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Roman 14  
Put on Jesus Christ

**Romans 13:14:** *...put ye on the Lord Jesus Christ, and make not provision for the flesh, to fulfil the lusts thereof.* In chapter 13, keeping of the law is the sum of keeping the spiritual law. In chapter 14, Paul continues to broaden this idea and gives examples of what it means to yield to the flesh. He uses specific examples from the law that pertain to food and days considered holy.

**Romans 14:2-3:** *2. For one believeth that he may eat all things: another, who is weak, eats herbs <sup>(g3001)</sup>. 3. Let not him that eats despise him that eats not; and let not him which eats not judge him that eats: for God hath received him.* The Greek word *lathanon* <sup>(g3001)</sup> is derived from an unused root which means *to dig*. Therefore, *lathanon* applies to anything planted (vegetables, fruits, nuts & herbs), as opposed to things growing wild. *All things* would include flesh foods. Why would Paul address an issue pertaining to foods eaten? While food from plants is considered suitable food, animals were divided into clean (i.e. beef) and unclean (i.e. swine) categories (Lv 11:1-47). Even today, orthodox Jews and others observe these laws. The Jews, however, are much stricter, especially regarding meat to be eaten. Foods that meet Jewish law is referred to a “kosher,” far too complex to discuss here. As an example, only the front half of a cow can be labeled kosher, and only a specially trained butcher can process the meat. The organs have to be inspected and certain blood vessels removed; and the lungs, once removed must be reinspected and be inflated and submerged in water to check for damage (leaks). Jews living in an area where kosher meat was not available, likely would eat only a plant based diet.

**Romans 14:17:** *For the kingdom of God is not food and drink but righteousness and peace and joy in a Holy Spirit* (literal rendering). The *kingdom of God* is inward (Lk 17:21), having to do with the thoughts of the mind. What a person eats has nothing to do with making one righteous. Personally, I eat very little meat of any kind because of some of the things fed to animals, including farm raised fish. Paul’s emphasis is to not judge people based on what they eat. **Romans 14:14-15:** *14. I am sure, and quite convinced in the Lord Jesus, that no food is unclean in itself; it is only if someone classifies any kind of food as unclean, then for him it is unclean. 15. And indeed, if through any kind of food you are causing offence to a brother, then you are no longer being guided by love. You are not to let the food that you eat cause the ruin of anyone for whom Christ died* (NJV). Not only are we not to judge others by the food they eat, but we should avoid offending others because of our own preferences.

As a Seventh-day Adventist Church observed these apparent food laws. One evening I was invited to a couple’s home for a meal. The lady had fixed a very nice salad, but had put bacon chips in it. I took a nice helping, then embarrassed her as sat there and picked out the bacon chips. When I think about what I did, I am the one embarrassed today, and if I had the opportunity would apologize.

**Romans 14:4-9:** *4. Who are you that judges the servant of another? to his own lord he stands or falls. Yea, he shall be made to stand; for the Lord has power to make him stand. 5. One man esteems one day above another: another esteems every day alike. Let each man be fully assured in his own mind. 6. He that regards the day,*

*regards it unto the Lord: and he that eats, eats unto the Lord, for he giveth God thanks; and he that eats not, unto the Lord he eats not, and giveth God thanks. 7. For none of us lives to himself, and none dies to himself. 8. For whether we live, we live unto the Lord; or whether we die, we die unto the Lord: whether we live therefore, or die, we are the Lord's. 9. For to this end Christ died and lived again, that he might be Lord of both the dead and the living.*

In addition to food, Paul mentions how some esteemed certain days more than others. Again, he is referring to Jewish ceremonial law, more specifically, the Jews interpretation of the law, which Paul taught was spiritual (Rom 7:14). **Colossians 2:8, 16-17:** *8. Beware lest any man spoil you through philosophy and vain deceit, after the tradition of men, after the rudiments of the world, and not after Christ.... 16. Let no man therefore judge you in [food], or in drink, or in respect of an [feasts], or of the new moon, or of the sabbaths (7<sup>th</sup> day); 17. Which are a shadow of things to come; but the body is of Christ.* All the law is a shadow (Heb 10:1), or a metaphor of good things to come. Eating has to do with the difference of accepting clean or unclean spiritual concepts.

Not everyone will see the law the same way. **Romans 14:13, 18-21:** *13. Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumbling block or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.... 18. For he that in these things serves Christ is acceptable to God, and approved of men. 19. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. 20. For [food] destroy not the work of God. All things indeed are pure; but it is evil for that man who eats with offence. 21. It is good neither to eat flesh, nor to drink wine, nor any thing whereby your brother stumbles, or is offended, or is made weak.*

**Romans 14:1:** *Him that is weak in the faith receive ye, but not to doubtful disputations.* The New International Reader's Version (NIRV) states the idea clearly: Accept those whose faith is weak. Don't judge them where you have differences of opinion. This is very clear. We are not to condemn (judge) another because they believe things different from ourselves. If they cannot see the spiritual law after it is explained, leave them to the God. He knows their heart and whether or not they will be safe to save.

**Romans 14:22-23:** *22. The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God; happy is he who has no reason to judge himself for what he approves. 23. But he who has doubts is condemned, if he eats, because he does not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin (RSV).* If we are not acting on the understanding (faith) given to us by God through Jesus Christ, then are we walking according to our own, or another person's understanding of scripture.

**Romans 14:19:** *So then let us pursue the things which tend to peace, and things whereby one shall build up another (Darby's Bible). Amen.*