

The Church

“Abstainers”
in fellowship with
“Participators”

Within every congregation there are divergent practices

- Romans 14
 - Eating/refusing meat, v.2
 - Observing/not observing “days”, v.5
 - “Clean/unclean”, v.14
- I Corinthians 7
 - Marry/celibacy, v.7
 - Circumcision reversal/circumcision acceptance, 7:18-19
 - Slavery, 7:21-23
- I Corinthians 8, 10
 - Eating/refusing meat that has been sacrificed to idols, 8:1-7
 - Lawful/expedient, 10:23
 - Drink, 10:31

Most of the time, the differences are cast as matters of “Christian liberty”

- The key to this understanding is Paul’s statement of truth,
But meat commendeth us not to God: for neither, if we eat, are we the better; neither, if we eat not, are we the worse.

I Corinthians 8:8 (KJV)

- **Conclusions** about a practice are generally based on **individual understanding** of the **Biblical information**
 - The “weak” have concluded the practice in question “commends to God” or causes us to become “worse”
 - The “strong” have concluded that the practice in question does not “commend to God”, making us neither “better or worse”
 - It is possible that a person’s conclusion is **not based on Biblical information** – **he/she practices lawlessness**

Material on Diversity

- <https://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume36/GOT036014.html>
- <http://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume40/GOT040042.html>
- <https://www.truthmagazine.com/archives/volume16/TM016124.html>

We Should Not Divide the Church into Classes

Then [G5119](#) pleased [G1380](#) it the [G3588](#) apostles [G652](#) and [G2532](#) elders, [G4245](#) with [G4862](#) the [G3588](#) whole [G3650](#) church, [G1577](#) to send [G3992](#) chosen [G1586](#) men [G435](#) of [G1537](#) their own company [G846](#) to [G1519](#) Antioch [G490](#) with [G4862](#) Paul [G3972](#) and [G2532](#) Barnabas; [G921](#) *namely*, Judas [G2455](#) surnamed [G1941](#) Barsabas, [G923](#) and [G2532](#) Silas, [G4609](#) chief [G2233](#) men [G435](#) among [G1722](#) the [G3588](#) brethren: [G80](#)

Acts 15:22

We Should Not Divide the Church into Classes

Gaius [G1050](#) mine [G3450](#) host, [G3581](#) and [G2532](#) of
he [G3588](#) whole [G3650](#) church, [G1577](#) saluteth [G782](#) you. [G5209](#) Erastus [G2037](#)
the [G3588](#) chamberlain [G3623](#) of the [G3588](#) city [G4172](#) saluteth [G782](#) you, [G5209](#)
and [G2532](#) Quartus [G2890](#) a brother. [G80](#)

Romans 16:23

We Should Not Divide the Church into Classes

If [G1437](#) therefore [G3767](#) the [G3588](#) whole [G3650](#) church [G1577](#) be come together [G4905](#) into [G1909](#) one place, [G846](#) and [G2532](#) all [G3956](#) speak [G2980](#) with tongues, [G1100](#) and [G1161](#) there come in [G1525](#) *those that are unlearned*, [G2399](#) or [G2228](#) unbelievers, [G571](#) will they not [G3756](#) say [G2046](#) that [G3754](#) ye are mad? [G3105](#)

I Corinthians 14:23

Response

For [G1063](#) if [G1437](#) I pray [G4336](#) in an *unknown* tongue, [G1100](#) my [G3450](#) spirit [G4151](#) prayeth, [G4336](#) but [G1161](#) my [G3450](#) understanding [G3563](#) is [G2076](#) unfruitful. [G175](#) What [G5101](#) is [G2076](#) it then? [G3767](#) I will pray [G4336](#) with the [G3588](#) spirit, [G4151](#) and [G1161](#) I will pray [G4336](#) with the [G3588](#) understanding [G3563](#) also: [G2532](#) I will sing [G5567](#) with the [G3588](#) spirit, [G4151](#) and [G1161](#) I will sing [G5567](#) with the [G3588](#) understanding [G3563](#) also. [G2532](#) Else [G1893](#) when [G1437](#) thou shalt bless [G2127](#) with the [G3588](#) spirit, [G4151](#) how [G4459](#) shall he that occupieth [G378](#) the [G3588](#) room [G5117](#) of the [G3588](#) unlearned [G2399](#) say [G2046](#) Amen [G281](#) at [G1909](#) thy [G4674](#) giving of thanks, [G2169](#) seeing [G1894](#) he understandeth [G1492](#) not [G3756](#) what [G5101](#) thou sayest? [G3004](#)