

the rock

Finger Bashing



Burger Fasting



Would you eat a hamburger? That's a silly question today, but back in Paul's day, eating meat was just one of the issues that started fights among Christians in the early church (early—as in the first century).

For Christians who lived in the city of Corinth, the hamburger issue was a really big deal. (Read the original account in 1 Corinthians 8:1-13.)

To Eat or Not to Eat

Suppose Justin, a member of the church in Corinth, has invited a new Christian, Jason, to dinner. But Jason takes one look at the hamburger Justin offers him and pushes it away.

“Some Christian you are,” he says. “Don’t you know this meat was first offered to pagan idols—before it ever got to the meat market? When I became Christ’s friend, I stopped eating anything that had been offered to false gods.”

But Justin feels just as strongly that there’s nothing wrong with eating meat. “Look,” he says, “God created meat just like

He created everything else.

There aren’t any ‘sin germs’ on the meat just because it sat in front of a statue for a while. Pass the ketchup.”

Jason yells, “No good Christian would eat something offered to evil gods! Pass the garbage can.”

A full-scale burger bash was in full force!

Hamburger Helper

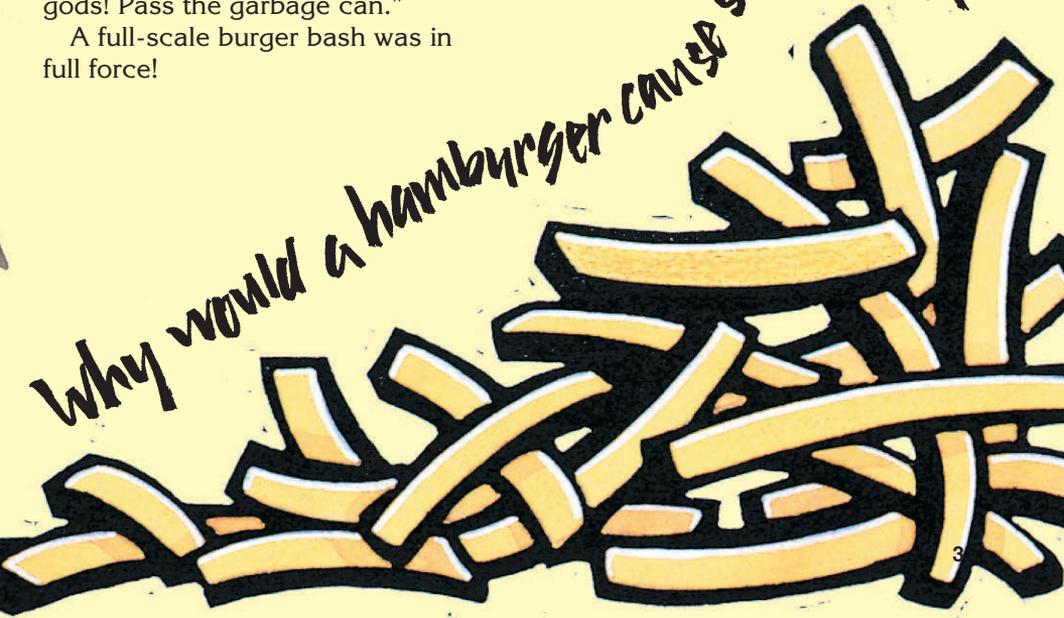
Suppose this hamburger thing has been bothering Jason for a long time. He really believes it’s wrong to eat meat that was offered to false gods. But when he’s served a hamburger at Justin’s house, he eats it anyway. He figures if Justin does it, it must be OK for him to do it too. So he ignores his conscience and eats up.

That’s wrong for Jason. His conscience warns him that he’s doing something wrong for him. God knows that Jason isn’t spiritually mature enough to live with the same amount of freedom Justin enjoys. If Jason eats the meat offered to idols, he may end up back at the temple and in his former way of life.

For Justin, however, God knows he is strong enough in his faith not to be drawn away from God by

Continued on page 6.

Why would a hamburger cause such a fuss?



FIGH



“Well, my church says that blah-blah-blah is wrong.”

“Well, my church says that blah-blah-blah is right.”

Actually, the real issue isn't who's right or wrong, but how Christians can learn to get along, even when they disagree. Read Romans 14:1-6, 13-15, 19, and then fill in the chart.

	NO
<ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. What does this person eat? 2. Would this person feel guilty for eating meat? Why or why not? 3. Who does this person answer to? 4. Is God pleased with this person? 5. What does Paul command this person <i>not</i> to do? Why? 6. What does Paul command this person to do instead? 	

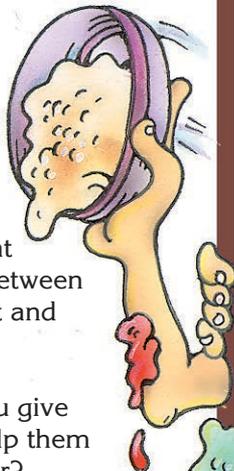
Paul Montgomery



IT!

- Look at the chart. What similarities do you see between the people who eat meat and those who don't?
- What advice would you give to these Christians to help them get along with each other?

WAY!	OKAY!



Today's Scripture

Romans 14:1-6, 13-15, 19

¹Accept the one whose faith is weak, without quarreling over disputable matters. ²One person's faith allows them to eat anything, but another, whose faith is weak, eats only vegetables. ³The one who eats everything must not treat with contempt the one who does not, and the one who does not eat everything must not judge the one who does, for God has accepted him. ⁴Who are you to judge someone else's servant? To their own master, servants stand or fall. And they will stand, for the Lord is able to make them stand.

⁵One person considers one day more sacred than another; another considers every day alike. Each of them should be fully convinced in their own mind. ⁶Whoever regards one day as special does so to the Lord. Whoever eats meat does so to the Lord, for they give thanks to God; and whoever abstains does so to the Lord and gives thanks to God.

¹³Therefore let us stop passing judgment on one another. Instead, make up your mind not to put any stumbling block or obstacle in the way of a brother or sister. ¹⁴I am convinced, being fully persuaded in the Lord Jesus, that nothing is unclean in itself. But if anyone regards something as unclean, then for that person is unclean. ¹⁵If your brother or sister is distressed because of what you eat, you are no longer acting in love. Do not by your eating destroy someone for whom Christ died.

¹⁹Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.



Continued from page 3.

eating meat offered to idols. But if Justin eats meat in front of Jason, knowing that Jason doesn't feel right about that meat, then Justin may hurt Jason. Paul's suggestion in this situation is that, to protect Jason's conscience, Justin give up his right to eat meat when Jason's at dinner.

In conclusion, Paul says it's OK for Christians to disagree on some issues. They can believe and do different things and both still be pleasing to God. Christians don't have to see eye to eye on every issue. But they do have to love each other.

To eat meat or not to eat meat might not be the question for today, but there are lots of other issues Christians don't always agree on. So the next time you and a Christian friend have different opinions of what's right or wrong, remember these two things:

- Our similarities are more important than our differences.
- God welcomes the person you disagree with too.



TAKE

this quiz about your relationships. (Be honest!) Then evaluate your answers on the point scale. Are there areas in your relationships that could stand a little rehabbing God's way?

1. When a friend needs advice, do you

- immediately pray about the situation?
- give advice off the cuff, and then get mad if your friend doesn't take it?
- change the subject?
- give your friend advice based on Scripture?

2. When you disagree with your parents, do you

- patiently show them the error of their ways?
- try to see their side?
- vow never to speak to them again?
- scream about how unfair they are?

3. A friend has invited you over, but it suddenly occurs to you that your family hasn't spent that much time together in a while. You

- stay home, but pout about it.
- go to your friend's house. There will be other



Rehabbed Relationships QUIZ



times to be with your parents.

- c. call your friend and tell him you can't make it, and then do something with your parents.
- d. go to your friend's, but come home early.

4. *Someone you've been dying to get to know invites you to a party. You want to go, but your best friend wasn't invited. You*

- a. go to the party.
- b. make plans to do something fun with your friend later.
- c. don't let your friend influence your decision.
- d. don't go to the party, but make sure your friend realizes what a sacrifice you made.

5. *You and your friend have a big argument. You find out she's been talking about you behind your back. That really makes you mad! You*

- a. get back at her by lashing out with your words. After all, you should be able to be "real" with your friends.
- b. calmly talk things over.
- c. stop speaking until she comes

crawling back with an apology.

- d. tell everyone what a rotten friend she is.

6. *Your youth leader challenges the youth group to get up at 5:00 a.m. for a week to have a time of fellowship with God. Everyone seems gung ho about the idea. But come 5:00 a.m. on Day 1, you*

- a. get up singing—ready to read your Bible and talk with God.
- b. roll over and go back to sleep and hope God understands.
- c. get up grumbling.
- d. admit you don't like getting up at 5:00 a.m. Then schedule another time—one to which you can truly commit yourself.

POINT SCALE:

- 1. a=5 b=0 c=1 d=5
- 2. a=1 b=5 c=0 d=0
- 3. a=0 b=1 c=5 d=3
- 4. a=1 b=5 c=3 d=0
- 5. a=0 b=5 c=0 d=0
- 6. a=3 b=0 c=0 d=5

MASTER BUILDER: 25-30

BUILDER: 20-24

CANDIDATE FOR REHAB: under 20



every day devos

THE OTHER GUY



Let us therefore make every effort to do what leads to peace and to mutual edification.

—Romans 14:19

Most people just go ahead and do whatever they want, without thinking about how their actions might affect the other guy. This week, stop and take the other guy's feelings into consideration before you act.

MONDAY Read Romans 14:19. The phrase “mutual edification” means to build up other Christians in the Lord. Ask God to help you build up your Christian friends and family members this week.

TUESDAY Read Romans 14:19 and 15:2. List some things you'd be willing to give up if it would help another Christian have a stronger relationship with the Lord.

WEDNESDAY Scribble a sketch, as well as a short story, of someone who does what leads to peace. Read Matthew 5:9. Ask the Lord to help you be a peacemaker.

THURSDAY Create a personalized poster. Draw, glue photos, or write the names of your closest Christian friends. Then write ways you can build up your friends. Use the poster when you pray for your friends.

FRIDAY Spend a few minutes in prayer, asking God to give you an open heart and open mind to accept Christians who don't think exactly the same way as you.

SATURDAY Read Romans 14:19 again. Think of a slogan to help you remember this verse. For example, “Practice peace.” You can depend on God to help you build up other Christians.

