

Uncle David Shook Says:
Good Morning
and
Welcome to Genesis the Church!



***Let's Begin by Dismissing Our Kids to Their
Kid's Quest Areas of Ministry!***

JOSSULLS



The Text:

1 Corinthians 8:1-13!

The Title:

***The Christian's Liberty:
Legalism, License, or Love?***

The Theme:

***The Sin of Self-Centeredness Brings
Shame Upon the Name of Jesus!***

For the past few weeks we've focused our attention on one of the major problems taking place in the church at Corinth – the problem of divorce and remarriage.

And I pointed out that some 2000 years later it remains one of the primary problems that the church faces today.

And Paul addressed this problem by focusing on the commandments given by our Lord to those who are married. And Paul offered his wise counsel on areas where Jesus gave no instruction.

In 7:1-9, Paul addressed the single or unmarried!

But I say to the unmarried and to widows that because of the coming time of conflict, it is good for those unmarried to **remain as they are**. But if Satan is going to use your lack of self-control to destroy your testimony for Jesus, it's better to get married than to burn with lust.

***In 7:10-24, Paul focused his attention
on those who are married!***

But I say to the married, listen to the Lord's instructions!

***The wife should not leave her husband and the husband
should not divorce his wife. For you have been called to be
a reflection or example of Christ's love for His bride (the
church), and since Christ promised to never leave or
forsake you, you are to remain in the state you're in until
death separates you. But if you must leave, you must
remain single or be reunited with your husband.***

In 7:25-40, Paul focused his attention on the fathers who have virgin daughters!

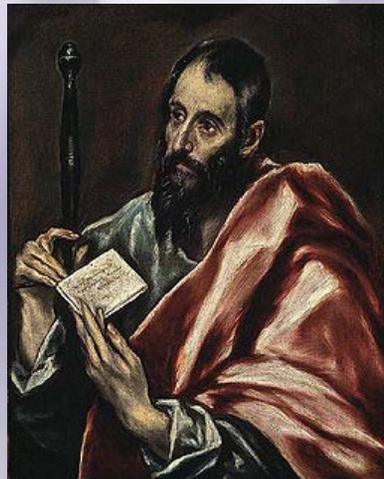
And his advice and counsel was to remain in what ever state you now find yourself in. Then Paul warned that marriage will only hinder your daughter's ability and willingness to serve God! Being married will not provide happiness.



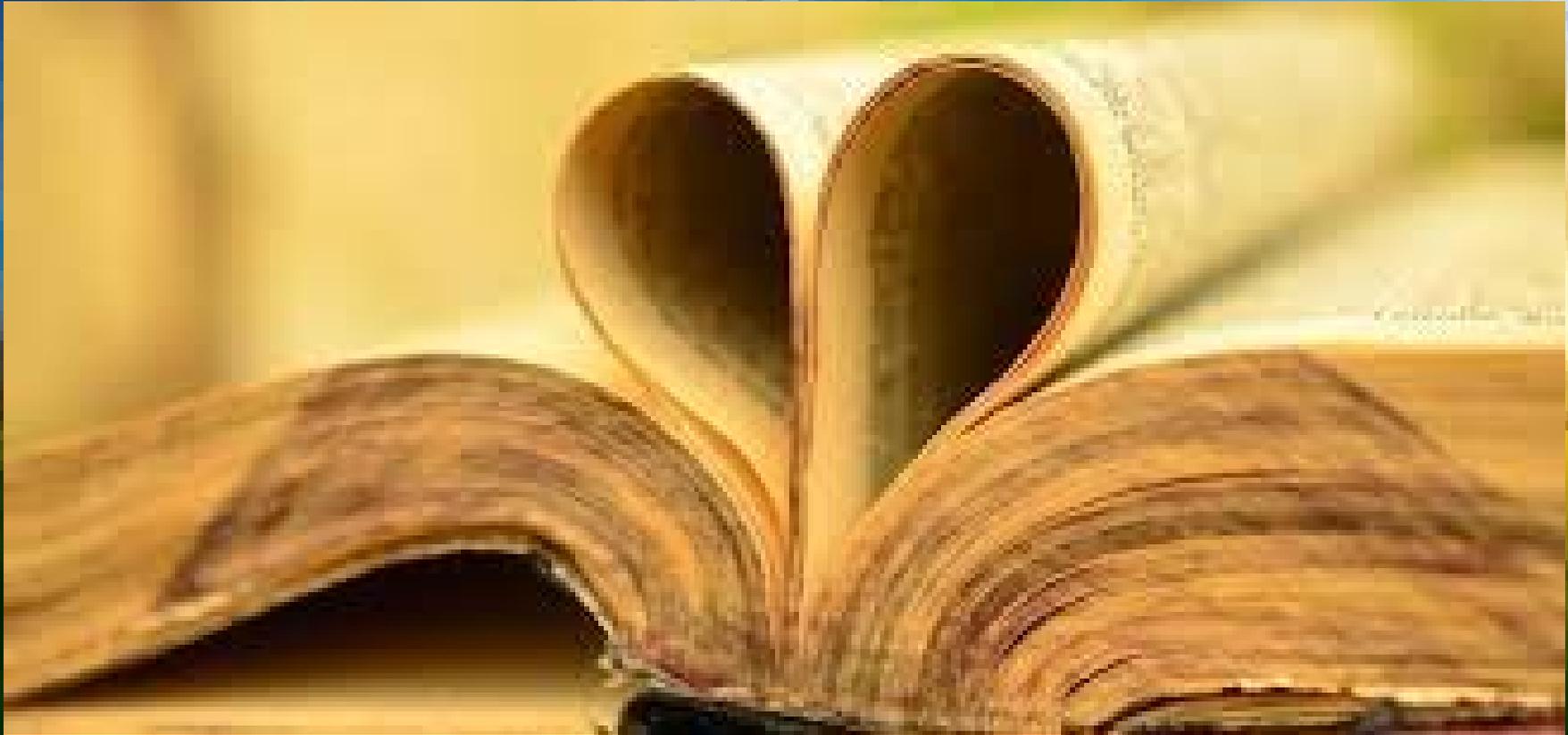
This morning Paul turns our attention to another topic of conflict taking place in the church at Corinth. In the section now before us the apostle answers the question, “Is it wrong for a believer to eat meat that has been sacrificed to an idol or to a pagan god?”



It is in this third section of the book that we find Paul answering question introduced to him by Chloe's people (1:11) and revealed by the special delegation sent to Paul from the church elders in Corinth (Stephanas, Fortunatus, and Achaicus / cf. 16:17).



Let's Read the Scriptures:
1 Corinthians 8:1-13!



Topics of Conflict
In The Third Section of the Book

Chapter 7 ... Is it God's will for me to marry or remain single?

Chapter 8 ... Is it wrong to eat meat offered to idols?

Chapter 9 ... Is it my responsibility to support the pastor?

Chapter 10 ... Is it wrong to participate in self-indulgence?

Chapter 11 ... Do I have a roll to play when the church meets?

Chapter 13 ... What is the key to unity in a divided church?

Chapters 12 & 14 ... What spiritual gift makes me special?

Today's Sermon Outline!

Five Points:

- I. (8:1-3) The **PROBLEM** is Introduced by Paul.
- II. (8:4-6) The **PREACHING** of Paul Begins.
- III. (8:7-8) The **PARADOX** is Pointed Out by Paul.
- IV. (8:9-12) The **PLEA** for Unity is Presented.
- V. (8:13) The Concluding **PRINCIPLES** in Liberty.

Today's Sermon Outline!

- I. (8:1-3) The **PROBLEM** is Introduced by Paul.
 - A. (v.1a) The **TOPIC** is revealed.
 - B. (v.1b) The **TURMOIL** is introduced.
 - C. (vs.2-3) The **TRUTH** is expressed.

Today's Sermon Outline!

- I. (8:1-3) The **PROBLEM** is Introduced by Paul.
 - A. (v.1a) The **TOPIC** is revealed.
 1. New topic is **introduced** / De Peri (Now).
 2. New topic is in **response** to Chloe's people (1:11) and the special delegation from Corinth (16:17).
 3. New topic **continues to amplify the book's theme**.
Their self-centeredness is the cause of further division – What I do, proves I'm more spiritual!

Today's Sermon Outline!

**B. (v.1b) The TURMOIL is introduced:
Contrast b/t Knowledge and Love!**

- 1. Knowledge is used 7 times in the first 3 verses to emphasize the problem. I don't want you to miss it!**
- 2. An entire chapter (13) will be later dedicated to love so that we see and understand the solution.**
- 3. Paul is building on the fact that personal knowledge has caused everyone to make up their own minds. So Paul will now offer his opinion (Paul is an Apostle).**

C. (vs.2-3) The **TRUTH** is expressed.

1. (v.2) When a person uses his knowledge to look down on a brother/sister he has become puffed-up and conceited. His **knowledge has caused him to deceive himself.** (Remember the Theme)
2. (v.3) But if a brother/sister loves God, he will apply God's love to those around him. **He/she will become a reflection or example of God's love.** (Testimony)

The Apostle's Point is Clear:

To have love and not knowledge is unfortunate!

But to have knowledge and not love is a tragedy!



II. (8:4-6) The **PREACHING** of Paul Begins.

A. (v.4a) The **TOPIC** is introduced and builds upon love's power over knowledge.

Here Paul begins with the word "**therefore**" to show the finality of what he is about to teach. The idea is sit-up and pay attention! Don't miss this!

It is also important to point out that Paul is **laying the foundation for an in-depth study on love's power over knowledge** in chapter 13.

B. (v.4b-6) Here the **TRUTH** is expressed to help the reader use his/her knowledge to understand how love brings about unity in the church.

1. (v.4b) We know that **idols are not real**. They're simply images carved out of wood, stone, or metal.
2. (v.5) Paul uses a **hypothetical** (2nd Class Condition / not true) to illustrate the difference between the world's "false" view of knowledge (idols) and the believer's "true" understanding of knowledge (Gosp. / Ch. 15).
3. (v.6) Paul explains what we (believers) know. There is **ONE** God who is our Father – since He alone is the Creator of all things. And there is **ONE** Lord, Jesus, Christ – who created all things, even our eternal relationship (Ch.15) with God the Father. (we exist for Him and through Him)

Let's Think This Through!

- 1. (v.5a) Even **if** there were many “so called” gods living in the heavens above or walking on the earth below, (**2nd Class Condition / There Isn't**) ...***
- 2. (v.5b) And even though men erect idols (**not real**) to worship these “so called” gods (**not real**) to gain favor with them for selfish reasons ...***
- 3. (v.6) “**We Know**” the truth. There is only **ONE** God and **ONE** Lord Jesus Christ, who is the Creator. And He alone is over all things. And He alone offers eternal life (**Chapter 15 / this is real**).***

Today's Sermon Outline!

III. (8:7-8) The PARADOX is Pointed Out by Paul.

The Setting / The Scene

A. (v.7) The TABOO ... Here Paul focuses his attention on the immature believer who has allowed his “knowledge” to surpass the Lord’s “love.” Because of his own false guilt (his past worship of idols), he has wrongly concluded that eating meat offered to Aphrodite is a sin (even though she doesn’t exist). But he uses his false “knowledge” and guilt as a weapon to control those around him (Chap. 13:8).

Today's Sermon Outline!

III. (8:7-8) The **PARADOX** is Pointed Out by Paul.

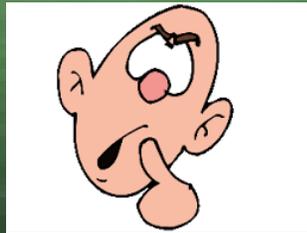
B. (v.8) The **TRUTH** ... Our God (the ONE and only TRUE God) is not interested in the things that go into our mouths, rather He is interested in the things that come out of our mouths (Mt. 15:11&18). IDEA: **Head knowledge without heart knowledge is of no value to God. It only causes conflict and division in the church.**

Today's Sermon Outline!

IV. (8:9-12) The PLEA for Unity is Presented.

Here the apostle returns our attention back to the proper use of the believer's liberty or freedom in Christ (**Our liberty is to be used to promote good**).

In these verses Paul confronts the supposed mature believer with the question – Is your liberty or freedom (**knowledge**) being used to express **legalism, license,** or **love**?



How is Christian Liberty to be Expressed?

Legalism ... is when every life's decision is viewed as being black or white. Legalism concludes that a person's spirituality is based on his obedience to some list of rules, rather than a heart that is surrendered to and trusting in God to bring about His will in another person's life. (**Rejects the Lord's work in us and places it with a List**)



How is Christian Liberty to be Expressed?

License ... grows where decisions have no boundaries. This principle was rejected in chapter 6:12, “all things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be mastered by anything.” When this principle is disregarded our liberty is no longer being used as a means for good. **(Denies the need for Jesus' cross)**



How is Christian Liberty to be Expressed?

Love ... is expressed when the knowledge of the truth of God is applied to those around us. Love is seen in the hope of Christ's return. **(In chapter 13 we will see what love looks like when it is built on a genuine and godly hope)**



IV. (8:9-12) The PLEA for Unity is Presented.

A. (v.9) The WISDOM of Paul ... Here Paul reminds us that God does not determine the believer's worth or value by the food that enters the mouth (v.8). Here Paul is warning the 'so called' mature believer of the sin of becoming a stumbling block to a weaker brother (from his own perspective). **Note:** the principle often taught in 6:19f (our bodies are the temple of God ...) is pointing to the believer's present testimony as well as his eternal blessings. This verse is not so much encouraging fitness as it is spiritual maturity in one's testimony and the believer's future rewards.

IV. (8:9-12) The PLEA for Unity is Presented.

B. (v.10) The importance of our WITNESS.

Here Paul emphasizes the key to understanding with the phrase “if he is weak / immature.” Paul’s point is this – while knowledge may be used to cause a brother to stumble, God’s love does not. (IRONWORKER)

IV. (8:9-12) The PLEA for Unity is Presented.

C. (vs.11-12) The need to WATCH-OUT.

Just as it is wrong for the weaker brother to judge you for eating cheaper meat offered to an idol, so too, it is wrong for stronger brother to flaunt his Christian liberty before the weaker brother. This will only cause him to stumble. (Freedom should build up and not tear down).

V. (8:13) The Concluding PRINCIPLE in Liberty!

*Therefore, **since** food causes my brother to stumble, I will **never** eat meat again, so that **I will not** cause my brother to stumble.*

These words are the key in answering the question of when and how a believer is to use his/her liberty or freedom in Christ.

The mature Christian always uses his/her freedom to promote what is good!

Seven Helpful Principles for Using Our Liberty!

1. **EVANGELISM** ... Is it something that will help me fulfill my calling before the unsaved world? (**1:23** – But we preach Christ crucified.)
2. **EDIFICATION** ... Is it something that will build up my brother? (**4:1-2** – Let a man regard us ... as stewards of Christ ... stewards who are trustworthy.)
3. **EXAMPLE** ... Is it something that I would want those under my care to do? (**4:16** – Therefore I exhort you, be imitators of me.)
4. **EXPEDIENCE** ... Is it something that would be helpful or useful? (**6:12** – All things are lawful for me, but not all things are profitable.)

5. **EXCESS** ... Is it something that is necessary or is it something beyond the norm. In other words, is it proper for me to use my liberty at this time? (7:35 – This I say for your own benefit; not to put a restraint upon you, but to promote ... undistracted devotion to the Lord.)
6. **EXALTATION** ... Is it something that will bring glory to God? (10:31 – Whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.)
7. **EMULATION** ... Is it something that Christ would do? (11:1 – Be imitators of me just as I am of Christ.)



The mature believer uses his/her freedom to promote what is good or what is best for others. The immature believer uses his/her freedom to control the lives and actions of others.

***The wisdom of Paul is found in verse 13:
“Therefore if food causes my brother to stumble, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause my brother to stumble.”***

***Next Week Our Journey Continues:
Why Should I Have to Support My Pastor?***

