

Read Romans 14

Now we move on from our own functionality in the body of Christ, to the maximizing of the functionality of the faith of others. We are to be *others oriented*. We live in a time where a lot of *new virtues* have been regarded by some as important. Some people are taken back if they see you miss an opportunity to recycle your trash. This chapter is saying that we who are mature in the faith should not *major in the minors* and get bogged down in all of that diatribe.

If we are with others who hold some of these issues in high regard, (like being a vegan), we do not have to execute our freedoms and stomp all over their sensitivities. Having a beer may not mean anything to most believers; but some would be very taken back. I don't drink because I have learned the hard way that I am not given to moderation in such things. It is easier to not drink at all. For me it is legalism...but it is still a sin for me...because I know that I may fall to old habits. I couldn't care less if others drink in moderation.

Paul tried to be all things to all people, to further his platform for the gospel. He was a circumcised and fully observant Jew to those who were inclined. He was free to eat anything or miss a given worship day out of necessity if need be.

Similarly, we are not to hold other's *means and methods* in critique. It might be easy to find a brother or sister in Christ who gets things done too slowly to engage them. Instead of being an efficiency expert, we might need to become a coach.

Paul clarifies what the law says about unclean animals. It is based more about the idea of being holy and different and clean. Today, the Jews do not put meat and cheese on the same plate, because of the verse that forbids boiling a kid in its mother's milk. That is in there because it was an idolatrous activity. It has nothing to do with mixing meat and cheese. After all, Abraham served Jesus a calf and curds on the same plate. Even so, it would be a big mistake to eat salami and cheese on the same plate around Jewish believers. It is not a salvation issue. It is a stumbling block for some.

