

Romans 14:13-23

Do Not Make Others Fall

- ◆ So then, let us stop judging one another. Instead, you should decide never to do anything that would make others stumble or fall into sin. My union with the Lord Jesus makes me certain that no food is of itself ritually unclean; but if you believe that some food is unclean, then it becomes unclean for you. If you hurt others because of something you eat, then you are no longer acting from love. Do not let the food that you eat ruin the person for whom Christ died! Do not let what you regard as good get a bad name. For God's Kingdom is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of the righteousness, peace, and joy which the Holy Spirit gives. And when you serve Christ in this way, you please God and are approved by others. So then, we must always aim at those things that bring peace and that help strengthen one another. Do not, because of food, destroy what God has done. All foods may be eaten, but it is wrong to eat anything that will cause someone else to fall into sin. The right thing to do is to keep from eating meat, drinking wine, or doing anything else that will make other believers fall. Keep what you believe about this matter, then, between yourself and God. Happy are those who do not feel guilty when they do something they judge is right! But if they have doubts about what they eat, God condemns them when they eat it, because their action is not based on faith. And anything that is not based on faith is sin.
- ◆ Whatever we do should not make others stumble and fall into sin. Building on the previous verses (1-12), that state how we're different; we should not use our differences to make others fall into sin. If others don't eat something that we eat, we shouldn't force them or judge them for not eating it. Their faith does not allow them to eat it. If they eat the food to please us, they are sinning because they're eating out of faith. Anything done but not based on faith is sin.
- ◆ If we force things on others, those things are going to have a bad reputation; we don't want things that we love to have a bad reputation. If we force things on others, we're not acting out of love.
- ◆ The kingdom of God is not a matter of food or our earthly priorities, but it's a matter of righteousness, peace, and joy which the Holy Spirit gives. When we serve Christ this way, we please God and we're also approved by others. We should always act out of love and aim for things that bring peace and which help strengthen others.