

No Cause to Stumble

Key Scriptures

Romans 14:14-23

¹⁴ I know and am convinced in the Lord Jesus that there is nothing unclean in itself; still, it is unclean to the one who considers it unclean.

¹⁵ For if your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. Do not destroy by your food someone for whom Christ died.

¹⁶ Therefore do not let what you consider good be spoken of as evil.

¹⁷ For the kingdom of God does not consist of food and drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

¹⁸ For the one who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and approved by people.

¹⁹ So then, let us pursue what makes for peace and for building up one another.

²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. For although all things are clean, it is wrong to cause anyone to stumble by what you eat.

²¹ It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything that causes your brother to stumble.

²² The faith you have, keep to yourself before God. Blessed is the one who does not judge himself by what he approves.

²³ But the man who doubts is condemned if he eats, because he does not do so from faith, and whatever is not from faith is sin.

Key Point: The kingdom of God does not consist of what we eat or drink, but righteousness, peace, and joy in the Holy Spirit.

TALK IT OVER

Start talking: Pick a conversation starter for your group.

- What was the most fun costume you ever wore for Halloween? If you didn't participate in Halloween, was there ever a costume you would have liked to wear to a friend's party?

Start thinking: Questions to get your group thinking.

- Read through Romans 14:14-23 with your group. What does Paul tell us about how we can edify/build up one another?
- How does the understanding of Jesus as the ultimate source of cleanliness and acceptability before God challenge traditional views of what makes people acceptable to God?
- Kyle used an illustration of an ex-hippie's reaction to a 60's themed party to illustrate the power of perception and personal history. Can you think of other situations where perception or personal history play into our conscience and convictions?
- What does it mean in v. 18 to be approved by people? Why does this matter?
- What is vv. 22-23 teaching us?

Start sharing: Questions to create openness.

- As an adult, are there any rules you have made as a reaction to something that happened? (aka: person is not allowed to use tools because they lost them)
- How can legalistic rules detract from the essence of Christianity? How does adding things to be acceptable before God, demote Jesus?
- How would v. 16 happen in everyday life?
- v. 23 "If it's doubtful, it's dirty." How can you apply this principle in respect to your own conscience, and in respect to the conscience of others?

Start doing. Commit to a step and live it out this week!

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Prayer Requests. It may be helpful to pray the scriptures back to God.

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