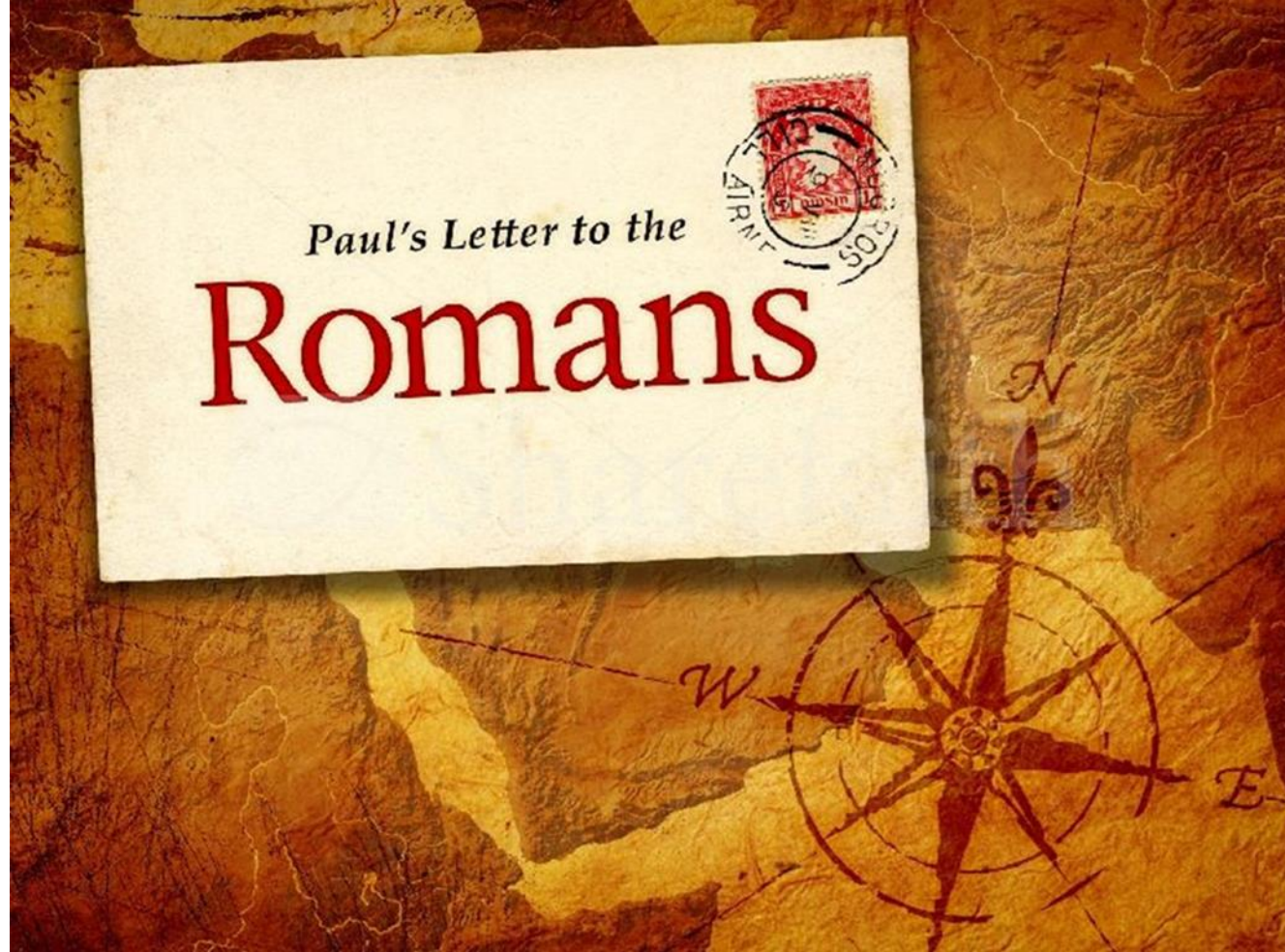
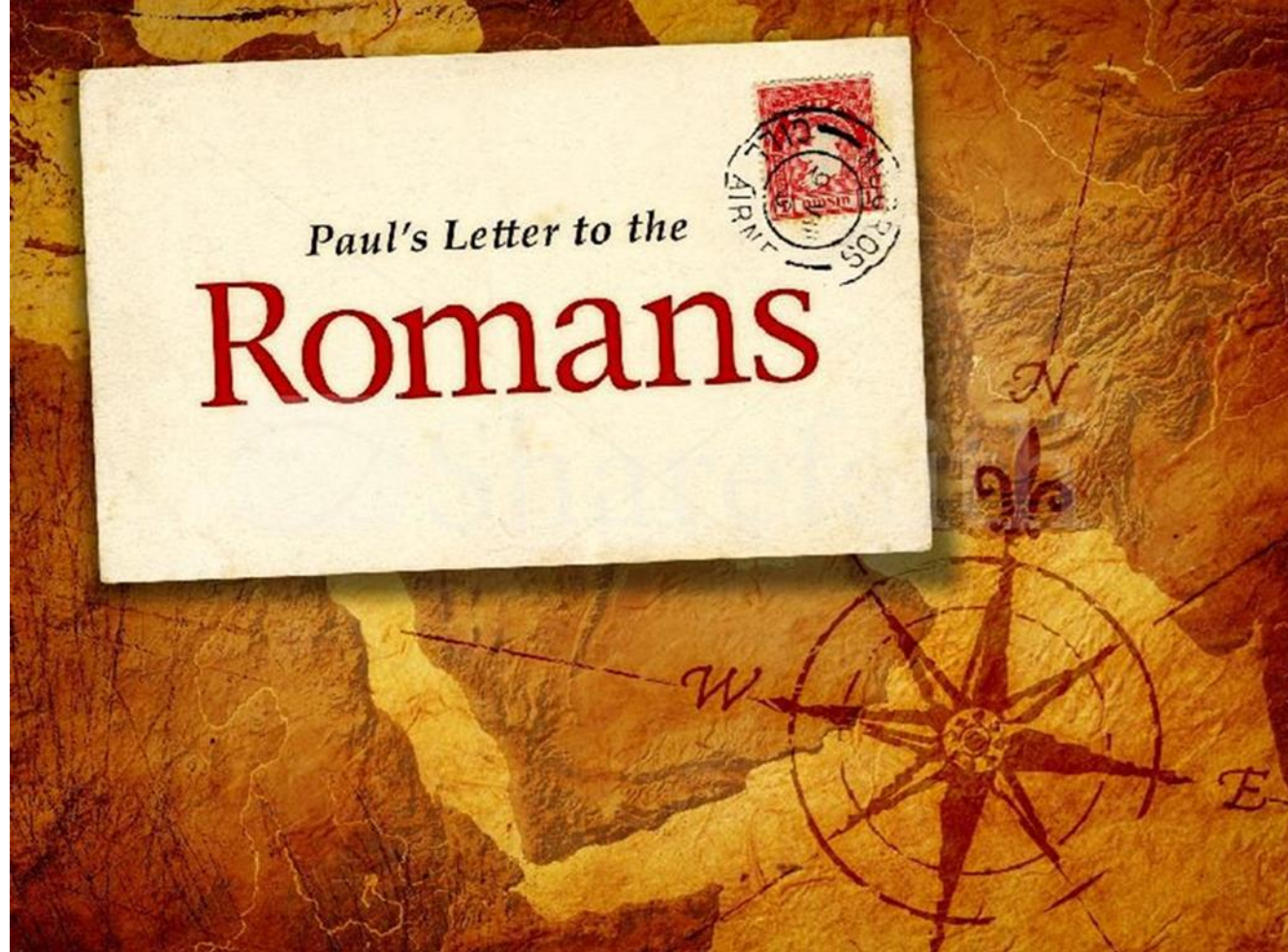


Food, Freedom, and Fellowship
(Romans 14:13-19)



Civic Responsibilities
(Romans 13:1-10)



Congregational Responsibilities
(Romans 14:13-19)

Today's Passage

Romans 14:13-19

(English Standard Version)

Romans 14:13-19

- **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.

Romans 14:13-19

- **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.

I. Food as Symbolism

Condition	Characteristics
Apathy	Food: It's just food. We can have as much or little of it as we want. (Gluttony) Religion: It's just people's ideas. You can do your thing but leave me alone.
Heresy	Food: Offer it to the gods to receive a blessing Religion: Zeal is directed to the wrong place, in false gods and beliefs
Legalism	Food: Follow strict "do's" and "don'ts" Religion: Wrongly understands Christianity as consisting of a system of what to do and what not to do. Leads to stress and emptiness.

II. Christian Freedoms (Romans:14)

- 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.* (Romans 14:14)
- **Food Viewed Objectively: The Facts Matter (14:14a)**
 - “These are the facts! Your food laws don’t matter! Why won’t you listen?”
 - ¹⁴ But Peter said, “By no means, Lord; for I have never eaten anything that is common or unclean.” ¹⁵ And the voice came to him again a second time, “What God has made clean, do not call common.” (Acts 10:14-15)
- ***Food Viewed Subjectively: Perceptions Matter (14:14b)***
 - “I think food laws DO matter. You’re wrong!”
 - ³ Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains (Romans 14:3)

III. Christian Maturity (Romans 14:13, 15-16)

- **No Judgments or Stumbling Blocks (14:13)**

- 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. (Romans 14:13)

- **Novice Christians (14:14)**

- As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. ² One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. (Romans 14:1-2)

- 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. (Romans 14:14)

III. Christian Maturity (Romans 14:13, 15-16)

- **Love Fulfills the Law**

- ¹⁵ For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love. (Romans 14:15a)

- ⁹ For the commandments, “You shall not commit adultery, You shall not murder, You shall not steal, You shall not covet,” and any other commandment, are summed up in this word: “You shall love your neighbor as yourself.” ¹⁰ Love does no wrong to a neighbor; therefore, love is the fulfilling of the law. (Romans 13:9-10)

III. Christian Maturity

(Romans 14:13, 15-16)

- **Not Needing to Always be Right**
- 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. (Romans 14: 15b-16)
- **Keep it in perspective:** most doctrines/issues, such as dietary laws, are secondary in importance
- **What is primary?**
- ²⁹ Jesus answered, “The most important is, ‘Hear, O Israel: The Lord our God, the Lord is one. ³⁰ And you shall love the Lord your God with all your heart and with all your soul and with all your mind and with all your strength.’ ³¹ The second is this: ‘You shall love your neighbor as yourself.’ There is no other commandment greater than these.”(Mark 12:30-31)
- **Having a *personal relationship* with Jesus as Savior and Lord of your life.**
- ²⁸ Thomas answered him, “My Lord and my God!” (John 20:28)

IV. Christian Pursuits

(Romans 14:19)

- **19** So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding (Romans 14:19)
- **Peace**
- ⁹ “Blessed are the peacemakers, for they shall be called sons of God. (Matthew 5:9)
- You keep him in perfect peace
 whose mind is stayed on you,
 because he trusts in you. (Isaiah 26:3)
- **Mutual Upbuilding**
- ⁹ Two are better than one, because they have a good reward for their toil. ¹⁰ For if they fall, one will lift up his fellow. (Ecclesiastes 4:9)

V. The Kingdom of God (Romans 14:17-18)

- 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**. (Romans 14:17)
- **Not a Physical Realm**
- ³⁶ Jesus answered, “**My kingdom is not of this world**. If my kingdom were of this world, my servants would have been fighting, that I might not be delivered over to the Jews. But my kingdom is not from the world.” (John 18:36)
- **Righteousness and Faith**
- ³ For what does the Scripture say? “Abraham believed God, and it was counted to him as righteousness.” ⁴ Now to the one who works, his wages are not counted as a gift but as his due. ⁵ And to the one who does not work but believes in him who justifies the ungodly, **his faith is counted as righteousness (Romans 4:3-5)**

V. The Kingdom of God

(Romans 14:17-18)

- **Peace**

- ²⁷ Peace I leave with you; my peace I give to you. Not as the world gives do I give to you. Let not your hearts be troubled, neither let them be afraid. (John 14:27)

- **Joy**

- You make known to me the path of life;
in your presence there is fullness of joy;
at your right hand are pleasures forevermore. (Psalm 16:11)
- Be glad in the LORD, and rejoice, O righteous,
and shout for joy, all you upright in heart! (Psalm 32:11)

V. The Kingdom of God (Romans 14:17-18)

- **The Presence of the Holy Spirit**

- ²⁵ “These things I have spoken to you while I am still with you. ²⁶ But **the Helper, the Holy Spirit, whom the Father will send in my name**, he will teach you all things and bring to your remembrance all that I have said to you. (John 14:25-26)

Congregational Responsibilities: An Extra Takeaway

- ⁷ Beloved, let us love one another, for love is from God, and whoever loves has been born of God and knows God. . . . ⁹ In this the love of God was made manifest among us, that God sent his only Son into the world, so that we might live through him. ¹⁰ In this is love, not that we have loved God but that he loved us and sent his Son to be the propitiation for our sins. **¹¹ Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another.** ¹² No one has ever seen God; if we love one another, God abides in us and his love is perfected in us.
- **¹³ By this we know that we abide in him and he in us, because he has given us of his Spirit.** (1 John 4:7-13)

A silhouette of two hands holding a glowing cross against a sunset background. The hands are positioned in the center-right of the frame, with the fingers spread and the palms facing each other. A bright white cross is centered between the hands, emitting a strong glow and lens flare. The background is a warm, golden sunset over a body of water, with the sun low on the horizon. The sky is filled with soft, orange and yellow clouds. The overall mood is peaceful and spiritual.

Let Us Pray