

ROMANS

Chapter 14:13-23

Reasoning with the Strong About the
Seriousness of Causing the Weak to Offend

Theme for this section stated:

*Let us **not therefore judge** one another any more: **but judge** ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. (v.13)*

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- To the weak, **do not** judge (condemn) a brother for that which his complete (strong) knowledge allows (Last week)
- To the strong, **do not** judge (condemn) a brother for that which his incomplete (weak) knowledge does not allow (Last week)

Theme for this section stated:

*Let us **not therefore judge** one another any more: **but judge** ye this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock in his brother's way, or an occasion of falling. (v.13)*

- To the weak **and** strong, **do not** judge (condemn) a brother for that which his complete (strong) knowledge allows or that which his incomplete knowledge allows
- To the weak **and** strong, **do** judge a knowledgeable brother who abuses those with less complete knowledge (a weaker brother)

The reason for judgement:

- The reason for such judgement is not the strong's participation in a sinful activity – **the activity is not itself sinful**

*I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean **of itself**... (v.14a)*

The reason for judgement:

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*I know, and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean **of itself**...* (v.14a)

- Judge (condemn) the man who **abuses someone with incomplete knowledge** (the weak) by his participation in some activity -- **this is not “walking in love”** (v.14)
- Cf. I Corinthians 8:1,4-7

Now concerning things sacrificed to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffeth up, but love edifieth...Concerning therefore the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that no idol is anything in the world, and that there is no God but one. For though there be that are called gods, whether in heaven or on earth; as there are gods many, and lords many; yet to us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we unto him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and we through him. Howbeit there is not in all men that knowledge: but some, being used until now to the idol, eat as of a thing sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled.

I Corinthians 8:1, 4-7

The reason for judgement:

- The weak is “destroyed” by participation in that which is “sin” because it is “not of faith” (v. 23)
- Conscience never defines sinful activity, for either the weak or strong (nor can it make fake gods into the real God)
 - The job of the conscience is only to evaluate whether I participate in the things my knowledge (of the Word) tells me to participate in

What does it mean to “overthrow faith”:

- The weak person is:
 - Caused to “stumble” (v.13, 21)

Thayer (V.13) noun

- 1) a stumbling block
- 1a) an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against he stumbles or falls
- 1b) that over which a soul stumbles, i.e. by which is **caused to sin**

Thayer (V.21) verb

- 1) to strike against
- 1a) of those who strike against a stone or other obstacle in the path, to stumble
- 1b) to strike one’s foot against a stone
- 1b1) i.e. to meet with some harm
- 1c) to rush upon, beat against
- 1d) to be made to stumble by a thing
- 1d1) i.e. metaphorically to be **induced to sin**

What does it mean to “overthrow faith”:

- The weak person is:
 - Caused to “fall” (v.13)

Thayer Definition:

1) the movable stick or trigger of a trap, a trap stick

1a) a trap, snare

1b) any impediment placed in the way and causing one to stumble or fall, (a stumbling block, occasion of stumbling), i.e. a rock which is a cause of stumbling

1c) fig. applied to Jesus Christ, whose person and career were so contrary to the expectations of the Jews concerning the Messiah, that they rejected him and by their obstinacy made shipwreck of their salvation

2) any person or thing by which one is (entrapped) drawn into error or sin

What does it mean to “overthrow faith”:

- The weak person is:
 - “Grieved” (v.15)

Thayer Definition:

- 1) to make sorrowful
- 2) to affect with sadness, cause grief, to throw into sorrow
- 3) to grieve, offend
- 4) to make one uneasy, cause him a scruple

What does it mean to “overthrow faith”:

- The weak person is:
 - “Destroyed” (v.15, 20)

Thayer Definition:

1) to destroy

1a) to put out of the way entirely, abolish, put an end to ruin

1b) render useless

1c) to kill

1d) to declare that one must be put to death

1e) metaphorically to devote or give over to eternal misery in hell

1f) to perish, to be lost, ruined, destroyed

2) to destroy

2a) to lose

What does it mean to “overthrow faith”:

- The weak person is:
 - “Overthrown” (v.20)

Thayer Definition:

1) to dissolve, disunite

1a) (what has been joined together), to destroy, demolish

1b) metaphorically to overthrow, i.e. render vain, deprive of success, bring to naught

1b1) to subvert, overthrow

1b1a) of institutions, forms of government, laws, etc., to deprive of force, annul, abrogate, discard

1c) of travellers, to halt on a journey, to put up, lodge (the figurative expression originating in the circumstance that, to put up for the night, the straps and packs of the beasts of burden are unbound and taken off; or, more correctly from the fact that the traveller’s garments, tied up when he is on the journey, are unloosed at it end)

The proper course for those having complete knowledge

- Do not expose the weak to what would destroy (v. 21)
 - "...it is good not to eat flesh..."
 - Infinitive in the aorist tense. This is an action that takes place at some point, as opposed to continued action or habitual practice
- Walk as recognizing that Christ died for more than meat (v. 15b-17)
- Continue to have your faith-activities with God (v. 22a)

The true nature of the kingdom

- In the Holy Spirit, finding:
 - Righteousness
 - Peace
 - Joy
- If you serve your brother, you serve Christ