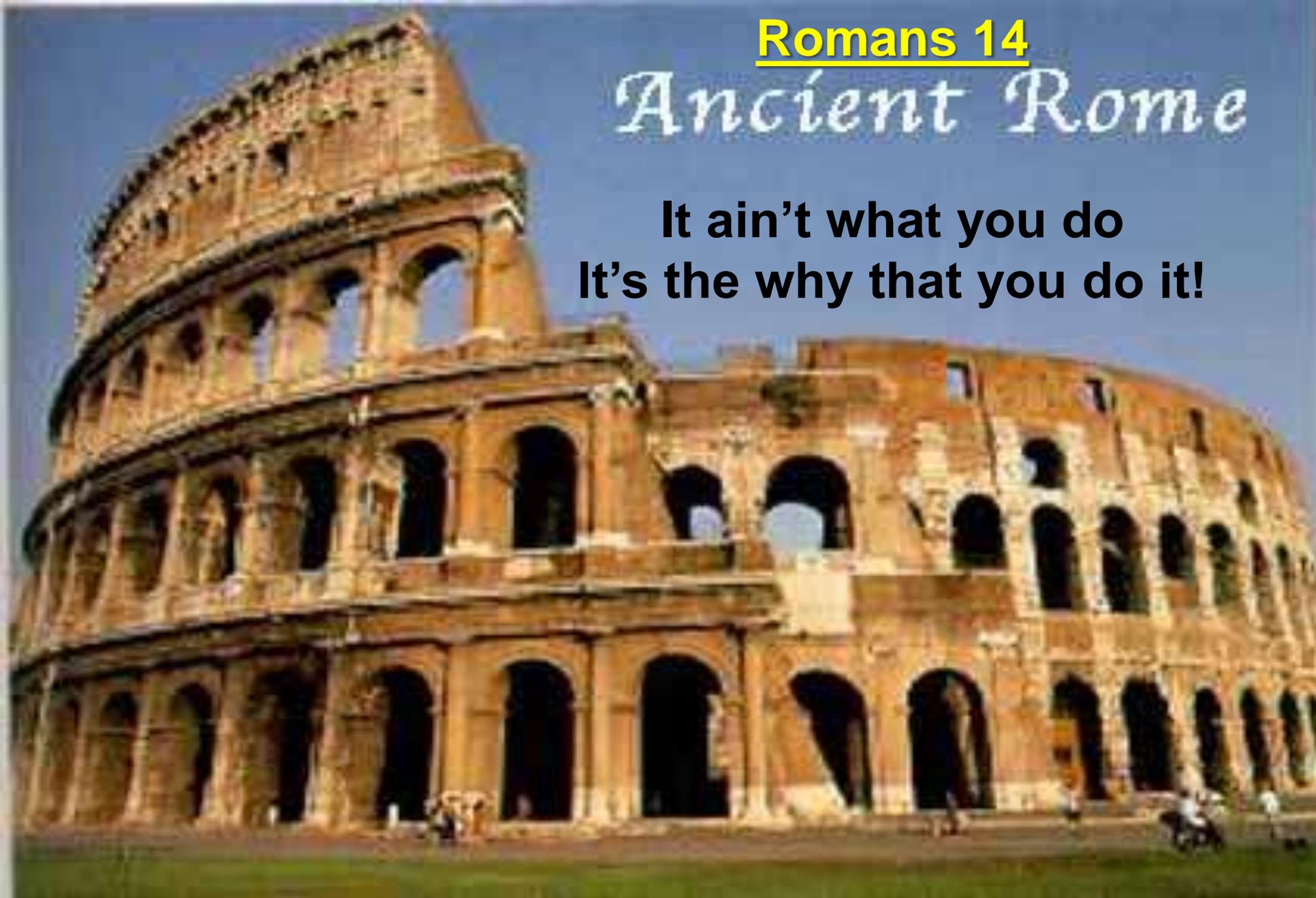


Romans 14

Ancient Rome

**It ain't what you do
It's the why that you do it!**



Part 1 Introductory background

Three things marked out the people as Jewish

Kosher, circumcision, Sabbath observance
(the Saturday people)



As seen in earlier chapters these practices were called
“works of the Law”
(as found in the Essene community)



They could be seen as the basis of salvation,
acceptance and relationship with God

No!

Faith in the atoning sacrifice of Jesus the Messiah
makes salvation available to both Jews and gentiles

Food

Leviticus 11 –
Kosher food laws for
Jews
Clean / unclean is
about RITUAL purity
not hygiene/toxicity



So for the devout Jews it was a conscience issue
If God says “Don’t” then ... don’t!

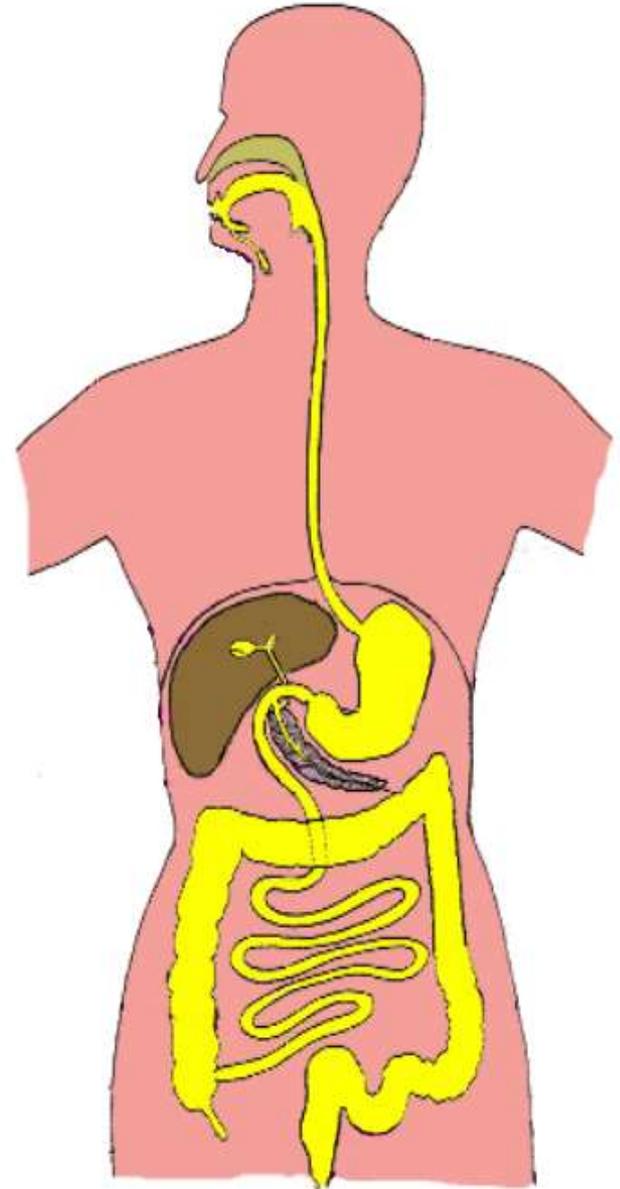
Here are a very interesting couple of verses in this context in Mark 7: 18 -19

"Are you so dull?" he asked. "Don't you see that nothing that enters a person from the outside can defile them? For it doesn't go into their heart but into their stomach, and then out of the body."

(In saying this, Jesus declared all foods clean.)

Jesus kept the kosher laws!

Mark is drawing the inference from what Jesus said that food "in itself is 'clean'"



Next we come to Peter's vision in Acts 10: 9 – 16



It's not really about food but people (see vs 27 – 28)
Here we have one of the “traditions of men” barring
association with gentiles.



Some of the believers of the Pharisee party were promoting the idea that to be a fully paid-up Christian you had to become a full Jew.

They intimidated Peter and Barnabus (Galatians 2:11) into breaking fellowship with the gentile Christians.

To settle the issue the Council of Jerusalem was called.



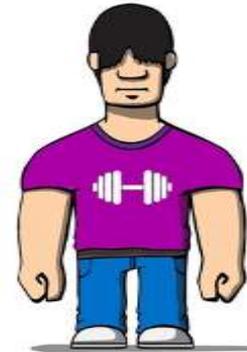
They gave the decision (Acts 15: 28-29) for the gentile believers.

It seemed good to the Holy Spirit and to us not to burden you with anything beyond the following requirements: You are to abstain from food sacrificed to idols, from blood, from the meat of strangled animals and from sexual immorality.

And so the gospel had come to the gentile communities in Corinth and other places

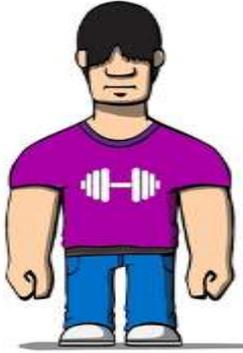
Here the Gentiles could be considered as 2 groups:-

1, The **STRONG** believers - the people who “know”
that idols etc. are nothing
1 Corinthians 8:1-6



2, The **WEAK** believers - the people who don't “know”
1 Corinthians 8:7





So both groups needed grace : 8: 8- 13
and teaching: 10: 23 – 11:1

The whole objective was to promote unity and harmony among the different groups.



This applies to Romans 14 (as I see it)

There were “strong” gentiles and “weak” gentiles in Rome

BUT it seems some were putting the Jews with their kosher rules into the “weak” box

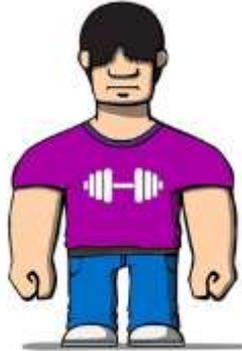


This is the general interpretation applied to Romans 14

ie. 'the Jews needed to “grow up” and realise the old kosher rules no longer applied and they could eat anything they wanted'

BUT

Paul calls himself “strong” because he “knows” (15:1)
NOT because he eats non-kosher food (cf. Acts 21:20-24)



He could have fellowship with Jews and with gentiles
cf Roger and me

1Co. 9:20-22 -To the Jews I became like a Jew, to win the Jews. To those under the law I became like one under the law (though I myself am not under the law), so as to win those under the law. To those not having the law I became like one not having the law (though I am not free from God's law but am under Christ's law), so as to win those not having the law. To the weak I became weak, to win the weak. I have become all things to all people so that by all possible means I might save some.

The whole aim in Paul's writing was to create harmony,
rather than antagonise those both Jew and gentiles in the
synagogue who had not yet come to faith in Jesus as the
Messiah



Romans 15:7

**Accept one another, then, just as Christ
accepted you, in order to bring praise to God.**