

Paul's Second Letter to the Corinthians – Part 3 (early 54)

1 Corinthians 8–11

Knowledge and Liberty are Never an Excuse to Cause a Weaker Brother to Sin

8:1 Now concerning food sacrificed to idols, we know that “we all have knowledge.” Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.
 2 If anyone thinks he knows anything, he has not yet known as it is necessary to know.
 3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by him.
 4 Therefore, concerning the eating of food sacrificed to idols, we know that “an idol *is* nothing in the world” and that “*there is no God except one.*”
 5 For even if after all *there* are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth, just as *there* are many gods and many lords,
 6 yet to us *there is* one God, the Father, from whom *are* all *things*, and we *are* for him, and *there is* one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom *are* all *things*, and we *are* through him.
 7 But this knowledge *is* not in everyone. But some, being accustomed until now to the idol, eat *this food* as food sacrificed to idols, and their conscience, *because it* is weak, is defiled.
 8 But food does not bring us close to God. For neither if we eat do we have more, nor if we do not eat do we lack.
 9 But watch out lest somehow this right of yours becomes a cause for stumbling to the weak.
 10 For if someone should see you who has knowledge reclining for a meal in an idol's temple, will not his conscience, *because it* is weak, be strengthened so that *he* eats the food sacrificed to idols?
 11 For the one who is weak—the brother for whom Christ died—is destroyed by your knowledge.
 12 Now *if you* sin in this way against the brothers and wound their conscience, which is weak, you sin against Christ.
 13 Therefore, if food causes my brother to sin, I will never eat meat forever, in order that I may not cause my brother to sin.

Paul Argues That as an Apostle He Has a Right to Receive Financial Support

9:1 Am I not free? Am I not an apostle? Have I not seen Jesus our Lord? Are you not my work in the Lord?
 2 If to others I am not an apostle, yet indeed I am to you, for you are my seal of apostleship in the Lord.
 3 My defense to those who examine me is this:
 4 Do we not have the right to eat and drink?
 5 Do we not have the right to take along a sister *as* wife, like the rest of the apostles and the brothers of the Lord and Cephas?
 6 Or do only I and Barnabas not have the right to refrain from working?
 7 Who ever serves as a soldier at his own expense? Who plants a vineyard and does not eat the fruit of it? Who shepherds a flock and does not drink from the milk of the flock?
 8 I am not saying these *things* according to a human perspective. Or does the law not also say these *things*?
 9 For in the law of Moses it is written, “You must not muzzle an ox *while it* is threshing.” [[Deut 25:4](#)] It is not about oxen God is concerned, is it?
 10 Or doubtless does he speak for our sake? For it is written for our sake, because the one who plows ought to plow in hope and the one who threshes *ought to do so* in hope of a share.
 11 If we have sown spiritual *things* among you, *is it too great a thing* if we reap material *things* from you?
 12 If others share this right over you, do we not *do so* even more? Yet we have not made use of this right, but we endure all *things*, in order that we may not cause any hindrance to the gospel of Christ.
 13 Do you not know that those performing the holy services eat the things from the temple, *and* those attending to the altar have a share with the altar? [cf. [Lev 7](#)]
 14 In the *same* way also the Lord ordered those who proclaim the gospel to live from the gospel. [cf. [Luke 10:7](#)]

Paul Denied His Own Right in Order to Further the Spread of the Gospel

15 But I have not made use of any of these *rights*. And I am not writing these *things* in order that it may be thus with me. For *it would be* better to me rather to die than *for* anyone to deprive me of my reason for boasting.
 16 For if I proclaim the gospel, it is not to me a reason for boasting, for necessity is imposed on me. For woe is to me if I do not proclaim the gospel.
 17 For if I do this voluntarily, I have a reward, but if *I do so* unwillingly, I have been entrusted with a stewardship.
 18 What then is my reward? That *when I* proclaim the gospel, I may offer the gospel free of charge, in order not to make full use of my right in the gospel.

Paul Put His Freedom Aside in Order to Win More to Christ

19 For *although I* am free from all *people*, I have enslaved myself to all, in order that I may gain more.
 20 I have become like a Jew to the Jews, in order that I may gain the Jews. To those under the law *I became* as under the law (*although I* myself am not under the law) in order that I may gain those under the law.
 21 To those outside the law *I became* as outside the law (*although I* am not outside the law of God, but subject to the law of Christ) in order that I may gain those outside the law.
 22 To the weak *I became* weak, in order that I may gain the weak. I have become all *things* to all *people*, in order that by all means I

may save some.

23 I do all *this* for the sake of the gospel, in order that I may become a participant with it.

The Importance of Self-Discipline

24 Do you not know that those who run in the stadium all run, but one receives the prize? Run in such a way that you may win.

25 And everyone who competes exercises self-control in all *things*. Thus those *do so* in order that they may receive a perishable crown, but we an imperishable *one*.

26 Therefore I run in this way, not as *running* aimlessly; I box in this way, not as beating the air.

27 But I discipline my body and subjugate *it*, lest somehow *after* preaching to others, *I* myself should become disqualified.

Israel—An Example of Apostasy

10:1 For I do not want you to be ignorant, brothers, that our fathers were all under the cloud and all went through the sea,

2 and all were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea,

3 and all ate the same spiritual food,

4 and all drank the same spiritual drink. For they drank from the spiritual rock that followed *them*, and the rock was Christ.

5 But God was not pleased with the majority of them, for they were struck down in the desert.

6 Now these *things* happened *as* examples for us, so that we should not be desirers of evil *things*, just as those also desired *them*,

7 and not become idolaters, as some of them *did*, just as it is written, “The people sat down to eat and drink, and stood up to play,” [Exod 32:6]

8 nor commit sexual immorality, as some of them committed sexual immorality, and twenty-three thousand fell in one day, [Num 25:1–9]

9 nor put Christ to the test, as some of them tested *him*, and were destroyed by snakes, [Num 21:4–9]

10 nor grumble, just as some of them grumbled, and were destroyed by the destroyer. [cf. Num 11:1–3]

11 Now these *things* happened to those *people* as an example, but are written for our instruction, on whom the ends of the ages have come.

12 Therefore, the one who thinks that he stands must watch out lest he fall.

13 Temptation has not come upon you except *what is* common to humanity. But God *is* faithful, who will not permit you to be tempted beyond what you are able, but will also make a way out together with the temptation, *so that you* may be able to endure *it*.

Paul Argues Against Participating in Pagan Festivals

14 Therefore, my dear friends, flee from idolatry.

15 I am speaking as to sensible *people*; you judge what I am saying.

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ?

17 Because *there is* one bread, *we* who *are* many are one body, for *we* all share from the one bread.

18 Consider Israel according to the flesh: are not the ones who eat the sacrifices sharers in the altar?

19 Therefore, what am I saying? That food sacrificed to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything?

20 *No*, but that *the things* which they sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons and not to God, and I do not want you to become sharers with demons.

21 You are not able to drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You are not able to share the table of the Lord and the table of demons.

22 Or are we attempting to provoke the Lord to jealousy? We are not stronger than he *is*, *are we*?

A Specific Example of How to Deal With Issues of Conscience

23 All *things* are permitted, but not all *things* are profitable. All *things* are permitted, but not all *things* build up.

24 Let no one seek his own good but the *good* of the other.

25 Eat everything that is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for the sake of the conscience,

26 for “the earth *is* the Lord’s, and its fullness.” [Ps 24:1]

27 If any of the unbelievers invites you, and you want to go, eat everything that is set before you, asking no questions for the sake of the conscience.

28 But if someone says to you, “This is offered to idols,” do not eat *it*, for the sake of that one who informed *you* and the conscience.

29 Now I am not speaking about your own conscience, but the *conscience* of the other *person*. For why *is* my freedom judged by another’s conscience?

30 If I partake with thankfulness, why am I slandered concerning that for which I give thanks?

31 Therefore, whether you eat or you drink or whatever you do, do all *things* for the glory of God.

32 Give no offense both to Jews and to Greeks and to the church of God,

33 just as I also please all *people* in all *things*, not seeking my own benefit, but the *benefit* of the many, in order that they may be saved.

11:1 Become imitators of me, just as I also *am* of Christ.

Honoring the Authority Structure of the Church

2 Now I praise you that you remember me *in all things*, and just as I handed over to you the traditions, you hold fast to *them*.

3 But I want you to know that Christ is the head of every man, and the man *is the* head of the woman, and *the* head of Christ *is* God.

4 Every man who prays or prophesies *while* having *something* on *his* head dishonors his head,

5 but every woman who prays or prophesies with uncovered head dishonors her head, for she is one and the same with the one whose *head* is shaved.

6 For if a woman does not cover herself, let her *hair* be shorn off. But if *it is* shameful for a woman to *have her head* shorn or shaved, let her cover her *head*.

7 For indeed a man ought not to cover his head, *because he* is the image and glory of God, but the woman is the glory of the man.

8 For man is not from woman, but woman from man.

9 For indeed man was not created for the sake of the woman, but woman for the sake of the man.

10 Because of this, the woman ought to have *a symbol of* authority on her head, on account of the angels.

11 Nevertheless, neither *is* woman *anything* apart from man, nor *is* man *anything* apart from woman in the Lord.

12 For just as the woman *is* from the man, thus also the man *is* through the woman. But all *things are* from God.

13 You judge for yourselves: is it fitting for a woman to pray to God *with her head* uncovered?

14 And does not nature itself teach you that a man, if he wears long hair, it is a dishonor to him?

15 But a woman, if she wears long hair, it is her glory, because her hair is given for a covering.

16 But if anyone is disposed to be contentious, we have no such custom, nor do the churches of God.

Concerning the Lord's Table

17 But in giving this instruction I do not praise *you*, because you come together not for the better but for the worse.

18 For in the first place, *when you* come together as a church, I hear there are divisions among you, and in part I believe it.

19 For indeed it is necessary that there be factions among you, in order that those who are approved may become evident among you.

20 Therefore, *when you* come together in the same *place*, it is not to eat the Lord's supper.

21 For *when you* eat *it*, each one of you goes ahead to take his own supper, and one is hungry and another is drunk.

22 For do you not have houses for eating and drinking? Or do you despise the church of God and humiliate those who do not have *anything*? What shall I say to you? Shall I praise you? In this I will not praise *you*!

23 For I received from the Lord what I also passed on to you, that the Lord Jesus, on the night in which he was betrayed, took bread,

24 and *after he* had given thanks, he broke *it* and said, "This is my body which *is* for you. Do this in remembrance of me."

25 Likewise also the cup, after they had eaten, saying, "This cup is the new covenant in my blood. Do this, as often as you drink *it*, in remembrance of me." [[Luke 22:19–20](#)]

26 For as often as you eat this bread and drink this cup, you proclaim the Lord's death until he comes.

27 So then, whoever eats the bread or drinks the cup of the Lord in an unworthy manner will be guilty of the body and the blood of the Lord.

28 But let a person examine himself, and in this way let him eat from the bread and let him drink from the cup.

29 For the one who eats and drinks, *if he* does not recognize the body, eats and drinks judgment against himself.

30 Because of this, many *are* weak and sick among you, and quite a few have died.

31 But if we were evaluating ourselves, we would not be judged.

32 But *if we* are judged by the Lord, we are being disciplined, in order that we will not be condemned with the world.

33 So then, my brothers, *when you* come together in order to eat *the Lord's supper*, wait for one another.

34 If anyone is hungry, let him eat at home, lest you come together for judgment. And I will give directions about the remaining *matters* whenever I come.

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