

How Important Am I to Me? Outline

1st Corinthians Chapter 8

- I. Answer the question: How important am I to me?
 - A. *Should they (I) eat the meat?*
- II. Is it ok to eat meat offered to idols?
 - A. In Christ we are free.
 1. John 8:31-32; 2 Corinthians 3:17 ; Galatians 5:1 5
 - B. What about the “grey” areas in life? The areas we are free to do what we choose in that the Bible does not prohibit it but perhaps it is not “beneficial” to do so?
 - C. Christian extremes:
 1. Legalists—everything is black or white.
 2. Libertarians—everything is ok to do, we are free in Christ!
- III. The culture and the Corinthian church.
 - A. The cheapest source for meat was meat that had been sacrificed in the temples.
 1. The sacrifices were the finest of animals.
 - a. Part of the animal would be burned on the alter for the god of the temple.
 - b. Part of the animal was given to the priests and friends for fine dining.
 - c. Part of the animal would be used for public temple dinners.
 - d. The rest of the meat would be given to the local butchers to sell inexpensively.
 2. Dining at the temple was an honorable, big event.
 - a. To decline a dinner invitation at the temple would have been offensive to the “god” and to society.
 - b. The Christian was under pressure to both dine at the temples and purchase meat “sacrificed to idols”
- IV. The three arguments for eating sacrificed meat (“the knowledgeable”).
 - A. “We all have knowledge” (Vs.1-3)

1. They “know” there is nothing in the New Covenant to prohibit them from eating the meat.
2. Paul’s warning: “Knowledge puffs up; love builds up”.
 - a. Knowledge—the self
 - b. Love—others

“Knowledge is the process of passing from the unconscious state of ignorance to the conscious state of ignorance”

- B. “We know an idol is nothing.” (V.4)
 1. “We have a high view of God”
- C. “God doesn’t care what we eat” (V.8)
 1. Food is neither “good” or “bad”.
 - a. Mark 7:18-19

V. HOWEVER...

- A. “It’s not all about you!” (Vs. 7-12)
- B. Violation of the weaker conscience.
 1. Conscience:
 - a. As a stop sign—I need to stop something in my behavior.
 - b. As a GPS—I’m going the wrong direction.
 - c. As a mirror—shows me who I am.

Conscience is God’s doorkeeper to keep us out of places where we could be harmed.

- VI. Today’s example-- *Is it ok for the Christian to drink alcohol?* (Vs.9-13).
- A. The Bible does not prohibit.
 - B. It’s not so much about being offensive than making someone stumble.
 - C. Love trumps liberty.

How Important Am I to Me? Pastoral Notes

1st Corinthians Chapter 8

I made a question the title of this morning's message... *How important am I...to me?*...How important am I to *me?*...You are important to me in many ways... you are important to your family, your spouse if you have one...to your boss... your fellow workers... but how important are you to yourself?...on a list of the most important things in your life... where do you put yourself?...honestly.

[if this was a Ted talk, you would now expect me to go into how vital it is to have a high opinion of yourself... 25 reasons you are a very, very important person...and how realizing that will empower you and lift you to a high level of success in your life...you would leave this place whistling a happy tune!... but you know better than that!... when was the last time you listened to one of my sermons and went away whistling a happy tune?...especially since we've been in 1st Corinthians!]....seriously...

When it comes to living the Christian life... living a life pleasing to God... the answer you give...if it reflects reality is vital...is telling... and it says much....it's actually a spiritual marker... it reveals something about your spiritual maturity.

How making Jesus Lord of your life is coming along...How much like Christ you are becoming.

I'll give you another question... I'll give it to you now... but wait to answer it until the end of the sermon... how you answer this question will help you see the answer to the first... this question is... *should eat the meat?*

That sounds a little off the wall... but I hope to bring it into your consideration this morning.

Each week as we've been traveling through the apostle Paul's book, letter, epistle of 1st Corinthians... we've been learning much about that small church that he planted in the pagan city of Corinth...each week we learn a little more about that culture...and the tension between the Christian values the church has been trying to embrace and the culture that is pulling it away in the opposite direction....

We're doing this because we recognize the Corinthian church and the surrounding Corinthian culture is not much different that our culture today and the challenge for the church in our culture.

Last week we turned a corner in this book... beginning in chapter seven, continuing to the end of the book, chapter 16... the apostle Paul has set out to answer a host of questions presented to him

by an entourage who journeyed to Ephesus where Paul had been ministering for the last five or six years after establishing the Corinthian church.

Enough time had passed to where many difficulties surfaced for the church... *“how do we live the Christian life in light of a perverse culture always pulling us back into it?”* ...can we not relate to that today?...

Last week their questions were regarding marriage... singleness and sexual purity...this week the implied question is... ***Is it ok to eat meat offered to idols?...*** Aren't we all very happy right now?...

Finally the apostle Paul lands on a topic that doesn't have anything to do with us... we are modern people... we don't have issues with eating meat offered to idols... after last week... this is a relief!...is it not?

Don't think Paul's not going to mess with us some more this morning...you'll see as we examine this passage this this morning... this is not so much about eating meat as it is about how to live within our Christian liberty... In Christ we are free...

John 8:31-32 **“If you continue in My word, then you are truly My disciples; 32 and you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free.”** Once you embrace TRUTH... you will not be in bondage to ANYTHING!

2 Corinthians 3:17 **Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.**

Galatians 5:1 **It was for freedom that Christ set us free...** free from the bondage of sin resulting in lives truly free...

If you're in Christ you are truly free... but that does not mean we have license to do ANYTHING and EVERYTHING we want...freedom is only ever freedom if it has boundaries... we are never to sin... our problem as Christians... as it was for the Corinthians... there are grey areas in life... there are absolute rights and wrongs spelled out in Scripture... **“Thou shall NOT commit adultery”**... but there are areas in the Bible that are not so clear.

Things that the Bible is silent on... or doesn't prohibit it... but we must deal with it... brings back to mind what Paul said back in chapter 6:12 **All things are lawful for me, but not all things are beneficial...profitable.**

So... how do we navigate through the grey areas... the areas we are free to do what we choose in that the Bible does not prohibit it... but perhaps it is not “beneficial” to do so?

Christians tend to pick an extreme in these situations... they either become “legalists” where every act, every decision you are to make is black and white...and if it is grey... you toss it over

to the blacks... and there's a list of everything black and white.... These you can do these you cannot do...

Here it is eating meat sacrificed to idols... but in my lifetime... especially in my parent's generation... the list went something like this:

You can't drink alcohol, smoke, play cards [Gambling and "cartomancy"....specific—Rook—“Christian Cards” or “Missionary Cards”... Vulture, raven?], dance, go to movies...had to wear two piece bathing suits....especially the men...the legalists.

The other group are the *libertarians*... *we are free in Christ... we can do ANYTHING we want...*

The Precipice

There's the "libertarian" that says "We're free in Christ so anything and everything goes... it's all ok... *the Christian life is walking a precipice*... the path is narrow, a couple feet wide... on one side is a drop of 10,000 feet... the other side the same... one side is the error of legalism...life in the law... the other the error of antinomianism...life with no law... either side is death.

Refraining from doing things...or doing anything and everything is not spirituality...

Walking in the Spirit is spirituality. Galatians 5:16

16 But I say, walk by the Spirit, and you will not gratify the desires of the flesh 17 For the desires of the flesh are against the Spirit, and the desires of the Spirit are against the flesh, for these are opposed to each other, to keep you from doing the things you want to do.

(Libertarian) **18 But if you are led by the Spirit, you are not under the law** (Legalist).

So... how do we handle the grey areas?

Verse 1 **Now concerning things sacrificed to idols...** what about these things?... it's about eating those things...Verse 4 **concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols...** the situation is... these Corinthian Christians have learned that since Christ... they have liberty... they were not Jews so they didn't understand the idea of being under the law...

The Old Testament Law had restrictions on what you could eat... read Leviticus... and After Christ... the Christian is at liberty to eat what they want... want a ham sandwich go for it... want a lobster go for it... all had been prohibited in under the Old Covenant... now there's freedom to eat whatever they want to eat...

Which is not new to the Corinthian Christians... they've ALWAYS eaten what they want...now there are some questions as to SHOULD they eat whatever they want?... are there some things you should not participate in.. should not eat or drink...are there some things from that culture that shouldn't be indulged in?...even if technically... even the Bible does not prohibit?

Like eating food that has been sacrificed to little “g” gods?... should a Christian eat food that was sacrificed to idols?...or dining in a temple serving sacrificed meat?... Apparently two groups formed within the church...legalist and the libertarian... one...the libertarians... we could call these “*the knowledgeable*...they **KNOW** they have liberty in Christ...

They say they can eat anything they desire...the other group... the more immature believers... the legalists... say that eating such food would be defiling to the body,... So they give Paul a question to answer.

Is it ok to eat meat sacrificed to idols?

A little more background here is useful... Of course there was no refrigeration in Paul’s day, 1st century... so butchered meats had to be eaten right away... meat was expensive in that day even more so as now... the average person couldn’t afford meat from the marketplace.

There was one place they could get affordable meat.... That was in the temples dedicated to pagan deities... the temple of Aphrodite...the temple of Apollo...continuous animal sacrifices took place where the finest animals were sacrificed to the pagan gods....

Part of the animal was sacrificed to a god... some of the choice cuts of meat were given to the priests and those associated with the temple for a sumptuous dinner...temple meals... Whatever was left would be given to the local butcher to sell at discount prices.... He had to move it out every day to make way for more temple meat.

Some of the meat was prepared right there at the temple for diners who could afford to “eat out”

Eating out at a temple actually was a big event... it would be like going to the finest restaurants today... It was a very high honor to be invited out to one of these dinners... if you denied an invitation to dine in the temple... you would possibly become a social outcast.... To say “no” to a dinner invitation would be a great insult against the pagan gods.

So for this little Christian church existing in the middle of all this... for the poor Christians... the only fresh meat they could afford was meat “offered to idols”.... And for the more wealthy Christians... they would have had a very difficult time refusing a dinner invitation at the Temple of Aphrodite....

Not to mention that all weddings and social events always served meat sacrificed to idols... you would have to become a social outcast to abstain from sacrificed meats...interesting... an actual invitation to such an event was uncovered a few years ago in Corinth... “*Apollonius requests you to dine at the table of our lord Sercipus on the occasion of his brothers coming of age in the temple of Thoeris*” ...you better attend!

That would have been a great honor to receive that invite.

So...there was a division developing over all this in the church... “Paul! Is it ok to eat meat sacrificed to idols?” ...*Is it ok for a Christian to participate in pagan feasts?*...the **knowledgeable** ones...the Christian libertarians laid out an argument for eating meat....and it is to these that Paul offers his answer.

NOW REMEMBER!... I’ve asked you ultimately answer the question *should they eat meat sacrificed to idols?*.... how would you answer their question?... here’s Paul’s:

There were three points to their argument... verses 1-6...*is it ok to eat meat offered to idols... yes because:*

1. We have all knowledge.

2. We know an idol is nothing....an idol is a piece of wood, of clay... there’s nothing to it.

3. God doesn’t care what we eat...Food is neither good or bad.

So Paul one by one comments on their three points beginning in verse 1

1. We have all knowledge

Verse 1... **Now... concerning things sacrificed to idols... WE KNOW THAT WE ALL HAVE KNOWLEDGE**... Sounds a bit egotistical... *well... WE’VE got knowledge... those who are having trouble with this... don’t have the knowledge that we have!*

They KNOW that they are living under the New Covenant and they can eat anything they want... they KNOW that food sacrificed to idols was still just food... nothing changed the food... they KNEW this.

They knew that eating meat sacrificed to idols would not in some way would contaminate them... so they say...**WE CAN EAT THIS MEAT BECAUSE WE KNOW WE CAN**...

Paul throws a shank in their argument... immediately he adds **Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up**...knowledge...knowledge alone makes one arrogant... conceited... I like the translation “puffed up”... inflated... blown up... full of hot air!

When I was digesting this verse this week... I immediately thought of “Bobble Heads”... those little figurines with tiny bodies and gigantic heads that bobble around...that’s what I think of “puffed up”.... By the way... I checked it out... there are dozens of Bobble Head companies that will make a Bobble Head from your picture for about 50 bucks!.

Boy have I had my share of running into puffed up bobble head Christians...there is actually a fairly large movement within evangelical Christianity to bring in High “intellectualism”...the thought is for so long Christianity has been moved by emotionalism...driven by feelings rather than intelligence...

There is much truth to that...we really do need to use our brains...[We can! The Bible holds up!] but to take this book and ONLY intellectualize it... ONLY become proficient and ONLY concerned with your Systematic Theology... and ONLY take pride in your understanding of complex doctrines... **To revel in your complete understanding of the incomprehensible mysteries of God... YOU FATHOM HIS UNFATHONABLE WAYS!**

Proud of your infallible understanding of Lapsarian theology...proud of your obsession with the doctrines of election and predestination...your right eschatology and soteriology.... Able to speak Greek Hebrew Aramaic and Latin... you soak all that in...and if that is all you do with it... you could get pretty puffed up....you become just a big....Bobble head!

You've gotten so "intellectualized" that you are completely worthless to the advancement of Christ's Kingdom...maybe even detrimental to it!... you've gotten so "puffed up" that the simple gospel and the desire to share it to the lost world "for God so loved the world that He gave His only begotten Son.. that whosoever believes in Him shall not perish but have ever lasting life..."

"Well... world doesn't mean "world"... and "whosoever" isn't really "whosoever"... I would like to argue about that for the next 50 years."

Paul says Knowledge puffs up....you're the center of the world!... BUT LOVE BUILDS UP... this is so important... Paul is NOT saying that knowledge is not important...

Colossians 1:9

9 For this reason we also, since the day we heard about it, have not ceased praying for you and asking that you may be filled with the knowledge of His will in all spiritual wisdom and understanding,

Knowledge is vital... but without love... it is basically worthless.... In fact... it can be harmful to others... and yourself!... In Paul's world... **knowledge is always subservient to Love**... we'll get to this one of these Sundays....1st Corinthians 13...

1 Corinthians 13:1-4

13 If I speak with the tongues of mankind and of angels, but do not have love, I have become a noisy gong or a clanging cymbal. 2 If I have the gift of prophecy and know all mysteries and all knowledge, I've become a bobble head...and if I have all faith so as to remove mountains, but do not have love, I am nothing.

Love trumps knowledge...Knowledge puffs up... love builds up... edifies... it's an architecture term for building up a building... **Knowledge involves the self.... Love is focused outside of the self...on others...** Love changes the value of things...love enters and you aren't as

important as you were before...you begin to look at something besides YOURSELF... you begin to look out for others.

Read verse 2

No matter how much knowledge you have... Paul is saying you don't have enough to know everything... one mark of spiritual maturity is that as you get more and more knowledge... you become more and more humble because you realize just how much you don't know.

I don't know where I got this but I love it: *"Knowledge is the process of passing from the unconscious state of ignorance to the conscious state of ignorance"*

Stuart Firestein, Chairman of the Department of Biology at Columbia University, professor of neuroscience.—*"most people believe ignorance precedes knowledge, but, in science, ignorance follows knowledge."*

Later he says:

"There is an overemphasis on facts and data, even though they can be the most unreliable part of research. "I think science and medicine has set it up for the public to expect us to expound facts, to know things. And we do know things, but we don't know them perfectly and we don't know them forever,"

I think that is what Paul is telling these knowledgeable Corinthians... *You don't know it all!...nobody does..*

Read verse 3

Our knowledge is limited... always transient... but if anyone LOVES GOD...he is LOVED BY GOD... this love transcends EVERYTHING else... including our puny knowledge.... So... can *I eat meat offered to idols because I KNOW there's nothing wrong with doing so?....* well...have you brought others into your consideration?... that's what love does.....it's not just YOU.

2. We know an idol is nothing...an idol is a piece of wood, of clay... there's nothing to it.

Verse 4 Therefore concerning the eating of things sacrificed to idols. We KNOW that there is no such thing as an idol in the world... again... *We have knowledge!!! We know that there is no such things as an idol in the world...* so what does it matter if we eat meat sacrificed to it or not? Paul agrees with this... Idols really are nothing!... it's a good point!... and to bolster the point... Verse 4 **and there is no God but one!**... this is a quote from Deuteronomy 6:4...the Shema... Deuteronomy 6:4 **"Hear, Israel! The Lord is our God, the Lord is one!**

Paul agrees whole heartedly with this... but some of the Corinthians used this fact to support eating sacrificed meat... *there's only one true God... there are no other gods... so eating meat sacrificed to non-existent gods shouldn't be a problem... good point!*

Read verses 5-6

We have such a high view of the one true God... that anything having to do with these false gods doesn't really matter to us.

3. God doesn't care what we eat... Food is neither good or bad.

Read verse 8

So eating or not eating food has absolutely no spiritual significance in itself... there's not a food that will bring us closer to God... and there are no foods that will separate us and take us further from God... food is a no issue, issue.

Everyone seemed to have heard what Jesus said recorded in Mark 7:18-19... **And He *said to them, "Are you so lacking in understanding as well? Do you not understand that whatever goes into the person from outside cannot defile him, 19 because it does not go into his heart, but into his stomach, and is eliminated?"** (Thereby He declared all foods clean.)

So there... great arguments for the most part... we can eat sacrificed meat because we have knowledge... We have all knowledge... We know an idol is nothing....an idol is a piece of wood, of clay... there's nothing to it. ...God doesn't care what we eat.

So... I can eat a dinner at a pagan temple that worships false idols... it means NOTHING to me or God... it's just meat....

So... if we stop here... don't you think we could conclude "eat the fillet mignon!"... but of course... there's a vital consideration we have not considered... back up to verse 7... **However...** that's like saying **Yes, BUT**

Read verse 7

Sure... it is no problem for you to sit at a table and eat meat sacrificed to idols... for all the reasons you just pointed out.... But it isn't all about you!... there's a hint...it's not all about YOU...it's not all about ME... well... that suggest that I just might not be as important as I thought!

What do you mean Paul?.....well... in your freedom... in your liberty... have you stopped to consider someone who is not as "knowledgeable" as you?...not as familiar with what the Scriptures say?.... doesn't know all the attributes of God... they haven't been a Christian as long as you... they're babes in Christ.... They're still learning...they've got a ways to go...

They see you eat this meat.... And Paul says **their conscience, being weak, is defiled.** In other words... he sees a mature brother in Christ eating meat sacrificed to idols and now he is tempted to go against his own conscience.

Read verses 9 - 10

What about one's conscience?... in scripture...especially the New Testament. The conscience plays out three different ways... three different functions.

1. It acts like a “stop sign”... *I'm getting involved with some things... my conscience tells me this behavior is wrong... I need to STOP...doing what I'm doing.*

2. It acts like a GPS on my telephone... I love Google Maps... I just plug in where I am and where I want to go and this robotic lady tells me how to get there...as I'm driving along it tells me to turn... sometimes I don't... what does it say on my phone?... recalculating....

If I go the wrong direction... “recalculating”...if I stop for gas... “recalculating”... just for kicks I pulled in a parking lot and just drove in circles... recalculating, recalculating, recalculating.....

what I need to do is listen to my phone...and do what the lady on my phone says... that's my conscience....it's like a compass or a GPS.

The way that Paul uses the conscience here in this text is more like

3. a mirror I look at myself in a mirror and what I see... do I feel good about what I see?... does it make me feel deflated... does it reveal weakness?... so here in verse 7... the weaker brother... the one who does not know as much...looks into the “mirror”... his conscience... is weak... we could say his confidence in himself is shaken...defiled...

One commentator said *Conscience is God's doorkeeper to keep us out of places where we could be harmed... As we mature, conscience allows us to go more places... do more things... because we have more spiritual strength and better spiritual judgement.*

God confines His spiritual children by conscience... as they grow in knowledge and maturity... the limits of conscience are expanded.

I doubt that any of you have struggled with the issue of eating meat sacrificed to idols... but there are many, many things that we could put in place of sacrificed meat...let's just look at one... One of the big ones today... in the church would be alcohol.

I've never seen the subject of alcohol and the Christian come up more than in these recent years...it used to be...*Is it ok for the Christian to drink alcohol?...*well... it has progressed to *Should we have margaritas in our home group this week?.....* [by the way, one marker for measuring your spiritual maturity is how much time you spend trying to find out all the things you can do as a Christian.... Especially the “edgy” things.]

There's a great quote in the original Jurassic Park movie... never saw the movie just know the quote... I do know it is about some scientist who figured out how to clone dinosaurs...and the monsters they created got away from them.

There's this scene where Jeff Goldblum runs in and makes this profound statement after seeing the destruction from these cloned dinosaurs... he looks at the scientist and **says "you were so preoccupied with whether or not you could... you didn't stop to ask... if you should."**

The Bible does not give us a prohibition in drinking alcohol... it does prohibit us from getting drunk on alcohol... believe me... I've heard all the arguments... if I didn't hear them I read them....

"wine in the New Testament is not the same wine as of today" ... there was not as much alcohol in N.T. wine... it was more like grape juice"When they drank a glass of wine they would dilute it 2 to 1 with water.... On and on.

That being the case... when it says **"do not get drunk with wine"** in Ephesian 5:18... would mean you would have to drink a swimming pool full of 2 to 1 water wine to get drunk....

When Jesus turned water into wine at the wedding of Cana... **'after the people drunk freely'** ran out of the good wine... usually that was followed by the cheap stuff because they didn't know any better by that time... apparently they had run out of both the first good wine and the second cheap wine..... so Jesus follows that by miraculously instantly making "good wine"

No liquidation there!.... all to say... there is no prohibition on alcohol in the Bible... it really is a comparable subject to sacrificial meat... we could make a list in defense of a Christians right to drink alcohol... so does that mean we should all drink alcohol?

This is where your conscience steps in isn't it?.... and the conscience is different for everyone... look at verse 9 again...

Read verses 9-10

Churches right here in Moscow have different attitudes towards alcohol... from one end of the spectrum... drink alcohol and you lose your salvation... (unbiblical!) all the way to glorifying it... flaunting the liberty we have in Christ by showcasing their imbibing....

An individual in this church... I received permission to share this... name not important... has been a recovering alcoholic for the last 26 years... his story is a from the grave to Jesus story... alcohol destroyed much of his life... he will tell you one drink... just one drink would send him into a tailspin back into a life of addiction most likely resulting in death.

Just a few years ago... he began attending a men's midweek Bible study downtown hosted by another church ... this particular church is one that revels in their liberty to drink... wine and beer are among God's blessings given to man for his enjoyment...

Psalm 104:15 and give wine to gladden the heart of man, and oil to make his face shine and bread to strengthen man's heart.

At the conclusion of the Bible study they brought out a keg of a fine micro-brew beer.... Everyone was EXPECTED *fill till they cup be hid!*.... he tells of being pressured to partake of the brew... *come on! It's a gift from God!*

Do you know what he did?... he partook of the first word of 1st Corinthians 6:18...and by the grace of God and the power of the Holy Spirit he **fled!...he ran!**

Read verse 11-12

That's a very strong warning!...it's not about eating meat sacrificed to idols... it's not about drinking alcohol... it's about making my brother stumble!... causing a brother to stumble is more than an offense against him... it is an offense against our Lord and Savior Jesus Christ.

Do you see where knowledge and love intersect?... everything we do should be motivated by love for others... not our RIGHTS...our LIBERTIES... Now... **I don't think Paul is telling us to never do anything that offends others.**

Good grief... I walk into a room I offend some people!... over in Romans 14 and 15.... Paul warns being judgmental of others...if you think you shouldn't eat something or drink something don't!.... if others do.... Stay out of it...let them!

For the kingdom of God is not eating or drinking, but righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit.

But when it comes to making a brother stumble...it's not so much about being offensive than making someone stumble.. or worse... **he who is weak is ruined**... that's when we set ourselves aside and love wins out... and that brother becomes way more important than you...way more important than your meat or your beer.

One of my favorite theologians of the past... Henry Ironside...who by the way shocked the Christian world when they found out he smoked thick black cigars... most certainly prohibited in scripture somewhere!... tells this story... paraphrase:

One of his congregants had just come out of the Muslim faith... there was this church picnic... everyone was having a grand ole time... there was this woman handing our sandwiches... she came up to this new Christian who had just come out of the Muslim faith... he asked her *what kind of sandwiches do you have?*

We have ham sandwiches... do you have any beef?... no just ham... Well, thanks, but I'll pass.... She knew him so she felt she could ask... You're now a Christian... you're free to eat ANY kind of meat now... you can eat ham....

Ironside quoted the man's response... *I am free to eat, and I am free NOT to eat... because every year I travel back to the Middle East to see my family... when I get to the door of my house... my father will ask me one question... "Have those infidels taught you to eat hogs meat yet?..."*

If I tell him yes... then I will not be given admittance to my home... and I will be banished from my family... But if I say "no father, I have not eaten it" ... I will be welcomed into the home and I will be able to share the grace of Jesus Christ upon my life to my family.

In evaluating ourselves... looking into the mirror of our conscience... what do we see?... someone all consumed with "my rights"... "my freedom"... My, my, my?... or do I see someone who truly embraces Philippians 2:3... **consider one another as more important than yourself?**

Ask yourself this... Am I pulling people toward Jesus... or am I pushing them away?

Paul concludes:

Read verse 13

Ok... what do you tell them?... the Corinthian church.... *Should they eat the meat?*

How your answer that reveals something about how important you are... to you...