



Stumble Not

Romans 14:14 - 15:6

Recap & Context

- **Pick up where Pastor Chin Nam left off**
- **Moving from not judging to not stumbling others**
- **Roman church was young, developing, multi-cultural, of both Jews and Gentiles**
- **Adiaphora - “matters of indifference” that the Bible does not command or forbid**

A Stumbling Block Is...

- **An obstacle to our progress in the Lord**
- **Something that gets in between us and God's perfect plan for our lives**
- **A snare or a trap that draws us into error or sin**

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stumbling
blocks into
stepping
stones.

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“The only difference between stumbling blocks and stepping stones is the way you use them.”

American Proverb

Leviticus 19:14 (NIV)

**“Do not curse the deaf or put a stumbling block
in front of the blind, but fear your God.
I am the Lord.”**

Romans 14:14 (NIV)

“¹⁴ I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person it is unclean.”

India

- **1.3 billion people**
- **830 million Hindus**
- **24 million Christians**

- **Ahimsa – the concept of non-violence, compassion and benevolence against all life forms including animals**

“Why Remain Vegetarian?”

“It’s a matter of conscience, I just can’t bring myself to do it. But I’m saved and I know I can eat meat, no problems there.”

Stumble Not

- 1) Don't stumble others by what you eat or what you do (v13-16)

Romans 14:15 (NIV)

“¹⁵ If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.”

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Greek Word – “Apollymi”

- To destroy fully, to put an end to, to kill, perish or lose, to be ruined completely
- “Do not be afraid of those who kill the body but cannot kill the soul. Rather, be afraid of the One who can destroy (“apollymi”) both soul and body in hell.” - Matthew 10:28

Paul's Example

- **We have someone who only eats vegetables and can't bring himself to eat meat due to reasons of conscience**
- **Because it is wrong to his own conscience, it is sin for him which then goes to shake the very foundations of his faith**

1 Corinthians 8:9-12 (NIV)

“⁹ Be careful, however, that the exercise of your rights does not become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰ For if someone with a weak conscience sees you, with all your knowledge, eating in an idol’s temple, won’t that person be emboldened to eat what is sacrificed to idols? ¹¹ So this weak brother or sister, for whom Christ died, is destroyed by your knowledge. ¹² When you sin against them in this way and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.”

Stumble Not

- 1) Don't stumble others by what you eat or what you do (v13-16)**
- 2) Edify one another because the kingdom of God is bigger than food or any of our personal desires (v17-21)**

Romans 14:17-18 (NIV)

“¹⁷ For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking, but of righteousness, peace and joy in the Holy Spirit, ¹⁸ because anyone who serves Christ in this way is pleasing to God and receives human approval.”

Romans 14:17-18 (The Message)

“¹⁷⁻¹⁸ God’s kingdom isn’t a matter of what you put in your stomach, for goodness’ sake. It’s what God does with your life as he sets it right, puts it together, and completes it with joy. Your task is to single-mindedly serve Christ. Do that and you’ll kill two birds with one stone: pleasing the God above you and proving your worth to the people around you.”

Romans 14:19-21 (NIV)

“¹⁹ Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification. ²⁰ Do not destroy the work of God for the sake of food. All food is clean, but it is wrong for a person to eat anything that causes someone else to stumble. ²¹ It is better not to eat meat or drink wine or to do anything else that will cause your brother or sister to fall.”

1 Corinthians 8:13 (NIV)

“¹³ Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother or sister to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause them to fall.”

Heart Of The Passage

- **Should we be living as individuals with our own faith or do we exist as a community of believers?**
- **Do we satisfy our own needs or deny ourselves to please God and others?**
- **Are you here as a consumer or a contributor?**

Edify

- **Archaic word**
- **Greek root - “oikodome”**
- **Describe the actual building or the building up, the act of promoting another’s growth and faith in Christ**

1 Corinthians 3:9-10 (NIV)

“⁹ For we are co-workers in God’s service; you are God’s field, God’s building (“oikodome”). ¹⁰

By the grace God has given me, I laid a foundation as a wise builder, and someone else is building on it. But each one should build with care.”

Christian Blog Author

“Love for my brothers in Christ guides and restrains my liberty in Christ. If going to that place or watching a movie or listening to an album or reading a book will lead you to violate your conscience, then I will cheerfully give up that right when I am with you. Love always triumphs over liberty. Unity always triumphs over personal rights.”

Romans 15:1-3 (NIV)

“¹ We who are strong ought to bear with the failings of the weak and not to please ourselves. ² Each of us should please our neighbors for their good, to build them up. ³ For even Christ did not please himself but, as it is written: “The insults of those who insult you have fallen on me.”

Stumble Not

- 1) Don't stumble others by what you eat or what you do (v13-16)**
- 2) Edify one another because the kingdom of God is bigger than food or any of our personal desires (v17-21)**
- 3) The strong should lead the way by building the weak (v22-15:3)**

Who Are The Strong?

Romans 15:1-2 (The Message)

“1-2 Those of us who are strong and able in the faith need to step in and lend a hand to those who falter, and not just do what is most convenient for us. Strength is for service, not status. Each one of us needs to look after the good of the people around us, asking ourselves, “How can I help?””

**The strong are the ones that
are serving others, not
themselves**

**“How can I make a difference
to PMC?”**

**It is far too easy for us to hide
behind the cloak of service in
ministry when perhaps our hearts
are in the work and not in the
people themselves**

Matthew 23:1-13 (NIV)

“¹ Then Jesus said to the crowds and to his disciples: ² “The teachers of the law and the Pharisees sit in Moses’ seat. ³ So you must be careful to do everything they tell you. But do not do what they do, for they do not practice what they preach. ⁴ They tie up heavy, cumbersome loads and put them on other people’s shoulders, but they themselves are not willing to lift a finger to move them. ⁵ “Everything they do is done for people to see: They make their phylacteries wide and the tassels on their garments long;

Matthew 23:1-13 (NIV)

⁶ they love the place of honor at banquets and the most important seats in the synagogues; ⁷ they love to be greeted with respect in the marketplaces and to be called 'Rabbi' by others....

¹¹ The greatest among you will be your servant. ¹² For those who exalt themselves will be humbled, and those who humble themselves will be exalted.

¹³ "Woe to you, teachers of the law and Pharisees, you hypocrites! You shut the door of the kingdom of heaven in people's faces. You yourselves do not enter, nor will you let those enter who are trying to."

“Why does all this matter?”

Key #1 - Romans 15:4 (NIV)

“⁴ For everything that was written in the past was written to teach us, so that through the endurance taught in the Scriptures and the encouragement they provide we might have hope.”

Key #2 - Romans 15:5 (NIV)

“⁵ May the God who gives endurance and encouragement give you the same attitude of mind toward each other that Christ Jesus had,”

End Goal - Romans 15:6 (NIV)

“⁶ so that with one mind and one voice you may glorify the God and Father of our Lord Jesus Christ.”

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- 2) Edify one another because the kingdom of God is bigger than food or any of our personal desires (v17-21)**
- 3) The strong should lead the way by building the weak (v22-15:3)**
- 4) One mind and one voice is needed to build the church for the glory of God (15:4-6)**