



The Book of ROMANS

Chapter 14

“A Life of Liberty & Love!”

> (v1-12) A Life of Liberty!

(v1) Let's understand the historical and cultural relevance of Ch. 14 - *“Weak in the faith”* characterizes those believers who are unable to let go of the religious ceremonies and rituals of their past. The weak Jewish believer had difficulty abandoning the rites and prohibitions of the Old Covenant; he felt compelled to adhere to dietary laws, observe the Sabbath, and offer sacrifices in the temple. The weak Gentile believer had been steeped in pagan idolatry and its rituals; he felt that any contact with anything remotely related to his past, including eating meat that had been offered to a pagan deity and then sold in the marketplace, tainted him with sin. Both had very sensitive consciences in these areas and were not yet mature enough to be free of those convictions.” – John MacArthur

(v2-3) The “Vegetarian” vs. The “Carnivore” – *“To eat or not to eat that is the question?”* Jesus has the answer in Mark 7:14-23 - *When He had called all the multitude to Himself, He said to them, “Hear Me, everyone, and understand: There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man. If anyone has ears to hear, let him hear!”* When He had entered a house away from the crowd, His disciples asked Him concerning the parable. So He said to them, *“Are you thus without understanding also? Do you not perceive that whatever enters a man from outside cannot defile him, because it does not enter his heart but his stomach, and is eliminated, thus purifying all foods?”* And He said, *“What comes out of a man, that defiles a man. For from within, out of the heart of men, proceed evil thoughts, adulteries, fornications, murders, thefts, covetousness, wickedness, deceit, lewdness, an evil eye, blasphemy, pride, foolishness. All these evil things come from within and defile a man.”*

- Paul gives warning and instruction regarding food in 1 Timothy 4:1-5 - *Now the Spirit expressly says that in latter times some will depart from the faith, giving heed to deceiving spirits and doctrines of demons, speaking lies in hypocrisy, having their own conscience seared with a hot iron, forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from foods which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.*

- Elements of truth are found in Scripture which commends both singleness (1 Cor. 7:25–35) and fasting (Matt. 6:16,17; 9:14,15). But the deception came in making such human works a prerequisite for salvation—a distinguishing mark of all false religions. Neither celibacy nor any form of diet saves or sanctifies. Paul says that our food is to be received with thanksgiving and sanctified by the Word of God and prayer. Do you say “grace” before every meal, I hope you do.

(v4) In regard to your brothers and sisters in Christ are you a critic, a Monday morning quarterback, a backseat driver? Paul helps us to mind our own business - 1 Cor 4:1-5 - *Let a man so consider us, as servants of Christ and stewards of the mysteries of God. Moreover it is required in stewards that one be found faithful. But with me it is a very small thing that I should be judged by you or by a human court. In fact, I do not even judge myself. For I know of nothing against myself, yet I am not justified by this; but He who judges me is the Lord. Therefore judge nothing before the time, until the Lord comes, who will both bring to light the hidden things of darkness and reveal the counsels of the hearts. Then each one's praise will come from God.*

- Warren Wiersbe writes, "Some activities we know are wrong, because the Bible clearly condemns them. Other activities we know are right, because the Bible clearly commands them."

(v5-6) Christians worship the Lord 365 days a year!

Worshipping on Saturday or Sunday, or any holiday does not make you more righteous or holier with God. There were annual religious celebrations on the Jewish calendar (e.g., *Passover, Pentecost, or Tabernacles*; cf. Lev. 23).

- Also, the *new moon*, which is the monthly sacrifice offered on the first day of each month (Num. 10:10; 28:11–14; Ps. 81:3). Plus, the *Sabbaths*, which are the weekly celebration of the seventh day, which pictured God's rest from creation.

- The New Testament clearly teaches that Christians are not required to keep these observances.

Galatians 4:9-11 - *But now after you have known God, or rather are known by God, how is it that you turn again to the weak and beggarly elements, to which you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days and months and seasons and years. I am afraid for you, lest I have labored for you in vain.*

Colossians 2:16-17 - *So let no one judge you in food or in drink, or regarding a festival or a new moon or sabbaths, which are a shadow of things to come, but the substance is of Christ.*

- Why do we gather for worship on Sundays?

The New Testament teaches that Christians gathered together on Sunday - Acts 20:7 - *Now on the first day of the week, when the disciples came together to break bread, Paul, ready to depart the next day, spoke to them and continued his message until midnight.* Also, 1 Corinthians 16:2 - *On the first day of the week let each one of you lay something aside, storing up as he may prosper, that there be no collections when I come.*

(v7-10) Romans 14:9 - *of both the dead* - That is, of those who "are" deceased, or who have gone to another state of existence. This passage proves that those who die are not annihilated; that they do not cease to exist or be conscious.

- Seventh Day Adventist and Jehovah Witnesses teach the false doctrine of "annihilation."

- The Roman Catholic Church declares the false doctrine of "purgatory," whereas, people are given the false idea of a second chance after death, this is found in Catechisms of The Catholic Church 1030, 1031, 1032, 1036, 1371, 1479; these teachings are contrary to the teachings of Jesus Christ, let's read Luke 16:19-31.

Jesus said in Matthew 25:46 - And these will go away into everlasting punishment, but the righteous into eternal life."

- What is the judgment seat of Christ?

2 Corinthians 5:9-11 - *Therefore we make it our aim, whether present or absent, to be well pleasing to Him. For we must all appear before the judgment seat of Christ, that each one may receive the things done in the body, according to what he has done, whether good or bad.*

- Turn to 1 Corinthians 3:9-15 - *For we are God's fellow workers; you are God's field, you are God's building. According to the grace of God which was given to me, as a wise master builder I have laid the foundation, and another builds on it. But let each one take heed how he builds on it. For no other foundation can anyone lay than that which is laid, which is Jesus Christ. Now if anyone builds on this foundation with gold, silver, precious stones, wood, hay, straw, each one's work will become clear; for the Day will declare it, because it will be revealed by fire; and the fire will test each one's work, of what sort it is. If anyone's work which he has built on it endures, he will receive a reward. If anyone's work is burned, he will suffer loss; but he himself will be saved, yet so as through fire.*

- Rewards are also found in the “Parable of the Talents” (Matthew 25:14-30).

(v11-12) Have you confessed Jesus Christ as your Lord and Savior unto salvation? (cp. Matt 10:32-33 - *"Therefore whoever confesses Me before men, him I will also confess before My Father who is in heaven. But whoever denies Me before men, him I will also deny before My Father who is in heaven.* Rom 10:9-11 - *that if you confess with your mouth the Lord Jesus and believe in your heart that God has raised Him from the dead, you will be saved. For with the heart one believes unto righteousness, and with the mouth confession is made unto salvation.*

> (v13-23) A Life of Love!

> Observe the do's & don'ts of love:

(v13) Do RESOLVE!

Don't stumble others!

(v14-15) Do eat with PRAYER!

Don't eat that which offends another!

(v16) Do GOOD always!

Don't do evil!

(v17) Do righteousness, peace & JOY!

Don't give in to sinful habits, fighting, & grumpiness!

(v18-19) Do EDIFY (build up) one another!

Don't tear down!

(v20-21) Do think of others FIRST!

Don't stumble, offend, or make others weak!