

<sup>17</sup> For the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.<sup>18</sup> Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. <sup>19</sup> So then let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.

ROM 14:17-19 ESV

# Christian Liberty



**BEREAN BIBLE CHURCH**

## Worship & Communion Service

Sunday, November 2, 2025

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### SERVICES & CONTACTS

**Worship Services In-person & Online 10:40am & 6pm**

 <https://www.youtube.com/user/bereanbarbados/live>

 <https://www.facebook.com/BereanBarbados/live>

**Sunday School In-person 9:30 - 10:15am**

 **ZOOM** links provided

**Midweek In-person & Online Service (Wednesday)**

**Noon & 7:30 pm | ZOOM links provided**

**Youth Service in-person 7pm (Friday)**

 **WhatsApp** 845 - 5752 or Tel: 426 - 4707

email: [info@bereanbarbados.org](mailto:info@bereanbarbados.org)

[www.bereanbarbados.org](http://www.bereanbarbados.org)



# 4 Principles for the Exercise of Christian Liberty

It was years ago now, but I still remember the discussion. I was making my way out of our church building some time after the morning service had ended, and was surprised to find a small group of people still engaged in vigorous conversation. One of them turned and said to me, “Can Christians eat black pudding?”

To the uninitiated in the mysteries of Scottish haute cuisine, it should perhaps be said that black pudding is not haggis! It is a sausage made of blood and suet, sometimes with flour or meal.

It seems a trivial question. Why the vigorous debate? Because, of course, of the Old Testament’s regulations about eating blood (Lev. 17:10ff).

Although (as far as I am aware) no theological dictionary contains an entry under B for “The Black Pudding Controversy,” this unusual discussion raised some most basic hermeneutical and theological issues:

- How is the Old Testament related to the New?
- How is the Law of Moses related to the gospel of Jesus Christ?
- How should a Christian exercise freedom in Christ?

The Council of Jerusalem, described in Acts 15, sought to answer such practical questions faced by the early Christians as they wrestled with how to enjoy freedom from the Mosaic administration without becoming stumbling blocks to Jewish people.

These were questions to which Paul in particular gave a great deal of thought. He was, after all, one of those appointed by the Jerusalem Council to circulate and explain the letter that summarized the decisions of the apostles and elders (Acts 15:22ff; 16:4). Faced with similar issues in the church at Rome, he provided them with a series of principles that apply equally well to twenty-first-century Christians. His teaching in Romans 14:1-15:13 contains healthy (and very necessary) guidelines for the exercise of Christian liberty. Here are four of them:

**Principle 1:** Christian liberty must never be flaunted. “Whatever you believe about these things keep between yourself and God” (Rom. 14:22, NIV).

We are free in Christ from the Mosaic dietary laws; Christ has pronounced all food clean (Mark 7:18-19). We may eat black pudding after all!

*But you do not need to exercise your liberty in order to enjoy it.* Indeed, Paul elsewhere asks some very penetrating questions of those who insist on exercising their liberty whatever the circumstances: Does this really build up others? Is this really liberating you—or has it actually begun to enslave you (Rom. 14:19; 1 Cor. 6:12)?

The subtle truth is that the Christian who has to exercise his or her liberty is in bondage to the very thing he or she insists on doing. Says Paul, if the kingdom consists for you in food, drink, and the like, you have missed the point of the gospel and the freedom of the Spirit (Rom. 14:17).

**Principle 2:** Christian liberty does not mean that you welcome fellow Christians only when you have sorted out their views on X or Y (or with a view to doing that).

God has welcomed them in Christ, as they are; so should we (Rom. 14:1, 3). True, the Lord will not leave them as they are. But He does not make their pattern of conduct the basis of His welcome. Neither should we.

We have many responsibilities for our fellow Christians, but being their judge is not one of them. Christ alone is that (Rom. 14:4, 10-13). How sad it is to hear (as we do far too often) the name of another Christian mentioned in conversation, only for someone to pounce immediately on him or her in criticism. That is not so much a mark of discernment as it is the evidence of a judgmental spirit.

What if the measure we use to judge others becomes the measure used to judge us (Rom. 14:10-12; Matt. 7:2)?

**Principle 3:** Christian liberty ought never to be used in such a way that you become a stumbling block to another Christian (Rom. 14:13).

When Paul states this principle, it is not a spur-of-the-moment reaction, but a settled principle he has thought out and to which he has very deliberately committed himself (see 1 Cor. 8:13). When that commitment is made, it eventually becomes so much a part of our thinking that it directs our behavior instinctively. We are given liberty in Christ in order to be the servants of others, not in order to indulge our own preferences.

**Principle 4:** Christian liberty requires grasping the principle that will produce this true biblical balance: "We ... ought ... not to please ourselves.... For even Christ did not please himself" (Rom. 15:1-3).

There is something devastatingly simple about this. It reduces the issue to the basic questions of love for the Lord Jesus Christ and a desire to imitate Him since His Spirit indwells us to make us more like Him.

True Christian liberty, unlike the various "freedom" or "liberation" movements of the secular world, is not a matter of demanding the "rights" we have. Dare one say that the American Founding Fathers, for all their wisdom, may have inadvertently triggered off a distortion of Christianity by speaking about our "rights" to life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness? The Christian realizes that before God he or she possesses no "rights" by nature. In our sinfulness, we have forfeited all of our "rights."

Only when we recognize that we do not deserve our "rights" can we properly exercise them as privileges. Sensitivity to others in the church, especially weaker others, depends on this sense of our own unworthiness. If we assume that we have liberties to be exercised at all costs, we become potentially lethal weapons in a fellowship, all too capable of destroying someone for whom Christ has died (Rom. 14:15, 20).

That does not mean that I must become the slave of another's conscience. John Calvin puts the point well when he says that we restrain the exercise of our freedom for the sake of weak believers, but not when we are faced with Pharisees who demand that we conform to what is unscriptural. Where the gospel is at stake, liberty needs to be exercised; where the stability of a weak Christian is at stake, we need to restrain it.

This is all part and parcel of "living between the times." Already, in Christ, we are free, but we do not yet live in a world that can cope with our freedom. One day we will enjoy "the glorious liberty of the children of God" (Rom. 8:21). Then may we eat black pudding whenever and wherever we want to! But not yet.

For now, as Martin Luther wrote, "A Christian man is the most free lord of all, and subject to none; a Christian man is the most dutiful servant of all, and subject to every one."

As it was with the Master, so it is with the servant.

# Order of Service

WORSHIP & COMMUNION SUNDAY

November 2, 2025 at 10:40am

**SERVICE THEME: "Worship King Jesus"**

- i. Welcome & Announcements: Bro. Mark Murray
1. Meditation/Scriptural Call to Worship
2. Prayer of Adoration and Invocation: Bro. Sean Hunte
3. **MEDLEY: Jesus Lover of My Soul/ I Worship You/ There is None Like You**
4. **SONG: The Blood that Jesus Shed for Me**
5. **SONG: 448 My Saviour's Love (I Stand Amazed in the Presence)**
6. OT Reading: Leviticus 27:26-44 (NIV): Bro. Mitchel Sinckler
7. NT Reading: Acts 14:19-28 (KJV): Deacon. Jamar Watts
8. **CHOIR: A Flag to Follow**
9. Prayer of Confession and Assurance: Sis. Ismay Barrow
10. **Offertory Song: Here I am to worship**
11. Prayer of Thanksgiving and Offering: Sis. Patricia Griffith-Archer
12. **CHORUS: The Heart of Worship**
13. Prayer of Intercession: Bro. Kenny St. Cyr
14. **SONG: In Christ Alone**
15. Sermon: Pastor Paul Garnes
16. **COMMUNION HYMN: There is a Fountain Filled With Blood**
17. DISTRIBUTION OF ELEMENTS
18. **SONG: His Mercy is More**
19. BENEDICTION

## ITEMS FOR PRAYER



- Give thanks for 59 years of freedom as a Nation.
- The proposed building project.
- For comfort to those who are grieving
- For the persecuted church.
- For God's Word to be faithfully preached.
- Pray for the ministry and wellbeing of our Pastor and family.
- For healing for our sick members and grace for our shut-in members.
- For the Berean Churches, Gazettes, Dominica, Grenada and DR Congo.
- For the friends of Berean - The Gilmours, Haecks, Hulls, Moores, Montagues, Porchers, Rogers, Rudders and Taylors.
- For our unemployed members to find meaningful employment.
- For the peace of Jerusalem.  
Psalm 122:6-8

## November Birthdays

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|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|
| 2 - Marsha Haynes    | 20 - Angela Bourne   | 26 - Frances Patrick |
| 3 - Aletha Parris    | 20 - Levi Watts      | 27 - Joshua Lucas    |
| 5 - Audrey Thomas    | 21 - Leneisha Watts  | 27 - Cecile Reid     |
| 8 - Eden Garnes      | 22 - Sheila Gill     | 28 - Peter Thomas    |
| 9 - Sophia Walcott   | 23 - Yohann Drayton  | 29 - Malivia Garnes  |
| 11 - Marva Blackette | 23 - Ashley Griffith |                      |
| 12 - Ronda Ifill     | 24 - Paul Garnes     |                      |

## Anniversaries

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|-------------------------------------|---------------------------------------|
| 3 - Barry & Kim Ward                | 26 - Angie & Priestley Anthony Blunte |
| 12 - Sylvester & Joyce Branch       | 28 - William & Wendene Wells          |
| 25 - McCurley & Glensschella Taylor |                                       |