

Rev. Richard Schwartz

“It Is Not Good To Do Anything That Causes Your Brother To Stumble: Whatever Is Not From Faith Is Sin”  
Romans 14:13-23

Application #1 – Not only should we not pass judgment on one another on non-essential issues, but we should also commit ourselves never to do something that might cause our brother or sister in Christ to stumble.

Application #2 – Paul knew that when it comes to actions and beliefs that God does not specifically call sin in His Word, Christians are free to choose to do whatever they want. But even though we are free to do what we want in these non-essential choices, anyone who even thinks that something is sinful, it really is sinful for them. So never cause yourself or those you love to fall into sin.

Application #3 – When you do anything that grieves your brother or sister in Christ in these areas of Christian freedom, you are no longer loving them. You are not only causing them to sin, but you are also sinning yourself by failing to love them. Christ has died for their sake, so do not destroy them by causing them to fall into sin.

Application #4 – Paul says that there is something you believe is good. Remember that this is your opinion about what is good since this is an area of Christian freedom. But a brother or sister in Christ is stumbling because of what you are doing, and they are speaking of it as evil. Rather than fail to love your fellow Christian, who thinks it is evil, it is better not to do it.

Application #5 – We must understand that even though we have the freedom to do anything we want in these areas of freedom, having freedom is not the purpose of the Christian life. Righteousness, achieved through love of God and love of others, peace with God and others, and shared joy in Christ, through the power of the Holy Spirit, are the true purposes of our faith.

Application #6 – If we truly serve Jesus Christ by loving Him and loving one another, then our actions are pleasing to God. And though our primary purpose is to please God, when we live out the Christian life in love, we will receive at least some approval from others around us because of our testimony. Therefore, we must pursue peace with our brothers and sisters in Christ and seek to build up others around us.

Application #7 – Even though your Christian freedom is important to you, to do the things you want to do, it is not worth it to destroy your brother or sister in Christ by causing them to sin. Even though everything we can choose to do is allowed by God, it is a sin to cause someone else to stumble in their faith when we do even something that we are free to do.

Application #8 – God commands us never to exercise our freedom to do anything that might cause our brother to stumble. It is better to give up our freedom entirely if we have to in order to avoid causing our brother or sister in Christ to stumble.

Application #9 – Paul divides our lives between things we do in public and things we do in private, which are between God and us. When we live our public life, better never to do something that might cause our brother to stumble. Where we go and what we do in front of others must be carefully considered with an eye to how it will affect the body of Christ and individual Christians around us.

Application #10 - We are never to do anything in the Christian life if we doubt that what we are doing is right. Any doubt that we have impacts our faith in Christ, and anything done without faith is sin. Therefore, we are never to knowingly sin against God in any circumstance.

## **Romans 14:13-23**

**13** Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother. **14** I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. **15** For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. **16** So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. **17** For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. **18** Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. **19** So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

**20** Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. **21** It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble. **22** The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God. Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. **23** But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.

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