

Romans 14:13

Authorized King James Version (KJV)

Let us not therefore judge one another any more: but judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way.

Analysis

Let us not therefore judge one another any more—Mēketi oun allēlous krinōmen (μηκέτι οὖν ἀλλήλους κρίνωμεν). Mēketi (no longer) signals decisive break. Allēlous (one another) emphasizes mutuality—both 'strong' and 'weak' must cease judgment. The hortatory subjunctive krinōmen (let us judge) includes Paul—this isn't condescending lecture but pastoral exhortation: 'we all must stop judging.' Judgment on disputable matters fractures the body; Christ alone is Judge (v. 10).

But judge this rather, that no man put a stumblingblock or an occasion to fall in his brother's way—Alla touto krinate mallon, to mē tithenai proskomma tō adelphō ē skandalon (ἀλλὰ τοῦτο κρίνατε μᾶλλον, τὸ μὴ τιθέναι πρόσκομμα τῷ ἀδελφῷ ἢ σκάνδαλον). Paul redirects 'judging' from critiquing others to self-examination. Proskomma (πρόσκομμα, stumbling block) is obstacle causing someone to trip. Skandalon (σκάνδαλον, snare/trap) is more severe—something causing spiritual ruin. Both refer to actions (even permissible ones) that cause weaker believers to stumble into sin or abandon faith.

Historical Context

The 'stumbling block' metaphor drew on Leviticus 19:14: 'Thou shalt not put a stumblingblock before the blind.' Paul applies it spiritually: don't place obstacles before those with weaker consciences. This principle governed early Christian

practice on meat offered to idols (1 Corinthians 8:9-13), alcohol, Sabbath observance. The strong have knowledge (8:1) but must prioritize love—limit liberty to build up, not tear down, the weak. This isn't legalism but love—willingly restricting freedom for the sake of others' spiritual welfare.

Related Passages

1 John 4:8 — God is love

1 Corinthians 13:4 — Characteristics of love

Study Questions

1. How do you 'judge' yourself (touto krinate) regarding whether your freedoms become stumbling blocks (proskomma) to others?
2. What legitimate liberties might you limit for the sake of weaker believers—alcohol, entertainment, political engagement, speech?
3. Where's the balance between limiting freedom for love's sake and imposing legalistic restrictions that violate Christian liberty?

Interlinear Text

Μηκέτι	οὐν	ἀλλήλους	κρίνατε	ἀλλὰ	τοῦτο	κρίνατε
any more	not therefore	one another	Let us	but	this	Let us
G3371	G3767	G240	G2919	G235	G5124	G2919

μᾶλλον	τὸ	μὴ	τιθέναι	πρόσκομμα	τῷ
rather	G3588	that no man	put	a stumblingblock	G3588
G3123		G3361	G5087		

ἀδελφῷ	ἢ	σκάνδαλον
in his brother's way	or	an occasion to fall
G80	G2228	G4625

Additional Cross-References

2 Corinthians 6:3 (Parallel theme): Giving no offence in any thing, that the ministry be not blamed:

James 4:11 (Judgment): Speak not evil one of another, brethren. He that speaketh evil of his brother, and judgeth his brother, speaketh evil of the law, and judgeth the law: but if thou judge the law, thou art not a doer of the law, but a judge.

Luke 12:57 (Judgment): Yea, and why even of yourselves judge ye not what is right?

Isaiah 57:14 (Parallel theme): And shall say, Cast ye up, cast ye up, prepare the way, take up the stumblingblock out of the way of my people.

Matthew 7:1 (Judgment): Judge not, that ye be not judged.

Luke 17:2 (Parallel theme): It were better for him that a millstone were hanged about his neck, and he cast into the sea, than that he should offend one of these little ones.

Revelation 2:14 (Parallel theme): But I have a few things against thee, because thou hast there them that hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balac to cast a stumblingblock before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed unto idols, and to commit fornication.

Romans 14:10 (Judgment): But why dost thou judge thy brother? or why dost thou set at nought thy brother? for we shall all stand before the judgment seat of Christ.

Romans 16:17 (Parallel theme): Now I beseech you, brethren, mark them which cause divisions and offences contrary to the doctrine which ye have learned; and avoid them.

Romans 14:4 (Judgment): Who art thou that judgest another man's servant? to his own master he standeth or falleth. Yea, he shall be holden up: for God is able to make him stand.