed as fruit of the Spirit.

**Romans 14:18** - “Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men.”

- Serving God by the Spirit (not the flesh) is what matters.

**Romans 14:19**- “So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.”

**Romans 14:20** - “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.”

- God is building the church, his people. Do not destroy the work of the Spirit for a material thing or a natural issue.

**Romans 14:21** - “It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.”

**Romans 14:22** - “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.”

- The strong is to take these material issues and keep them private.
- “Blessed” or happy are you if you understand your freedom and do not allow others to judge you.

**Romans 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.”

- If you do not understand a freedom and it still strikes your conscience, then it is sin.
- “Faith” refers to the body of doctrine or truth that has been revealed and understood from the text of Scripture by the Holy Spirit.

**Romans 15:1** - “We who are strong have an obligation to bear with the failings of the weak, and not to please ourselves.”

- Addressing the Strong
- Galatians 6:2

**Romans 15:2** - “Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, to build him up.”

- This is not compliance or compromise, but more of a missionary effort.

**Romans 15:3** - “For Christ did not please himself, but as it is written, ‘The reproaches of those who reproached you fell on me.’ ”

- Christ’s entire ministry was this
- Psalm 69, which was also used by Jesus in John 2:17, “Zeal for your house will consume me.”
- Christ was misunderstood by the religious crowd, yet Christ only did what pleased God (John 8:29)

**Romans 15:4** - “For whatever was written in former days was written for our instruction, that through endurance and through the encouragement of the Scriptures we might have hope.”