

**b. All that is not done it faith is sin.**

- 1) Remember, “**faith**” as used in this verse is NOT talking about saving faith. It is talking about a conviction that something is right in the sight of God.
- 2) If you are a Christian, God wants you to carefully evaluate and test every activity you do by the Bible.
  - a) If the Bible condemns that activity, you cannot do it in faith, believing that God approves of it.
  - b) If the activity does not harm you, but you know that it could cause another person to stumble, then you cannot do it in faith.
- 3) This verse clearly tells us that doing something when we do not have faith that God has approved it, it is not just a poor choice; it is actually **sin**.

**Conclusion:** These two verses identify three things of which God wants us to be sure. **1)** Be sure God approves of your choices. **2)** Be sure you do not condemn yourself. **3)** Be sure you have no doubts before proceeding. If we practice these three things, they will keep us from many sins and make Judgment Day a much more pleasant time.

If you are presently doing or planning to do something that you know does NOT pass God’s approval, **flee that sin**. Do not condemn yourself. Do not bring God’s judgment down on yourself.

If you are unsure if an activity passes God’s approval, carefully study the Scriptures on that topic. If you need help finding verses, let me know.

With God’s help, learn to say, “**If God’s against it, so am I!**”

This sermon has been for Christians. If you are not yet a true Christian, you are in even greater danger. Your judgment will not just be a loss of reward or rebuke from the Lord, it will be separation from God for all eternity. If you will sincerely and humbly repent of your sin and ask God to save your soul today, He will make you a true Christian.

**Song:** Cleanse Me - 166

# Be Sure Before Doing

*19 March 2023 AM – Romans 14:22-23 – Rom2023 – Scott Childs*

**Introduction:** During summer holidays while I was in Bible College, I worked for Lynn Degrow, an excellent carpenter. During those summer days, we built several houses from the ground up. There is an old saying that Lynn used to tell me often, “**Measure twice, and cut once.**” That was wise advice. He knew that once I cut a board too short, I could not make it any longer. It was a permanent choice.

The same principle is true in the Christian life. We must be sure that our choices are right because we cannot undo a wrong choice.

**Transition:** In our text this morning, God urges us to be sure of three things before we do them. Read Romans 14:22-23.

## 1. Be sure that God approves your choices.

### a. Do you have faith? (v.22)

- 1) Faith is a conviction of a truth. It is a steadfast belief of a truth.
- 2) This faith is **not** speaking of saving faith. In the context of the chapter, it is faith that a choice you are about to make is right.

### b. Have your faith to yourself before God. (v.22)

- 1) The idea of this phrase is that **if** you have faith that something is right, you must have that conviction down inside yourself.
- 2) In this age of relativism, many people claim that there is no standard of truth. They say, truth resides in the heart of every person. If you feel that something is right, then it is right to you. Truth changes with culture and varies from person to person. If you think like that, are you **positive** there are no absolutes? ☺
- 3) Such a relativistic thinking fails when challenged by unchangeable facts of nature like jumping off a cliff, breathing under water, touching a hot burner, or drinking poison. You may think these activities will not hurt you, but the fact remains that they **will** hurt you.
- 4) You may have faith that a sinful activity is fine because in

your heart you feel it is fine or because today's society accepts it. You may even believe, as a young man told me years ago, "**I know the Bible says that living with my girlfriend is not right, but I believe that God understands my situation.**"

- 5) If you have faith that a choice is right, you must settle this conviction in your heart before God. Paul is reminding us that **God** is the absolute and perfect standard of right and truth. He is the holy Judge to whom we must give account. **Be sure that God approves of your choices.**

## 2. Be sure you do not condemn yourself.

### a. Paul begins with the positive (v.22).

- 1) **Happy** or blessed is the person who does not condemn himself in what he allows.
  - a) The word "**condemn**" as used here refers to being guilty before God.
  - b) We saw earlier in the chapter that every Christian will stand before God's Judgment Seat (Read v.10-12). We also noted that non-Christians will stand before the Great White Throne Judgment, at which time God will sentence them to the Lake of Fire for all eternity (Rev 20:11-15).
- 2) The word "**alloweth**" is the same word frequently translated "prove". It speaks of something that has been carefully examined, tested, and found to have passed the test.
- 3) To help us with this, God gave us (1 Thessalonians 5:21-22) "**Prove all things; hold fast that which is good. Abstain from all appearance of evil.**" Test your activities with Scripture BEFORE you do them. Those that pass the test, hold them fast. Those that fail God's test, reject.
- 4) You cannot be **happy** or blessed by God if you make yourself guilty before God by doing things you know do not pass God's test.

### b. Paul proceeds to the negative (v.23).

- 1) He begins with a statement. "**He that doubteth is damned if he eat.**" Keep this statement in context.

- a) He is talking about whether to eat all kinds of meat or to be a vegetarian (v.2).
  - b) He explained that this choice may have an influence on other Christians of that day (v.3-8).
  - c) He warned Christians not to put a stumbling block or occasion to fall in a brother's way (v.13).
  - d) Even a choice that is not morally wrong may harm others, thus making it a wrong choice (v.15, 20).
  - e) This principle applies to any situation in our lives today, not just to what we eat.
- 2) If after examining Scripture and seeking God's mind through prayer, you are still in **doubt** about an activity – in other words, you doubt or hesitate whether it is right to do – God says, do not do it.
  - 3) If you do it anyway, you **damn** yourself. The word "**damn**" in this context is not speaking about sending you to hell. It simply means you bring God's judgment against you, including loss of reward, rebuke or some form of punishment.
  - 4) No godly Christian wants to bring God's judgment upon himself. Be sure you do not condemn yourself.

## 3. Be sure you have no doubts before proceeding.

### a. Proceeding when in doubt is not faith.

- 1) Go back to point one and review **faith**.
  - a) Faith is not a feeling. Faith is acting upon trusted information.
  - b) Faith is not relative. It does not change with the person or with the situation.
  - c) Our faith is to be before God. What we trust to be true and right must be in line with God's holiness and His Word – the Bible. God sets the rules.
  - d) If the Bible says something is wrong, then no amount of twisting your faith can change that fact.
  - e) It is not about what you or I feel. It is all about what God as established as true and right.
- 2) If you have a doubt or hesitate whether God approves, you must not proceed.