

Be Conscientious of Others

Romans 14

Group ¹	C	V	Description
Principles of Conscience	14	1-4	We are not to judge others actions
		5-9	We are to live, or die, for God
		10-12	All will give an account for our lives
		13-23	Don't do anything to cause another, especially other Christians, to stumble

Reflections

I will sum up this chapter in a sentence. In matters that are not clearly defined in scripture, if you are having a hard time deciding if you should do, say, or eat something that might offend someone or cause someone to sin, don't do it.

It is better to give deference to others than to offend and have to ask for forgiveness or cause someone to sin. The key here is in areas which are not clearly defined in scripture. If God has said to do or not do something, there's little/no room for discussion. Just do it or don't do it.

That being said, we won't always make everyone happy. Most likely there will be someone who will be offended by what we do, say or eat. So choose wisely and rest in knowing you did your best. Sometimes, it is up to the other person to not be offended if it is a matter of personal preference.

In the Christian tradition I grew up in, the Stone-Campbell Restoration Movement, we had this saying, "In essentials, unity; in nonessentials, liberty; in all things, charity."² This saying was not peculiar to our tradition. There are versions of this going all the way back to Augustine of Hippo and among a variety of Christian groups.

Of course, the question of what is essential and what is nonessential usually has to be asked or answered. Again I go back to the second paragraph above, if God has said to do or not do something, that should be an essential. Anything beyond that is personal preference and should be viewed as cultural flavor and expression. Think of it as not necessarily wrong, just different than what I'm use to.

God has blessed each culture with many things that are unique to them and they should be allowed to let their worship of God to have its own flavor, just like food. No matter how much you might like chocolate ice cream, if every food tasted like chocolate ice cream, it would get pretty boring. So too with how we live out our Christian life. As long as the essentials are right, the rest is flavor. Enjoy the variety!

There and Then: Here and Now

Answer the questions below as you reflect on your own life and this part of our study: *my LOG vs others SPECK*. Here are some possible responses I've identified from the text that might apply to anyone.

S - Are there *sins* for me to avoid or confess?

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P - Are there *promises* from God for me to claim?

1 (NASB) "Group" column from the headings in the NASB text.

2 (Cherok)

* *Navigator Bible Study Handbook* (with additions) & Matthew 7:1-5.

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- E - Are there *examples* for me to follow or avoid?
- C - Are there *commands* for me to obey?
- K - How has this passage increased my *knowledge* about God / Jesus / Holy Spirit?
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Key Words: New Testament, Letters, Romans, Judgment, Deference, Attitude, Compassion, Liberty



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Bibliography

Cherok, Richard J. "In All Things, Charity." *Cover Stories | Christian Standard*. 12 June 2015. Web. 31 July 2016.

(NASB) *New American Standard Bible*. La Habra, CA: The Lockman Foundation, 1995. Print.