



# The Black & White on Gray Areas

Working Harder at Love and Unity

Romans 14:13-21

Dr. Mike Fabarez • Compass Bible Church • November 19 & 20, 2011 • Book of Romans week 90 • CD 11-34

## 1. Don't

(vv.13-16, 20-21)

*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*

## 2. Focus

(vv.15, 19)

*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*

## 3. Don't (vv.17-18)

*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. (ESV)*

# Application Questions

These questions are provided for your further study and application of today's sermon. Thoughtfully writing out the answers to these questions will help to drive home the point of today's study. It is also helpful when you are able to discuss your answers with others. For more information about small groups at Compass Bible Church that utilize these questions as the basis for their weekly discussion, please call the church office at (949) 540-0699 or email us at [SmallGroups@CompassChurch.org](mailto:SmallGroups@CompassChurch.org).

1. Read **Romans 5:6-8** and **Philippians 2:3-8**. How can the example of Christ and how he loved us serve as a guide when we are making decisions about the "gray areas"?
2. Describe a situation in which you could easily imagine one Christian's exercise of freedom genuinely "tripping up" another Christian by emboldening him to participate in something that could very well violate his conscience or entice him into sin.
3. Read **James 1:14-15**. Not everyone's temptations are the same. What are some of your vulnerabilities or enticements about which you need to be extra vigilant, so as to not open yourself up to serious temptation?
4. Read **1 Corinthians 8:4-13**. What are some freedoms in your life that you need to reconsider for the sake of your brothers and sisters in Christ?
5. What approach would you take in responding to someone who tells you he is not going to limit his freedom just because someone else can't handle it?

## **The CBC Bible Reading Schedule for this Week:**

Go to [ESV.org](http://ESV.org) (Reading Plans: Through the Bible) for schedule prompts.

### **November 20<sup>th</sup>**

*Ezk.22-23 & Jms.2*

### **November 21<sup>st</sup>**

*Ezk.24-26 & Jms.3*

### **November 22<sup>nd</sup>**

*Ezk.27-28 & Jms.4*

### **November 23<sup>rd</sup>**

*Ezk.29-31 & Jms.5*

### **November 24<sup>th</sup>**

*Ezk.32-33 & 1Pt.1*

### **November 25<sup>th</sup>**

*Ezk.34-35 & 1Pt.2*

### **November 26<sup>th</sup>**

*Ezk.36-37 & 1Pt.3*

### **November 27<sup>th</sup>**

*Ezk.38-39 & 1Pt.4*

Today's sermon will be recorded and available on CD at the Focal Point Ministries window in the lobby immediately following today's service. For sermons on MP3 go to [FPR.info](http://FPR.info). The following are other available sermons related to today's subject matter.

CD # 0325 – **Why You Feel Like a Loser When You Try to Be Nice**

CD # 0326 – **The Price of Being Really Nice**

CD # 0327 – **When Your Passions Meet Your Prerogatives**

CD # 0328 – **The Unwavering Focus of People Who Win**

CD # 0733 – **Countercultural Christians: Sacrifice Instead of Selfishness**

Here are some books which may assist you in a deeper study of the truths presented in today's sermon. While Pastor Mike cannot endorse every concept presented in each book, he does believe these resources will be helpful in profitably thinking through today's topic.

Allender, Dan and Tremper Longman. **Bold Love**. Reprint. NavPress, 1993.

Bonhoeffer, Dietrich. **The Cost of Discipleship**. SCM Press Ltd., 1959.

Carson, D. A. **Love in Hard Places**. Crossway Books, 2002.

Fisk, Bruce N. "Eating Meat Offered to Idols" *Trinity Journal* 10 (1989): 49-70.

Frazee, Randy. **The Connecting Church**. Zondervan, 2001.

Kroll, Woodrow. **Struggling with Selfishness: Choosing to Look Past Yourself**. Back to the Bible, 1996.

Lloyd-Jones, D. Martyn. **Ephesians 4:1-16. An Exposition on Christian Unity**. Baker Books, 1998.

Morris, Leon. **Testaments of Love: A Study of Love in the Bible**. Eerdmans, 1981.

Ryken, Philip Graham, ed. **The Communion of the Saints: Living in Fellowship with the People of God**. P & R, 2001.

Schaeffer, Francis. **The Church at the End of the Twentieth Century**. Crossway Books, 1994.

Shelly, Marshall. **Well-Intentioned Dragons: Ministering to Problem People**. Word Books, 1985.

Smith, William P. **How to Love Difficult People: Receiving and Sharing God's Mercy**. NG Press, 2008.

Still III, E. Coye. "The Meaning and Uses of 'Idol Food'" *Trinity Journal* 23NS (2002): 225-234.

Swindoll, Charles. **Improving Your Serve: The Art of Unselfish Living**. Reprint. Word, 2002.

Whitney, Donald. **Spiritual Disciplines Within the Church: Participating Fully in the Body of Christ**. Moody, 1996.