

## SMALL GROUP LESSON

### STUMBLING BLOCK OR STEPPING STONE

ROMANS 14:13-23 AND 1 CORINTHIANS 8:8-13

APRIL 15, 2018

Last week in our sermon series on the book of Romans, Paul encouraged us not to be judgmental of our brothers and sisters in Christ. This week as we conclude chapter 14, he is reminding us to be stepping stones rather than stumbling blocks for our fellow believers. Let's see what he has to say to us.

1. In the church at Rome there were Christians, probably from a Jewish background, who felt it was important to observe the Old Testament dietary guidelines. There were others, probably from a Gentile background, who felt it was not necessary to abstain from certain foods. How could these Gentile believers become stumbling blocks to their Jewish brethren with regards to what they ate? Can you think of a modern day example which might create this same kind of discord?
2. Paul felt that he was free to eat anything. The Old Testament restrictions had been replaced by the new relationship that we enjoy with God through the Lord Jesus Christ. However, in verse 15 he placed a limit on the exercise of his freedom. What was that limit and why in verse 16 was he willing to place that limit upon himself?
3. The question of what to eat and what not to eat was evidently an important issue in the life of the early church. Paul speaks to this same issue in 1 Corinthians 8:8-13. However, this time the debate involves another concern besides Old Testament food prohibitions. What do you think it is and how might this apply to our lives in Christ?
4. In the final analysis, which is more important, my liberty in Christ or the edification of the body of Christ, my fellow believers who are members of the family of God? How might the way I respond to this question affect the way I live my life?