

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

Introduction: Two apparent primary views among the Corinthian believers. (Thiselton)

- **“THE PARTICIPANTS”:** “Why can’t we eat idol food?”
 - The best-quality meat comes through these temples. Should we avoid such opportunities?
 - Influential non-Christian friends, business contracts, and political officials often invite people to dinner/banquets/weddings/funerals/childbirth/birthdays/coming-of-age/election victories in the pagan temples. Should we callously refuse such invitations?
 - These meals are not acts of worship, but are more social. Should we refuse such courtesies?
 - These are temples to false gods, and because they are “nothings,” we are not eating to anything real. Should we be concerned about these “nothings”?
- **“THE NON-PARTICIPANTS”:** “Can we eat idol food?”
 - Christians of knowledge, influence, and wealth know more about such things than we do.
 - We were redeemed from the worship of false gods and want nothing to do with these demons. Do you expect us to return to our old life?
 - How can we justify eating at both the table of the Lord and the table of demons?
 - We have experienced rejection/persecution by our unsaved acquaintances because we have left the temple worship. How can other Christians just carry on as if nothing has happened? How is our church a “holy” people if we go to these temples?

¹ Now concerning things offered to idols:—8:1-3

- 1) The danger of loveless knowledge—8:1 *We know that we all have knowledge.*
 - a) *Knowledge inflates with pride (cf. 13:4) but love builds up.*
- 2) All our knowledge is, at best, incomplete—8:2 ² *And if [1st class condition] anyone supposes that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.*
- 3) Love for God trumps our incomplete knowledge—8:3 ³ *But if [1st class condition] anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.* (true knowledge is always tethered to love)

⁴ Therefore, concerning the eating of things offered to idols,—8:4-13

- 1) Basic Biblical knowledge—8:4 *we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.* (cf. Deuteronomy 6:4)
- 2) The conflicting situation—8:5-6
 - a) Improbable cultural perception—8:5 ⁵ *For even if perhaps there are many so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),*
 - i) Note the emphasis on their plurality, impersonal nature, and lack of purpose
 - b) Contrasted with sound theology on the Unity of God—⁶ *yet [ἀλλά] for us there is ...*
 - i) God the Father, the personal Source and Goal—*one God, the Father, from [ἐκ] whom are all things, and we exist for [εἰς] Him;*
 - ii) God the Son, the personal Intermediary and Agent—*and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom [διὰ] are all things, and we exist through [διὰ] Him.*