

A Letter to Messed Up People Part 17

“A Study of 1st Corinthians”

I Corinthians 8:1-13

All Scripture is the very breath of God therefore I will strive to know it and live in its truths.

Introduction: A Good subtitle for chapter 8 is “Take Care with Your Liberty”

A. Paul is addressing yet another debate and argument in the Church of Corinth.

1. They are trying to decide if there is a problem with the eating of meat that has been sacrificed to idols.

- We are going to look a little closer at that debate in a moment but listen to this verse: ***9 But take care that this liberty of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.*** 1 Corinthians 8:9

- Let's get some definition:

- **Liberty:** This word in the original language is the Greek word “exousia” it can and is used in a few different context but it really simply means permission “We are allowed to do it”

= We remember from our childhood these are words that we long to here. “We are Allowed to Do It”.

- Too often this idea of getting permission dominates our life.
- It is as if we just want to come in just under the rules.
- Even our prayer life “God this is really what I would like to do but I don't really know if I am allowed”
- More often than not if we asking permission we already know the answer.

- The other word to define is **Weak**: This word in the strict sense means to be sick and powerless.
- But in this context it is spiritual weakness struggling in the faith.
- 2. So what we are going to see here in God's word is that we may not want to do everything that we have permission to do just because it will cause us no harm doesn't mean it doesn't cause harm.

= Too often we base what we do just on how it will affect us and give little or no consideration to how it will affect others.

Transition: Church we need to be careful with the liberty or the permission that we have!

A. Now let's look a little closer at the context from which we get this truth.

1 No such thing as idols

I. There are no such thing as idols verse 2-6

A. Church, we know some stuff because we are believers in Christ.

1. But what might be the most important thing that we know is that there is one God!

- *In the beginning God created the heavens and the earth.* Genesis 1:1

- *"Who will not fear, O Lord, and glorify Your name?"*

For You alone are holy;

For ALL THE NATIONS WILL COME AND WORSHIP BEFORE YOU,

FOR YOUR ¹⁰RIGHTEOUS ACTS HAVE BEEN REVEALED." Revelation 15:4

= From the beginning of scriptures to the end God has revealed himself as not a God but the one and only God

- In Exodus 20 when God reveals His character through His Law: *2 "I am the LORD your God, who brought you out of the land of Egypt, out of the*

house of slavery.³ "You shall have no other gods before Me.⁴ "You shall not make for yourself an idol, or any likeness of what is in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the water under the earth. Exodus 20:2-4

➤ These verses are not God saying pick me, pick me I am the best God!

- He says I Am the Lord God!
- It is wrong for us to say picked a God because He seemed like the best option, first because He pick us and second because there is only one God, Jehovah God, the great I Am.

2. With all this in mind Paul says: Why would it even matter if meat had been sacrificed to idols, idols do not exist!

- *⁴ Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols, we know that there is no such thing as an idol in the world, and that there is no God but one. ⁵ For even if there are so-called gods whether in heaven or on earth, as indeed there are many gods and many lords, ⁶ yet for us there is but one God, the Father, from whom are all things and we exist for Him; and one Lord, Jesus Christ, by whom are all things, and we exist through Him. 1 Corinthians 8:4-6*

B. But here is the thing the spiritually weak don't get it yet.

- *⁷ However not all men have this knowledge; but some, being accustomed to the idol until now, eat food as if it were sacrificed to an idol; and their conscience being weak is defiled. 1 Corinthians 8:7*

= There has been so much idol worship, so much indoctrination, false doctrine that the weak do not fully grasping that there is only one God to answer to.

C. So if idols are not real than what are they?

1. An idol is an invention of man's mind and heart.

2. In idol is something in the heart and mind of a man that deserves attention and worship.

= That is why we get so defensive when someone criticize or threatens to harm our idols.

- Imagine for a moment if we were as passionate about Jesus as we are well you fill in the blank!

Transition: It is interesting that Paul then says that they we are neither better or worse if they eat the meat sacrificed to idols.

II. Neither Better or Worse verse 7-8

- A. Doing something that is offensive to other believers will not condemn you before God.

1. And it will not better you standing with God.

= That is not even the debate given the fact that the meat has really been sacrificed to no one!

- But all that will be accomplished is you will have proven a point and your weaker brother or sister in Christ will be offended.

= And that is our goal isn't it, they are wrong and I will prove they are wrong and I will use the freedom I have in Christ to proven that they are wrong.

= I will eat the meat sacrificed to idols and I will still worship God and I will stay in good staying with God if they don't like it tough!

- B. My, My, what a dangerous attitude!

1. There is nothing about eating meat that is wrong before God the meat is not somehow evil simply because of gods really don't exists.

- But there is something very wrong with an arrogant attitude that says if it doesn't hurt me, and I have the permission to do it. And I can say I didn't do anything wrong then all is well.

= Can you not here the debate in the Corinthians Church "Get over it man there no such thing as idols I will eat what I want to eat"

- The problem is the attitude in the first part of that statement "Get over it" that says I don't care what you think therefore I don't care about you I got my stuff together you should get yours.
- But listen to these words: *³ Do nothing [a]from [b]selfishness or empty conceit, but with humility of mind regard one another as more important than yourselves;*
Philippians 2:3

Transition: So although there is nothing wrong with the meat and we have the liberty to eat there is something very wrong about offending a weaker brother.

III. We are ruining our brothers verse 9-13

- A. By living out a self-centered attitude that we base on our freedom in Christ we cause others to stumble.
 1. Without questioning our salvation we must question ourselves if who we are living for, what is it that motivates our decisions, our actions and our words.

= Our world conditions us to look at for self!

- But God's Word teaches us that all things should bring glory to God!
- 2. Verse 11 says that we ruin the brother that Christ died for!
- Can our self-serving attitude possibly bring glory to God when we are ruining lives that Jesus died for?

- B. We can make claims that we have done nothing wrong because there is no law against it.
1. We lay claim to the freedom we have in Christ that there is nothing wrong with “eating idol meat”
 - The problem is not the meat; the problem is the lack of consideration for what Christ has done in our brother’s lives.
 - The problem is pride I can do whatever I want as long as there is not a Thou Shalt Not!
- Verse 11-12 *11 For through your knowledge he who is weak is ruined, the brother for whose sake Christ died. 12 And so, by sinning against the brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.* 1 Corinthians 8:11-12
- C. If it is not our own pride than what could possibly motivate us to ruin a brother or sister in Christ just because we can.
1. When we act in such a way we not only do our brother or sister Christ great damage but we sin against our Savior!

Transition: So Paul makes a final declaration if food, meat (speaking of that which is sacrificed to idols) causes my brother to stumble then I will not do it!

Closing: How do Our lives or churches look differently if we become concerned about one another and leave behind our selfish attitudes?

- A. The Corinthian church was struggling because they were abusing the freedom that have in Christ.
1. We tend to base what we do as right or wrong on whether there is a Thou shalt not or not.

- But it is much deeper than that God's people become affective for Christ when we start sharpening one another rather than tear each other down.

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