

I CORINTHIANS – LESSON 5

INTRODUCTION:

This lesson emphasizes the proper way the Christian should view, and use his or her liberties. In chapter 8 Paul is addressing the question of how the Christian should react to the meats that have been sacrificed to idols, especially among Christians who still connect the eating of meats with unlawful idolatry. In Chapter 9, Paul addresses his apostleship and his use of liberties in his desire to save souls. In the first section of chapter 10, Paul uses events from God's people in the Old Testament to teach the Christian that they should not compromise with idolatry. Then, in the later part of Chapter 10 Paul addresses the Christian's liberties as he expands the application beyond the church to include unbelievers.

I. THE CHRISTIAN AND LIBERTIES (Chapters 8-10)

- A. Viewing one's liberty before the weak Christian who connects eating of meats that have been sacrificed to idols with idolatry (8:1-13).
 - 1. Knowledge that the idol is nothing, should be coupled with edifying love (v. 1-6).
 - 2. The case where a Christian knowing idolatry is wrong, when eating meat sacrificed to idol, will associate the practice as a sacrifice unto the idol (v. 7-12).
 - a. The truth about food: it will not commend us to God – if we eat not are we the worse, or if we eat are we the better (v. 8).
 - b. Question to consider: But if one who is weak in his conscience sees you who is strong in knowledge eating meats in an idol's temple, will not he be emboldened to do the same thing and defile his conscience because to him such a practice is idolatry, and wrong? (v. 9-10)
 - 3. Consequence of improper use of one's liberty: (v. 11-12).
 - a. weak brother perishes – one for whom Christ died.
 - b. sinning against brother is a sin against Christ.
 - 4. The limitation of the Christian's liberty (v. 13)
 - a. Consideration: If meat causes my brother to stumble...
 - b. Practice: I will eat no flesh for evermore.
 - c. Reason: So I will not cause my brother to stumble.
- B. Paul viewing his liberties as he defends his apostleship (Chapter 9).
 - 1. Paul affirms his freedom from man and his apostleship (v. 1-2)
 - 2. Paul affirms his right to eat and drink, and lead about a believing wife as other apostles (v. 3-5).

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3. Paul affirms his right with examples to partake of the carnal things because of his work in sowing the spiritual things in the gospel (v. 6-14).
 - a. Paul affirms that his reason for not using his right to partake of these things from their hands was so that he would not cause a hindrance to the gospel of Christ.
 4. Paul affirms that to preach the gospel without charge is his glory (v. 15-18).
 - a. Necessity is laid on him to preach the Gospel – his stewardship.
 - b. His glory is to preach Gospel without charge – his reward.
 5. Paul affirms that his conduct connected with preaching the gospel is to be all things to all men so he might save some (v. 19-23).
 - a. To Jews – as Jews respecting law though not under the law.
 - b. To Gentile – as a Gentile who is not under law of Moses but lives as one who is under law of Christ.
 - c. To the weak – identified with them in their weakness
 - d. Paul does all things for the gospel's sake to be a joint partaker thereof.
 6. Paul affirms that the race is to be run by all (v. 24-27)
 - a. Paul encourages all to run the race to receive the prize.
 - b. Paul disciplines himself in addition to preaching the gospel so he will not be rejected, and receive his prize.
- C, Paul views the issue of idolatry and liberty before the unbelievers (Chapter 10).
1. The appeal to the sins of the Israelites, including idolatry, to warn the Christian of sin's consequences (v.1-13).
 2. Paul's appeal to the Corinthians to flee idolatry (v. 14-22).
 3. Paul's appeal to the Christian to be willing to forgo the liberty of eating meats sold in the shambles if the unbeliever connects it with the practice of idolatry (v. 23-32).
 4. Paul's appeal to his example of seeking the profit of the many (v.33).

QUESTIONS:

1. What knowledge does Paul affirm all can have?
2. Define love in the context of 9:1-2?
3. Why is idolatry a sin?

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4. Is the weak brother weak because of his lack of knowledge or is it because of his habitual practice?
5. Considering verse 8, what can you say food is in God's mind?
6. Explain how the "weak" brother is "emboldened" to eat things sacrificed to idols?
 - a. Explain what you would do realizing this fact:
7. What sobering thoughts should cause the Christian to have consideration for the weak brother's conscience?
8. Why does Paul affirm his being "free" in 9:1?
9. What things did Paul claim to have a right to do?
10. What principle is Paul expressing in verses 7-14?
 - a. How does Paul illustrate this principle?
 - b. How does Paul apply this principle to himself?
 - c. Why does Paul not use this "right"?
11. What TWO words does Paul use that shows his attitude towards his preaching of the gospel?

12. How did Paul become “all things” to the following:
 - a. Jew?
 - b. Gentile?
 - c. The weak?

13. In what way is the spiritual race different from physical races?

14. Why was it essential for Paul to buffet his body?
 - a. What all is involved in buffeting one’s body?

15. What is meant being “baptized unto Moses”?

16. How did the Old Testament Israelites drink a spiritual drink and the spiritual rock: Christ?

17. What is the point of Paul pointing out the fact that most of the Israelites that passed through the Red Sea fell in the wilderness?

18. From the specific sins listed by Paul, in what two general ways did the Israelites displease God and suffered from their actions?

19. What admonition should the Christian take to heart from the Old Testament examples given by Paul?

20. Does man have to sin?

21. Why is the fruit of the vine in the Lord's supper the "cup of blessing"?
22. In the Lord's supper, with whom or what are we having communion?
23. How were the Corinthians to "flee from idolatry"?
24. Why would a Christian not have to ask about the origin of the meat they were being offered at a feast?
25. What circumstance would keep a Christian from eating the meat offered at a feast?
26. Give the phrases in 10:23-33 connected with the concept of one "seeking his neighbor's good"?