

7/1/12

1Corinthians 8-9

The apostle Paul turns to another question the Corinthians had asked him, namely the eating of meats offered to idols.

The subject is covered in chapters eight through ten, it is a natural unit and should be studied as such.

The principle of Christian liberties to be guide by God's love for the brethren not self.

This principle can be applied to many of the gray area that the Scriptures do not clearly address yet may be lawful to an individual.

Questions that need to be made in gray areas are as follows.

1. What does it do to me?
2. What does it do to my brother
3. What does it do to my relationship to God and witness.

The principles and cautions are throughout the Scriptures.

1. All things are lawful, but not profitable. I will not be brought under the power of any. 1Cor. 6:12

2. All things are lawful for me, but not all things are lawful for me, but not all things edify. 1Cor. 10:23

3. For of whom a man is overcome, of the same is he brought in bondage. 2Pet.2:19c

4. Let us therefore follow after the things which make for peace, and things wherewith one may edify another. Rom. 14:19

The principle and character of the Christian is laid down for us by Our Lord's example.

1. In attitude must be that of emptying oneself.

Phil. 2:3

2. The service must be for the sake of others. Jn. 13

There are four basic questions that the Corinthians asked Paul.

- 1) The problem of meats offered to idols. 1Cor. 8:1, 4

- 2) The problem of going to temple feast. 1Cor. 8:10

- 3) The problem of buying of meat in market. 1Cor. 10:25

- 4) The problem of dinner invitations. 1Cor. 10.27

* The key verse is found in chapter ten verse twenty-one!

8:1-3 The contrast between knowledge and love.

- 8:1** The problem with knowledge.
- 1) Knowledge puffs up “phusioo”, which means to inflate or swell, due to false perception of self.
 - a) The word knowledge “gnosis” intellectual information and understanding apart from God was revealed to be a big problem with the Corinthians.
 - b) This human knowledge that inflates man and causes him to focus on self.
 - c) This kind of human arrogant, superior knowledge occupies the first four chapters, as well as human wisdom, both inferior to God’s knowledge and wisdom.
 - 2) All social interaction involved around feast and sacrifices or meat offered in a sacrifice
 - a) There were private offerings.
 - 1)) Part was burned at the altar.
 - 2)) Part was given to the priest.
 - 3)) Part was enjoyed by the worshipper.
 - b) There were public offerings, which:
 - 1)) Part to priest.
 - 2)) Part to magistrate.
 - 3)) Part sold to markets.
 * They all possessed this basic knowledge, but some were priding in knowledge.

- 2) The benefit of love “agape” is that it edifies, builds up. Rom. 14:19; 1Cor. 13:1-3, 13
 - a) Human knowledge is “ego-centered”.
 - b) God’s divine love is “theo-centered” and therefore interested and actively doing what is best for people, loving your brother, not self!
 - 1) The first table of the Law deals with our relationship to God.
 - 2) The second table of the Law, deals with our relationship with our fellow-man.
 - 3) Jesus said, in answer to the greatest commandment; to love God with all your heart, mind and soul and the second to love your neighbor as yourself. Matt. ?

- 8:2** The pride of intellect blinds man to his ignorance.
- 1) No man knows all there is to know about any one thing or area.
 - * Shakespear “Man, poor man, ignorant in that he knows best.”
 - 1) There were many societies and clubs in the among the Greek.
 - 2) The feast had sacrifice and a common meal that made them one as a family and brotherhood.

3) Rome scrutinized these societies very closely. “The Neolatans”

8:3 The believer’s love for God is recognized by God.

- 1) The societies at times gave a greater allegiance to the brotherhood than the empire of Rome.
- 2) Love for God is the priority that lead to love for other. Matt. 22:37-40
* But now, after that you have known God, or rather are known of God, how turn ye again to the weak and beggarly elements, whereunto you desire again to be in bondage? You observe days, and years. Gal. 4:9; 1Jn. 4:7; Jn. 13:34; 16-17

8:4-8 The facts about eating things offered to idols.

8:4 The facts about an idol.

- 1) The idol is nothing.
- 2) There is only one God.
 - a) They sacrifice to devils. 1Cor. 10:24; Is.41:21-24
 - b) God challenges gods. Jer. 10:1-46; Ps. 115:4-8
* “Hear O Israel: The Lord our God is one Lord.” Deut. 6:4

8:5-6 The acknowledgment of the pagan reality.

- 1) The Father is the source of all.
- 2) The Son is the channel for all.
- 3) The Holy Spirit is the agent for all.
* Jn. 1:3; Col. 1:16-17; Heb. 1:2

8:7 The problem of conscience.

- 1) Not all have the same knowledge.
- 2) The weak conscience could be one who had recently come out of paganism.
* You have faith? Have it to yourself before God, for whatsoever is not of faith is sin. Rom. 14:23

8:8 The basic principle of food.

- 1) Food has nothing to do with our relationship to God, it does not give us a more favorable standing before Him.
- 2) Food does not make us the better or worse.
* Rom. 14:1-6, 13; Col. 2:8, 14-17

8:9-13 The caution of living by knowledge done apart from love.

8:9 The strong warning to those acting on pure knowledge.

- 1) The liberated Christian needs to walk in such a way to not stumble the weak brother. vs. 9

* The word beware “blepo” means to see with the mind’s eye, to discern, to understand, to take heed mentally, observe and perceive carefully.

- 2) The real danger is pointed out.
 - a) The phrase “this liberty of yours” is emphatic in the Greek.
 - b) The exercises of his liberty in eating the meat offered to an idol, without any consideration for the weak brother.
 - c) The word stumbling block “proskomma” means an obstacle in the way which if one strikes his foot against, he stumbles or falls and causes him to sin.

8:10-11 The potential of a real case in point.

- 1) The weak brother seeing you in the temple is encouraged to eat and afterward is truck with guilt. vs. 10
 - a) The picture is of sitting or lying down on one’s side eating “katakeimai”.
 - b) They did not eat sitting on chairs.
- 2) The one who has a weak conscience might be emboldened to eat, due to the practice of the stronger believer.
 - a) The word emboldened “oikodomeo”, means encouraged to eat.
 - b) Translated puffed up in verse one.

3) The rhetorical question has only one answer, NO! vs. 11

* The word perish means to destroyed in faith and be perhaps dragged back into it or be so condemned. vs. 11

8:12 The consequences of such actions.

- 1) Sin is against the weak brother.
- 2) Sin is against Christ.

8:13 The principle of Christian liberty.

- 1) If food causes one to stumble, I will never eat meat.
- 2) The reason being it stumbles a person.
 - a) The Christian attitude, though the context is legalism of foods. Rom. 14:19-21
 - b) As free, and not using your liberty for a cloak of maliciousness, but as the servants of God. 1Pet. 2:16
 - c) Paul circumcised Timothy, but didn't submit to have Titus circumcised.
 - * Same goes for all gray areas, smoking, drinking, mixed bathing, etc.)

9:1-18 The rights of an apostle denied.

9:1-2 The proclamation of Paul’s apostleship.

- 1) In chapter eight Paul declared to the Corinthians the principle of love for others over one's rights.
- 2) In chapter nine Paul is going to illustrate this principle by his own example as he refused to receive wages for the gospel in view that it might of been a stumbling tone to some.
- 3) In chapter ten Paul provides the example of Israel in the Old Testament who exercised her liberty in such a way that she fell into gross idolatry and sexual immorality, thereby falling under God's judgment.
 - * No one is exempt from this potential ensnarement is the warning. 1Cor. 10:11-12
- 4) Four rhetorical questions are asked by Paul to affirm his apostleship. vs. 1
 - a) Am I not an apostle? Yes!
 - b) Am I not free? Yes!
 - c) Have I not seen the Lord? Yes!
 - * Acts 1:22; 9:17; 18:9; 22:11, 17; 2Cor. 12:2
- d) Are you not my work in the Lord? Yes!
 - * 1Cor. 2:1; 4:15
- 5) Paul declares that if in fact is not an apostle to others, he certainly is to them for he preached to them and they repented. vs. 2

- * The reference to they being his seal of his apostleship meant that they were the stamp or evidence of his being sent out and of God's ownership through the gospel.

9:3-6 The answer of Paul to those who had examined his apostleship critically.

9:3 The particulars that he had authority to claim.

- * The word defense "apologia" means give an answer in order to refute the opposition.
- 1) We get our word apologetics from it, a defense for our faith to those who oppose it.
- 2) Paul is not really defending his apostleship here as much as he is providing his Biblical authority to receive wages as an apostle in order to illustrate the principle of self denial, so as to not stumble people.
 - * In his second letter he defends his apostleship, giving the signs of apostle, patience, signs and wonders and mighty deeds. 2Cor. 12:12

9:4-6 The four rhetorical questions Paul asked were in perfect accord with the rights of an apostle.

- 1) Do we have no right to eat or drink in the places they minister as apostles? Yes! vs. 4
- 2) Do we have no right to take along a believing wife, as do also the other apostles, the brother's of the Lord, and Cephas when they ministered? Yes! vs. 5
 - a) The early apostles were married, Peter certainly. Mk. 1:30
 - b) James and Jude. Matt. 13:55-56
- 3) Do I and Barnabas have no right to refrain from working as we minister? Yes! vs. 6
 - a) Paul's craft was tent making. Acts 20:34 His hands ministered to his own necessities and those that were with him. Acts 18:3, 20:34
 - b) Paul labored night and day so as not to be chargeable. 4:12, 1Thes. 2:9

9:7-14 The argument of Paul from the Old Testament.

9:7-9a-b *The first four examples from every day life.*

- * Rhetorical questions, having only one answer.
- 1) First, who ever goes to war at his own expense? No one! vs. 7a
 - 2) Second, who plants a vineyard and does not eat of its fruit? No one! vs. 7b

- 3) Third, who tends a flock and does not drink of the milk of the flock? No one! vs. 7c
- 4) Paul asked two more rhetorical questions to evaluate his use of the Scriptures. vs. 8
 - a) He exclaims to his readers, "Do I say these things as a mere man?", implying wanting to justify himself by twisting the Scriptures? No! vs. 8a
 - b) He exclaims his proper use of the law, "Or does not the law say the same also?", Yes! vs. 8
- 4) Fourth, or it is written in the law of Moses, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain." vs. 9a-b
* He is quoting Deuteronomy. Deut. 25:4

9:9c-10a *The apostle Paul makes two important questions regarding the examples and Scripture he quoted, again rhetorical.*

- 1) Is it oxen God is concerned about? No! vs. 9c
- 2) Or does He, God, say it for our sakes? Yes! vs. 10a

9:10b-12 *The apostle Paul answered his own questions interpreting the law by the Holy Spirit.*

- 1) Paul said it was written for the ministers of God. vs. 10b-f

- 2) Paul makes the application in principle for receiving finances. vs. 11-12
- a) The answer is no! vs. 11
- * He placed the higher value on the imparting of the gospel, the spiritual.
- b) The second is yes! vs. 12a-b
- 1)) He placed the greater right on Silas, Timothy and himself, than other, “are we not even more”.
 - 2)) The key word “right”. vs. 4, 5, 6
- 3) Paul proclaims their willful denial of this right they have, due to not wanting to hinder the gospel. vs. 12c-d
- * The word hinder “enkope” means a cutting off like a road or bridge in order to impede advance by the enemy.

9:13-14 *The apostle Paul used one more Old Testament illustration to make his point and then seals it with the words of Jesus, providing a total of six proofs for financial support, if God is in the work.*

- 1) He calls attention to the Levitical priesthood who lived of the temple offerings. vs. 13

 - * Lev. 6:16, 26; 7:6 31

- 2) He quotes the words of Jesus. vs. 14
 - a) In the gospels. Matt. 10:10; Lk. 10:7
 - b) Paul later quotes the same passage in Deuteronomy to Timothy which

makes the two Testaments of equal authority. 1Tim. 5:18

9:15-18 The proclamation of Paul his committed integrity.

9:15 The application to Paul’s life.

- 1) His motive in writing these things is pure and blameless.
- 2) He had not use these in the past nor written in the present that they might give him money.
- 3) He would rather die than for someone to charge him and making him a liar.

 - * The boasting is in that he preach for no charge. 1Cor. 9:18

9:16 The great responsibility of Paul regarding the gospel.

- 1) Paul had nothing to boast as he preached the gospel, for it was a charge given him by Jesus. Acts 9:15-16; 1Cor. 3:5-9; 4:7; Gal. 1:15; Eph. 3:1
- 2) Paul looked at it as judgment to him if he did not obey his call! “Woe to me”.

9:17 The great accountability of Paul regarding the gospel.

- * Paul’s perspective is two-fold.
- 1) If he did it willingly, he would have a reward.

- 2) If he did it against his will, God saw the heart, Paul would have to give account as a steward to Jesus, Who entrusted him with the gospel.

* The word entrusted “ousteuo” was used of imperial letters and decrees!

9:18 The reward of Paul was in being obedient to his call by God.

- 1) That he may preach the gospel without charge, providing for his own needs. vs. 18a-c
 - a) Yet he was arguing for the benefit of other ministers to received finances.
 - b) Not that he could not except an offering, for the Philippians sent him two offerings.
- 2) That he may not abuse his authority in the gospel. vs. 18d
 - a) To become greedy.
 - b) To abuse or take advantage of people.

9:19-23 The motives of an apostle declared.

9:19 The liberty Paul had, he used to win men to Christ.

- 1) He not being obligated to any man for his finances, he had great liberty. vs. 19a
- 2) He by his own will, as a bond-servant served all men to see them saved. vs. 19b-c

* Mk. 10:35-45; Lk. 22:26-27

9:20-23 The flexibility of Paul articulated.

- 1) To the Jew he became a Jew to win them to Christ. vs. 20a-b
- 2) To those under the law, the Pharisee, to win them to Christ. vs. 20c-d
 - a) He complied with the law when and where it did not contradicted grace, in fact he was arrested in the temple serving a vow in sponsorship of some young Jews. Acts 21:26
 - b) He circumcised Timothy. Acts 16:3
- 3) To those without law, the Gentile, to win them to Christ. vs. 21
 - a) Not burdening them with keeping the law, refusing to circumcise Titus. Gal. 2:3
 - b) He was under the law of Christ, love!
- 4) To the weak, to win them to Christ. vs. 22a-b
- 5) Paul did whatever he need to in order to communicate Christ, without compromising the gospel of grace and love. vs. 22c
- 6) Paul did all this having two things in mind. vs. 23
 - a) For the benefit of the gospel, that it be affective to save sinners. vs. 23a
 - b) To be joint-partners in the gospel with the Corinthians, an equal. vs. 23b

9:24-27 The discipline of an apostle.

9:24 The picture is of the Isthmian games, 2nd to Olympics, occurring every 2 years.

- 1) The word race is where we get our word “stadium” and “stade”, a race course of 6063/4 feet long and it came to mean ‘race’ due to the fact that the track at Olympia was exactly the number feet in length.
- 2) The Christian life is a race and how much more the winning of souls.
- 3) The commitment is to win, not simply to run. Heb. 12:1

9:25 The example of the athletes.

- 1) Every athlete is tempered in all things. vs. 25a
* The word tempered “egkrateuomai”, means self-control.
 - a) He is self-restraint, disciplined as to his training and strict diets, etc
 - b) The rigorous training was for 10 months prior to games before the judges in the gymnasium immediately before the games.
- 2) Every one did it for a corruptible crown, garland or crown of oak leaves that shortly fade away. vs. 25b
- 3) The believer for an incorruptible crown. vs. 25c

- a) God has a custom made course for each believer. Phil. 3:12-14;
2Tim.4:6-8
- b) The word is “stephanos” the victors crown not the royal crown “diadema”.

9:26 The commitment of Paul to the race.

- 1) Not with uncertainty which means with a clear perception of his object and goal.
- 2) He fight “pulteuo”, which means with the fist, not as a shadow boxer in the air, but to knock out his opponent.
* The boxing gloves were made of furling, covered with cow hide, with lead and iron.

9:27 The daily discipline of Paul to sin nature, the old man.

- 1) He bring his body into subjection. vs. 27a
 - a) The word discipline “hupopiazo” means to strike under the eye and make it black and blue.
 - b) Used for the woman who wearied the judge who did not fear God. Lk. 18:5
- 2) He declares the reason for doing all this, to remain a legitimate contestant in the race and not be disqualified. vs. 27b-d
 - a) Having preached to others, he be He disapproved, rejected, rightly disqualified.

- b) The word “adokimos” was used to test metals and coins as genuine.