

Romans 14:16-23

Romans Chapter 14 overview: This chapter discusses Christians and how we treat other people. It can be called the consideration chapter; consider others before you consider yourself. This chapter deals with Christians personal relationships with other Gentiles and Christians.

16 Let not then your good be evil spoken of: Don't be bound by the old laws because we are under grace now. We are not to behave badly or poorly because we are saved, on the contrary, **we are to behave as best and politely as possible towards others.**

17 for the kingdom of God is not eating and drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. There are two kingdoms mentioned in scripture: one is the Kingdom of God, the other is the Kingdom of Heaven. They are not the same thing. When Jesus Christ came on the earth, he announced the kingdom of heaven is at hand, here's your king. Paul told this to the Jews when he presented Jesus Christ to them, but they rejected Him. This kingdom of God spoken of here is all of creation; the universe, the planets, everything that is out there. The pharoses had added hundred of laws that the people were to obey to be saved, but that is wrong. Joy is different than happiness. Happiness is dependent upon outside circumstances, like getting a present for your birthday, and that happiness is short-lived. Joy is a state of being because you are living in Christ. It is not dependent upon outside circumstances. You could be dying in the hospital and still have joy. The Holy Spirit is our teacher and comforter.

18 For he that herein serveth Christ is well-pleasing to God, and approved of men. If you are living a life that serves Jesus Christ, then you are acceptable to God. Specifically how you treat others – your neighbors, your boss, your coworkers, etc. If you treated them all right, then you are right by God at the end of the day. Men may not approve of your behaviour, but they will respect you.

19 So then let us follow after things which make for peace, and things whereby we may edify one another. Notice – we as Christians are to search out things and circumstances that foster peace. We should strive for peace in our words, behavior, and actions. If you deal with telemarketers, be nice to them if you have to refuse them. They are our fellow humans. If someone is irritating you or you are irritated, take a deep breath and be as polite as you can. Use your manners no matter what.

20 Overthrow not for meat's sake the work of God. All things indeed are clean; howbeit it is evil for that man who eateth with offence. Meat here means anything in your life that you can use that would hurt a fellow weaker Christian. If it moves, eat it, as long as it's not poisonous.

21 It is good not to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor to do anything whereby thy brother stumbleth. Always consider the other person first. Anything that you can do that will hurt another Christian is wrong. Do not throw stumbling blocks in front of people around you, be they Gentiles or Christians. If they don't drink coffee because they think it's a sin, then don't make any for yourself. Wait until after they leave. Don't belittle them for their beliefs. [Here's the comment about alcoholic beverages:](#) you can eat all the hamburgers you want, but it won't change your mental facilities like alcohol will. Warning: knowing that drinking alcohol will change your mental facilities and your ability to reason properly, and that someone could see you from church or an impressionable child, and knowing that you could become an alcoholic just by starting with one drink, DON'T DRINK! As a Christian, you are ordered not to put stumbling blocks in front of your brethren, so don't drink and become a fool. Using a tiny bit of alcohol for medicinal purposes is different. For medical uses, they don't drink to get a buzz. When Jesus Christ turned water into wine, they lived in a time and in an area where the water

was bad and they didn't have treatment facilities, but they drank in moderation not to get a buzz but to wash down their food and whet their whistle. It was the custom of the time. But there are ample warnings in scripture to not overdo it with the alcohol. If you have good tap water, you don't need wine. There are foreign countries still today that drink wine with every meal and don't think a thing about it, but they don't drink to get drunk. They don't drink until they are two sheets to the wind. **Be prudent with alcohol, and if you can help it, don't drink.**

22 *The faith which thou hast, have thou to thyself before God. Happy is he that judgeth not himself in that which he approveth.* If you think its ok for you, and you have settled in your own mind that it's alright for you to do those things which the bible does not designate specifically as a sin, then it's ok. Eat the hamburger, see the movie.

23 *But he that doubteth is condemned if he eat, because he eateth not of faith; and whatsoever is not of faith is sin.* If you really feel that something is wrong that isn't specified in the bible, but it bothers you, **then don't do it.** That is your own conscience guiding you. When you follow God's rules and your pure heart, you will be fine.