



Biblical Principles vs. Today's Belief

SPIRITUAL DEVELOPMENT

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How Do We Determine What Pleases God?

Opening Question

- ▶ Is something right simply because we don't feel convicted about it?

Many believers determine right and wrong based on:

- The Bible
- Personal conviction
- Church tradition
- Family teaching
- Culture

How Do We Determine What Pleases God?

Sin = Displeases God

Tradition = May or May not displease God

Practice	Bible Explicitly Calls It Sin?	What makes it sin?
Drinking		Drunkenness (Ephesians 5:18)
Smoking		Toxins (Ephesians 5:18)
Gambling		Poor Stewardship (Proverbs 21:20)

These aren't explicitly named as sins in Scripture, but are considered sinful because they violate biblical principles of holiness, self-control, stewardship, or Godly witness.

Broader Biblical Principles

- ▶ **Holiness** (1 Peter 1:15-16)
- ▶ **The body as God's temple** (1 Corinthians 6:19-20)
- ▶ **Avoiding the appearance of evil** (1 Thessalonians 5:22, KJV)
- ▶ **Being separate from the world** (2 Corinthians 6:17)
- ▶ **Not causing others to stumble** (Romans 14:13-21)
- ▶ **Avoiding anything that masters you** (1 Corinthians 6:12)

The Heart Is Not the Final Authority

"If my heart doesn't condemn me, then God must be okay with it."

What Does Scripture Actually Say?

- ▶ 1 John 3:20-21

A clear conscience does not automatically give biblical approval.

Holy and Abomination

What is Holy?

- ▶ **God Himself** (Leviticus 19:2 & Isaiah 6:3)
- ▶ **God's People** (Exodus 19:6 & 1 Peter 2:9)
- ▶ **The Sabbath** (Genesis 2:3 & Exodus 20:8-11)
- ▶ **The Temple and Sacred Objects** (Exodus 30:29 1 Kings 8:10-11)
- ▶ **Holy Foods** (Leviticus 2:3; 6:17)
- ▶ **Holy Conduct** (Leviticus 11:44-45 & Romans 12:1)
- ▶ **Marriage** (Malachi 2:15 & Hebrews 13:4)
- ▶ **The Body** (1 Corinthians 6:19)

What is an Abomination?

- ▶ **Idolatry** (Deuteronomy 7:25 & Deuteronomy 27:15)
- ▶ **Occult Practices** (Deuteronomy 18:10-12)
Witchcraft, Divination, Sorcery, Consulting the dead
- ▶ **Sexual Sins** (Leviticus 18 & Leviticus 20:13)
- ▶ **Child Sacrifice** (Deuteronomy 12:31 & Jeremiah 32:35)
- ▶ **Dishonest Business Practices** (Proverbs 11:1 & Proverbs 20:10)
- ▶ **Lying and Pride** (Proverbs 6:16-19)
- ▶ The seven things God hates include:
A proud look, A lying tongue, Hands that shed innocent blood, A wicked imagination, Feet swift to mischief, A false witness, One who sows discord
- ▶ **Eating Unclean Creatures** (Deuteronomy 14:3-20 & Isaiah 66:17)
- ▶ **Cross-Dressing** (Deuteronomy 22:5)
- ▶ **Sacrifices Offered with Wrong Motives** (Proverbs 15:8, Proverbs 21:27)

When God Makes Distinctions

► From Genesis onward God separates:

- Light from darkness
- Day from night
- Holy from profane
- Clean from unclean

God is a God of order and distinction.

► When and Why Did God Create Clean and Unclean Distinctions?

When: The Distinction Existed Before Sinai

The first explicit mention of clean and unclean animals is found in the days of Noah (Genesis 7:2, KJV).

This was hundreds of years before Moses received the Law.

When God Makes Distinctions

► When and Why Did God Create Clean and Unclean Distinctions?

Why: To Teach Separation and Holiness

Throughout Scripture, God uses physical distinctions to teach spiritual truths. "For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy..." (Leviticus 11:44)

- The clean and unclean laws reminded God's people that they were called to be separate from the nations and devoted to Him.

Why: For Human Well-Being

While Scripture primarily presents these laws as matters of holiness and obedience, many observe that numerous animals classified as unclean are scavengers, predators, or carriers of disease. The Bible itself emphasizes obedience to God's command rather than giving a scientific explanation.

Leviticus 11

Land animals must **chew the cud and have a divided hoof** (Leviticus 11:3).

Fish must have **fins and scales** (Leviticus 11:9).

Certain birds are prohibited (Leviticus 11:13–19).

Most insects are unclean, except certain locust-type insects (Leviticus 11:20–23).

The chapter concludes with God's purpose:

"For I am the LORD your God: ye shall therefore sanctify yourselves, and ye shall be holy; for I am holy..." (Leviticus 11:44, KJV)

Deuteronomy 14

It begins: "Thou art an holy people unto the LORD thy God..."

Then God lists:

Clean land animals (Deuteronomy 14:4–6)

Unclean land animals (Deuteronomy 14:7–8)

Clean aquatic creatures (Deuteronomy 14:9)

Unclean aquatic creatures (Deuteronomy 14:10)

Clean and unclean birds (Deuteronomy 14:11–20)



DIDN'T JESUS DO
AWAY WITH THE
LAW, ESPECIALLY
THE DIETARY?

Matthew 15:1-2,20

Mark 7:1-3,18-23

In Matthew 15 and Mark 7, Jesus answers a dispute with the Pharisees about ritual handwashing, not about the clean and unclean animals listed in Leviticus 11. Understanding the context and the Greek is essential.

► The Context

The Pharisees asked: "Why do your disciples **transgress the tradition of the elders?** For they do not wash their hands when they eat bread." (Matthew 15:2)

- Notice what they didn't accused the disciples of:
 - Not eating unclean animals
 - Not breaking God's dietary laws

Their accusation was eating with ceremonially unwashed hands, which was a tradition of the elders, not a command from God.

So if Jesus wasn't talking about food what was He talking about?

He was not speaking about the dietary laws because the Pharisees and Scribes wasn't talking about the dietary laws. He was speaking about the heart of man! They would rather keep the traditions of man than the commandments of God. That which cometh out of you defiles you!

The more accurate translation (Greek) to Mark 7:18-19 is "Because it does not enter into his heart, but into the stomach, and goes out into the latrine..."

Jesus is describing **digestion**, not changing the definition of food.



So if Jesus wasn't talking about food what was He talking about?

The Phrase "Thus He Declared All Foods Clean"

Many modern translations add: "(Thus He declared all foods clean.)"
For example, the ESV, NIV, and NASB.

However, these words are **not present** in the Greek text.

Acts 10:9-16,28

- ▶ Acts 10 records that Peter saw:

A sheet descending from heaven. It contained **all kinds of animals**, clean and unclean.

A voice said: "Rise, Peter; kill and eat." (Acts 10:13)

Peter responded: "Not so, Lord; for I have never eaten anything common or unclean." (Acts 10:14)

- ▶ This is significant because this occurred **years after Jesus' resurrection**. Peter still distinguished between clean and unclean animals according to Leviticus 11.
- ▶ The voice replied: "What God has cleansed, do not call common."

What does "common" mean?

The word translated "**common**" is **κοινός (koinos)**, not the Greek word for "unclean."

κοινός (koinos) = common, ordinary, shared, profane, ceremonially defiled.

It refers to something that has become **ritually defiled** or **treated as profane**, not something that is inherently unclean by God's Law.

► This is different from:

ἀκάθαρτος (akathartos) = unclean, impure according to God's standards (such as unclean animals in Leviticus 11).

The revelation "God has shown me that I should not call **any man** common or unclean." (**Acts 10:28**)

Where does "common" appear again?

- ▶ Romans 14:14, "I know, and am persuaded by the Lord Jesus, that *there is* nothing **unclean** of itself: but to him that esteemeth any thing to be unclean, to him *it is* **unclean**."

The Greek meaning for unclean in Romans 14:14 is **common** (2839 in the Greek).

The Greek meaning for unclean in Leviticus 11 is **defiled, polluted** (2931 in the Greek).

1 Timothy 4:1-4

1 Timothy 4:3-5, where he speaks of false teachers “forbidding to marry, and commanding to abstain from **foods** which God created to be received with thanksgiving by those who believe and know the truth. For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving; for it is sanctified by the word of God and prayer.”

Notice what Paul addressed

- 1) False Teachers
- 2) Foods and not animals
- 3) Paul is affirming Genesis 1:25 But "good" does not necessarily mean "intended for eating."
- 4) Prayer itself does not make something holy that God never declared holy. The "Word of God" had already distinguished clean from unclean animals:



I do not believe that observing biblical dietary practices is what saves a person. Salvation is by grace through faith in Jesus Christ. However, I do believe that the Holy Spirit reveals God's truth to believers who are open and receptive to His leading.

I don't eat clean to be saved; I eat clean because I am saved. Grace is not permission to ignore God's commands; it is the power to walk in them.