

**PURSUE WHAT MAKES FOR PEACE
(ROMANS 14:13-23)**

I. Don't press your opinions (vs. 13-16).

- A. We have no right to judge in these matters of indifference.
 - 1. He is not saying we can't make any judgments of any kind.
 - 2. Jesus said we are to judge righteous judgment.
 - 3. There would be no way to practice discipline of any kind if there are no judgments to be made.
- B. We aren't to judge but we are not to put a stumblingblock, or bait the trap, in a brother's way.
 - 1. If what I know to be right is a problem for a brother, I won't press my opinion.
 - 2. I don't want to cause a brother in Christ to sin.
- C. Paul knew there was no such thing as an unclean animal for food.
 - 1. Peter learned this in a dream did he not.
 - 2. There were brethren there in Rome that were strong enough in the faith to know there were no unclean meats.
 - 3. It's important to note that Paul was not saying there is nothing unclean.
 - 4. He's talked about sin in this book already and the need to be cleansed from it.
 - 5. Therefore, we know he is not saying all actions are clean.
- D. However, if one accounted, or considers eating of meats of various kinds or offered to an idol to be sinful, to him it was a sin.
- E. When you press your opinion, even though right, and cause a brother to stumble, you aren't walking in love.
 - 1. In fact, Jesus died for that person you are harming.
 - 2. Put away whatever opinion it is and make sure to take care of your brother.
- F. It is wrong for us to force our opinion on someone and cause them to partake in something they believe to be wrong.
- G. We can't let what we believe, and know, to be good be the cause of someone's sin.
- H. If we press our opinion's on another, we are sinning ourselves.

II. Strive for peace (vs. 17-20).

- A. We need to remember the spiritual nature of the kingdom.
 - 1. The things we eat or drink don't make us who we are.
 - 2. Being in Christ makes us who and what we are.
 - 3. We are to be seeking those things that are righteous, that make for peace and bring joy
 - 4. All of these are taught by the Holy Spirit and allow Him to be in us and us in Him.

- B. When we seek after righteousness, peace and joy, we are serving Jesus.
- C. Because we are serving Jesus, we must follow after peace.
- D. Not only must we follow after peace, but we must seek to edify one another.
 - 1. When truth is accepted by all, there is peace.
 - 2. When there is peace, there can be edification.
 - 3. You might be able to teach the weak brother the truth on the issue that is in the realm of opinion.
 - 4. We can build one another up if we are at peace with one another.
- E. Don't destroy a peaceful setting for meats, or any other matter of opinion.
- F. Those things may be pure or good, but if one does it against his conscience it becomes an offense to that brother or sister.
- G. In matters of opinion, our consciences become our standard of authority.
 - 1. If we feel something is ok in the realm of judgment and we do it, there is no problem.
 - 2. If we feel something is wrong though, and we do it, we are sinning.
- H. Let's make sure we are striving for peace, even if we must put something away we believe to be right.

III. **There is a penalty (vs. 21-23).**

- A. It is much better to eat no meat than harm a brother.
 - 1. The drink no wine must not be about alcohol because the Bible in at least nine different passages plainly teaches that alcohol is sinful to drink.
 - 2. If it is alcoholic wine, there is still no support for it because it is not to drunk in order not to harm the weak brother.
 - 3. In fact, there should not be any religious indifferent activity that I am willing to participate in at the expense of my brother's soul!
- B. If you do believe something is right, don't flaunt it, keep it between you and God.
- C. We don't want to be condemned, which is a penalty, in the thing we allow ourselves to do.
- D. We will be condemned if we cause a brother to stumble.
- E. One will be damned or condemned if he eats something that was against his conscience.
- F. If it is not done by faith, or belief that it is right, it is sinful to do it.
- G. If we don't believe we are right in doing something we are sinning.