

1<sup>st</sup> Corinthians 8:1-13 (part 2)

- 1) The compassionate response—8:7-13
    - a) The situation—8:7 <sup>7</sup> *However, not everyone shares this knowledge* (cf. 8:1; about the nothingness of false gods); *but some, with consciousness of the idol, until now are eating as if it were offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is stained.*
      - i) Some Corinthian Christians have stained their conscience with a sense of guilt by acting contrary to their conscience.
    - b) The principles—8:8-13
      - i) Basic truth concerning food—8:8 <sup>8</sup> *Now food does not commend us to God; for we are not better off if we do eat, nor worse off if we do not eat.* (cf. Mark 7:18-23)
        - (1) However, eating meat sacrificed to idols is not a neutral activity. (cf. 10:19-22)
      - ii) Selflessness—8:9-12 <sup>9</sup> *But be careful that this right [ἐξουσία] of yours<sup>pl</sup> does not become a stumbling block to those who are weak* (in their conscience).
        - (1) The danger of the careless exercise of one's rights—8:10-11
          - (a) The potential—8:10 <sup>10</sup> *For if [3<sup>rd</sup> class condition] anyone sees you who have knowledge reclining at table in an idol's temple* (for business, socially, etc.), *will not his conscience, of him who is weak, be emboldened* (lit. "built up") *to eat things sacrificed to idols?* (assumes "Yes") (cf. Romans 14:23)
            - i) They appear to be pressuring other believers to attend the idol's temple with them.
          - (b) The problem—8:11 <sup>11</sup> *And on the basis of your knowledge this weak brother will ruin/harm himself, for the sake of whom Christ died.*
            - i) **Question:** In what ways might a believer cause harm to himself?
            - ii) **Note:** They not only do not build up one another, they insensitively set the stage for others to cause harm to themselves.
        - (2) The seriousness of the careless exercise of one's rights—8:12 <sup>12</sup> *But when you<sup>pl</sup> sin against the brothers in this way, and injure their conscience when it is weak, you<sup>pl</sup> are sinning against Christ.*
          - (a) Note: To sin against one of Christ's own is to sin against Christ Himself.
      - iii) Genuine love—8:13 <sup>13</sup> *For this very reason* (not wounding another's conscience and sinning against Christ), *if [1<sup>st</sup> class condition] food causes my brother to stumble, (then) I will never ever eat meat unto the age,*
        - (1) Why? *so that I may not cause my brother to stumble* (influenced to violate his conscience).
    - c) Refuse to do what may bring a spiritual danger to your fellow Christian, even if you may potentially lose some business, friends, and social standing.
- 2) Note what can happen to a believer's conscience:
    - a) It can be weak—8:7 [ἀσθενής], 12 [ἀσθενέω]
    - b) It can be stained [μολύνω]—8:7
    - c) It can be emboldened [οἰκοδομέω] by the influence of other Christians to do something it perceives to be sin—8:10
    - d) It can be injured [τύπτω] by the influence of other Christians—8:12

**Take-home truth:** temper your Christian liberty with Godward love