*Northwest Bible Church – June 12, 2005                Worship Service – Alan Conner***Rom. 14:1-4**
*To Eat or Not to Eat . . .*

**INTRO**
**I. CHRISTIAN LIBERTY**    Salvation in Christ sets us free, liberates us, but it is very important that we understand what we have been set free from. Cf. Gal. 5:1; Jn. 8:32; Rom. 7:6; 8:2.

    A. WHAT WE HAVE BEEN SET FREE FROM:

        1) We are set free from the law as a means of salvation. Rom. 3:28.

        2) We are set free from the law’s condemnation. Rom. 8:1.

        3) We are set free from the ceremonial aspects of the law. Rom. 14.

        4) We are set free from the dominion of sin. Rom. 6:14.

    B. WHAT WE HAVE NOT BEEN SET FREE FROM:

        1) We have not been set free from the moral law of God. Rom. 8:4.

        2) We have not been set free in order to abuse our liberty. Gal. 5:13; 1 Pet. 2:16.

**II. THE CONTROVERSY OVER FOOD (vv. 1-2).**
    A. The strong and the weak (vv. 1-2).

        The faith of the “weak” was genuine but deficient. Mainly Jewish Christians.

        The strong who held to a biblical view of Christian liberty. Mainly Gentile Christians.

    B. The strong must accept the weak (v. 1).

        “to accept” means not just tolerate them, but to warmly accept them as brothers and             friends in Christ.

    C. Meat-eaters vs. vegetarians (v. 2).

        FOOD: This was an explosive issue.

    The New Testament teaches us that these food laws are a part of the ceremonial law that is no longer binding on Christians. This is a part of our Christian liberty. Cf. Mk. 7:18-19; 1 Tim. 4:4-5.

    But vv. 2, 21 seems to include all meat, yet Jews were not vegetarians. How is this to be explained?

**III. THE DOUBLE REBUKE (vv. 3-4).**
    A. Let the strong not regard with contempt the weak (v. 3).

    B. Let the weak not judge the strong (v. 3).

    C. “For God has accepted him” (v. 3).

    D. Don’t play God! (v. 4).

        1) The other believer is a household-servant of another, and we have no right to judge the servant of another person.

        2) They will stand or fall by the verdict of their own master, not you.

        3) The other brother will stand (be approved) by Christ on the day of judgment.

            “Christ is able to make him stand” points not only to the possibility but the power of Christ’s grace to make the brother stand, and this all implies the certainty of it happening according to God’s persevering grace (Phil. 1:6).

**SO, DON’T CONDEMN ONE WHO HAS BEEN ACCEPTED AND JUSTIFIED BY GOD.**

**APPLICATION**