

1st Corinthians 8:1-13 (part 2)

- 1) The compassionate response—8:7-13
 - a) The situation—8:7 ⁷ *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 ⁸ *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 ⁹ *But be careful that this right [ἐξουσία] of yours^{pl} 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 ¹⁰ *For if [3rd 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 ¹¹ *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 ¹² *But when you^{pl} sin against the brothers in this way, and injure their conscience when it is weak, you^{pl} 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 ¹³ *For this very reason* (not wounding another's conscience and sinning against Christ), *if [1st 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