

All for the Glory of God Outline

1st Corinthians 10:14-33

- I. The source of our satisfaction.
 - A. A life of glorifying God.
 - 1. We were created for the glory of God—Isaiah 43:6-7
 - B. What does it mean to glorify God?
 - 1. Living lives that honor Him, elevating Him and praising Him.
 - 2. True satisfaction is found ONLY in glorifying God.
 - 3. We “praise” things that we value.
 - a. Our satisfaction is complete in our expressed joy in God.

“I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment...it is its appointed consummation”

-- C.S. Lewis

- II. The Christian standard for all of life.
 - A. **Whether, then, you eat, you drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God** 1st Corinthians 10:31
- III. **“Therefore my beloved, FLEE IDOLS!”** (10:14)
 - A. Idols are nothing.
 - 1. An idol is *anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give...* T. Keller
 - a. An idol is nothing except for the power you ascribe to it.
 - B. Eating or not eating meat that has been offered to idols does not condemn one to God
 - 1. Two kinds of people:
 - a. The strong—Mature Christians with biblically formed consciences.
 - b. The weak—Immature Christians with undeveloped consciences.
 - C. The strong should forgo their rights to the weaker should they make them stumble.
 - 1. Motivation—*“So that I might win more for Christ”*.

IV. **Principle:** You can't be in deep fellowship with Christ while participating in the demonic.

A. The Lord's Table—"Communion" (10:16-22)

1. More than a "memorial"—a "sharing" or "fellowship" with the body and blood of Jesus Christ—a participation.

V. **Principle:** Although idols are nothing—there is only one God—there is a demonic reality underlying the idolatry.

A. Any activity that does not honor God... honors the king of this world Satan.

IDOLS—NOT REAL.....DEMONS—REAL.....DEMONS USE IDOLS!

VI. Five Basic Principles in Using Our Christian Liberty for God's Glory:

A. Edification over Gratification (10:23).

1. Christian liberty is to be defended and protected at all costs from Pharisees and legalists.
2. Christian liberty should be put next to the standard—NOT TO CAUSE THE WEAK TO STUMBLE OR FALL

B. Others over Self (10:24).

1. Philippians 2:3-4

C. Liberty over Legalism (10:25-26).

1. Example 1—Buying meat in a butcher shop (*the possibility of being meat offered to idols*).
2. *If it only concerns YOUR conscience... if your conscience says "buy the meat...buy the meat!"...*

D. Fellowship over Legalism (10:27).

1. Example 2—A dinner invitation by your non-Christian friend serving steak for dinner.
2. *Don't ask where it came from!... your conscience is ok of ignorant.*

E. Love over Liberty (10:28-29).

1. Example 3—You are informed that the meat being served has been offered to idols.
2. *Don't eat!—for the sake of other's consciences.*

***Whether, then, you eat, you drink or whatever you do, do all for the
glory of God*** *1st Corinthians 10:31*

All for the Glory of God Pastoral Notes

1st Corinthians 10:14-33

We spend so much of our lives seeking to be satisfied in and with our lives... we look everywhere... try all sorts of things... and then we go to church and we hear exhortations from books of the Bible such as 1st Corinthians that tell us that we are to become slaves to Christ... slaves... slavery.... Doesn't sound very "satisfying".

And not only to Christ.... if we follow Paul's example... which he tells us to do...we would place ourselves in voluntary slavery to others...putting their interests above our own...being honest...that doesn't sound very satisfying either...

Paul has been telling us that we are free in Christ... that all things are "lawful" for us...which is good news for us seeking to be satisfied... but then he says **but not all things are beneficial... or profitable...** so our freedom is always in check....implied boundaries.

We might conclude that the Christian life is a life ONLY of complete self-denial... self-depreciation... self-sacrifice and personal dissatisfaction for the satisfaction of others....why would we want and seek such a life?...how can that be satisfying?

Let me propose to you that true satisfaction only comes from a life of glorifying God... we can find temporary satisfaction in much of God's creation.... But we only find lasting true satisfaction when we glorify God....why is that?... because that is why we were made in the first place!

We can read in places like Isaiah 43:6-7 where God says **Bring My sons from afar and my daughters from the end of the earth, EVERYONE who is called by My name, WHOM I HAVE CREATED FOR MY GLORY.**

The proper understanding of EVERYTHING in life begins with God... not us... you will never understand true satisfaction until you understand why God created us... one put it well... *[God] created us in His image so that we would image forth His glory in the world..*

What does it mean to "glorify God"?... it does not mean to make Him MORE glorious... we can't do that... it means to acknowledge His glory... to value His glory above all things...to make it known to others... it is to have a heart felt gratitude for who He is and what He has done for us...

We glorify God by PLEASING Him with our lives... lives that honor Him, glorifying elevating Him... and *praising Him*...this is where we find true satisfaction...

When you have something that is very valuable to you... it is normal for you to praise it... If you have your dream car... if you and that car were the only two things on the planet... you might

get some satisfaction driving it... but you get more satisfaction by sharing with others how great a car it is... in fact... it the praising of the car that is a great part of your satisfaction!

C.S. Lewis made the observation that not only do we tend to praise whatever we value... we urge others to join in our praising.... *Isn't she beautiful?... Isn't she lovely?... Don't you think it's magnificent?...*

He says... *I think we delight to praise what we enjoy because the praise not merely expresses but completes the enjoyment...it is its appointed consummation...* We praise what we enjoy because the delight is incomplete until it is expressed in praise...and when we praise the highest of highs... God Himself... That friends is true satisfaction!

Christianity is not a religion centered on prohibitions... **Thou shall** and **thou shall not**... Christianity is a religion centered upon God's gracious plan to rescue sinners from the guilt and consequences of sin.... Thieves of true satisfaction.

God created us for His glory... saved us for His glory... so that we might center our lives on His glory and be truly satisfied.

So in that context... we can read 1st Corinthians and understand what Paul is showing to us is a life that may go counter to what the world says is a wonderful life... but it is a life that is pleasing to our God... a life that is pleasing to Him is a life that is glorifying Him... praising Him... and a life that is all about that.... Will be completely satisfied life!

John Piper wrote *The good news of the Bible is that God is not at all disinclined to satisfy the hearts of those who hope in Him...just the opposite... the very thing that can make us happiest is what God delights in with all His heart and all His soul:*

I will make with them an everlasting covenant, that I will not turn away from doing good to them...I will rejoice in doing **them good...with all My heart and all My soul.** Jer. 32:40-41

What is the intention of God in Scripture?... What does God have to say about "the chief end of man"... How does God teach us to give Him glory?... Does He command us to enjoy Him?...if so... how does this quest for joy in God relate to EVERYTHING else?...EVERYTHING?!

The answer to that... which is what we will find this morning...***the Christian standard for life***... all of life...the Christian secret to living a fully satisfying life...is found at the conclusion of our passage this morning...

One of the most important verses in all of scripture...Let's begin by going to the end of our passage and set this morning's message on this premise:

Read 10:31

Whether, then, you eat, you drink or whatever you do, do all for the glory of God.... circle that word **whatever**... it is the key word.... This verse brings everything we've been looking at

for three chapters into our lives... chapters 8,9 and 10 have all been about Christian liberty... the liberty we have in Christ...and how we are to navigate our lives through this freedom.

These three chapters have been a blend of culture and theology...the culture being 2000 yrs removed from us... the Corinthian culture... we don't spend much time dealing with idols... or worry much about eating meat offered to idols...but the underlying theological truths and concerns are NOT far removed from us....

As we complete this section this morning... I hope to reveal to us some very practical principles and applications for us in our present situation and life...

Chapter ten is closely related to chapter eight... in fact... some critics have said that chapter nine shouldn't be where it is in the letter.... That it doesn't "fit" with the other two chapters... it does... all three have been dealing with our Christian liberty.... And the limitations of our liberty... and all of this is in the context of glorifying God.

We begin at verse fourteen which says: **Read 10:14**

This points back to chapter eight and connects it with chapter ten.... We've learned:

1. Idols are nothing—they are simply man-made objects, they have no power in themselves... why?... there is only ONE true God (8:4)

Idols today?...How does this subject concern us?...because we are as Calvin said "idol factories"...we can make an idol out of anything... an idol can be anything... the atheist Nietzsche said *There are more idols in the world than there are realities...*

Timothy Keller...who passed away this week... famously said in his book *Counterfeit Gods* that an idol is *anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give...*

A counterfeit god (idol) is anything so central and essential to your life that should you lose it, your life would feel hardly worth living... so to us... an idol can be another person...a spouse...a child... a hobby... some passion... you house, boat, a place... a dog or cat.... Anything!

I think it was Calvin who said that *our hearts are idol factories*...we create them... we empower them.

But you see...just like the hand made idols in Corinth... our invented idols also are really nothing... they themselves have no power... only the power we ascribe to them....idols themselves are nothing.

2. Eating or not eating meat that has been offered to idols does not condemn or commend one to God....a little refresher on meat offered to idols:

Every day there were animal sacrifices in the temples of the little “g” gods in Corinth... that meant a lot of meat... Some of it was burned as a sacrifice... a large portion was given to the priests and their friends to eat... the rest would have been sold in the marketplace at a discount.

The question that Paul was addressing was “is it ok for a Christian to eat meat that had been offered to idols? So the conclusion was... ***Eating or not eating meat that has been offered to idols does not condemn or commend one to God.***...Meat is just meat.

A vital part of chapter eight... there are two kinds of people... [one said *there are two kinds of people, those who say there are two kinds of people and those who don't*... well there are two kinds of people here in these three chapters...

1. The strong—These are the Christians who are mature... they have “mature consciences”... remember that one’s conscience is formed through life experiences and what you feed your mind on... The Greek word translated “conscience” in all New Testament references is *suneidēsis*, meaning “moral awareness” or “moral consciousness.”

The conscience reacts when one’s actions, thoughts, and words conform to, or are contrary to, a standard of right and wrong... those standards of right and wrong would come from God’s word... Here a “mature conscience” would be a conscience that has been fed on God’s word... and has lived the Christian life for a period of time.... they are strong.

2. The weak—The immature Christians... those with undeveloped consciences... who have not been exposed to God’s word for any length of time... who have not been fed for very long... they may know that idols are wrong... but they haven’t yet put it together that idols are just man-made objects... and meat that has been sacrificed to them is still just meat...

So the principle we learned in chapter eight is:

3. The strong--- those who KNOW there is nothing wrong with eating meat offered to idols should be willing to forgo their “right” to eat such meat so as not to make the weaker brother stumble in his spiritual walk....

Why would we do this?... remember Paul’s motivation in all his life?... remember Paul’s mission?... ***so that I might win more for Jesus Christ!***...why?... ***because that glorifies God!***

Now... I hope that as we’ve been going through all this for the last several weeks you’ve been able to put it together that for us... the problem is not meat offered to idols... meat is not the issue... the issue is edifying the weaker brother by not participating in something—anything—that would side rail them..... all things are lawful but not all things are beneficial...

It could be drink... it could be a food... it could be clothing... organizations you participate in... entertainment... movies you watch..... ***those who know there’s nothing wrong with _____ should be willing to forgo their “right” to participate in _____ so as not to make the weaker brother or sister stumble.***

So Paul continues on with his argument... he appeals to their intellect... the Corinthians prided themselves in being smart:

Read verse 15

If you are as smart as you think you are then you will see that what I'm telling you is also smart and wise.

Part of wisdom for the Christian is to know what is foolish to participate in... even if in some sense it is permissible... for the Christian Corinthian... they saw no harm in dabbling in idolatry... after all it was their culture!... so Paul says.... *Don't try to resist idolatry... don't try to fight idolatry.... RUN FROM IT!....* and then gives them a profound reason for doing so.

Principle” **YOU CAN'T BE IN DEEP FELLOWSHIP WITH JESUS CHRIST WHILE AT THE SAME TIME PARTICIPATE IN THE DEMONIC.** He uses the Lord's Table to make his point.

This is some of the first if not the first teaching regarding the Lord's Table in all of scripture... remember that 1st Corinthians was written before the gospels... the Lord's Supper or “Communion” along with Baptism was immediately practiced in the first churches according to the book of Acts...

Read verses 16-17

Paul reveals to us something about Communion you may never have realized... we know that Communion is a “memorial”.... “A remembrance”... in the next chapter, chapter eleven Paul goes further with communion... he quotes Jesus saying ...two times in verses 24 and 25... **Do this in remembrance of Me.**

So we know that communion is a memorial... every time we partake of the bread and the cup... we are to remember what Christ did for us on that cross... He sacrificed His body and shed His blood on our behalf... but here in chapter ten we see that it is MORE than just a remembrance!

Is not the cup of blessing?... this is how we know Paul is talking about the Lord's Supper... the Last Supper was the last true Passover meal... the “cup of blessing” was the third of four cups of the Passover meal... that third cup... the cup of blessing would have been picked up by the overseer of the Passover meal and a prayer of thanksgiving would be said over the cup.

Thanksgiving... a humble thanks to God for what He has done for us in the forgiveness of our sins... **but here its more than just remembering what Christ has done for us...** we actually somehow “*participate*” in the blood of Jesus Christ.

Is not the cup of blessing which we bless A SHARING IN THE BLOOD OF CHRIST?...

“Sharing” is the Greek word “*koinonia*”... the idea of one who participates in the Lord's Table are bound together with Jesus Christ is fellowship.... *Koinonia*... sharing.... Some of your

translations say “Communion”.... [That’s where we get the term “Communion”]......bottom line... this is more than a memorial!

We are using more than our minds remembering something when we participate in Communion!... the Roman Catholics have always seen it as more than a “remembrance”.... They believe the bread and the cup actually become the body and blood of Jesus.... [The Lutherans don’t go that far].

We believe it is a spiritual not physical sharing... a spiritual fellowship with Christ... a spiritual union... in consuming the cup... believers are spiritually bound together in fellowship with Christ... Calvin put it this way several hundreds of years ago:

The soul has as truly communion in the blood... as we drink the wine with our mouth...

Now back to the context... the Corinthian church... in their liberty had been apparently doing more than buying meat offered to idols from the local butcher... they had been actually going to the pagan temples and dining there...remember... the finest restaurants in town...in Corinth... were at the temples?....

So Paul is addressing the problem in the context of the greatest of meals... the Lord’s Table... and his point is... how can you share this meal at the Lord’s Table then go share a meal in a pagan temple?....

How can you have one foot in Christ’s kingdom and one foot in the devils?... how can you participate... share... in the sacrificed body of Christ on the cross...the body He sacrificed... the blood He shed for you then go share...fellowship...partaking the meat offered to pagan idols?

You are smart people.... right?

See... Paul has brought us further into the situation... in chapter eight he basically said there’s nothing wrong with eating meat offered to idols...meat is just meat... and idols are worthless..... anticipating pushback from the Corinthian church... he reads their minds...he anticipates their thinking:

Read verse 19

That’s a rhetorical question... *You are smart people...prudent... surely the answer is “NO”... an idol is nothing!....and meat is meat.... BUT...* Paul now ups the ante....

It is one thing to eat meat offered to idols in you home or a restaurant... it’s another thing to go to the temple and participate in a pagan ceremony...fellowshipping...communing... and eat sacrificed meat.....

Read verses 20-21

In other words... It's not the THINGS that the pagans are offering that is wrong... The meat... nor what/who they are sacrificing to.... The idols that are NOT anything... IT'S WHAT'S UNDERNEATH IT ALL!...

Principle: ALTHOUGH IDOLS ARE NOTHING... THERE IS ONLY ONE GOD... THERE IS A DEMONIC REALITY UNDERLYING IDOLATRY...

Satan is in it!... in fact... to help us... **any activity that does not honor God... honors the king of this world Satan**... [there are two kinds of activities... God honoring and God dishonoring].... This really steps into our world doesn't it?... especially when we define idolatry as anything as Keller defined it....

Anything more important to you than God, anything that absorbs your heart and imagination more than God, anything you seek to give you what only God can give... You fill in the blank....of course that is dishonoring God... of course Satan is underneath that!

Let's put it this way in the Corinthian context.... **Even though idols are nothing, people who associate with them are not engaging in some neutral activity. THERE IS AN OCCULT DIMENSION so real that people who sacrifice to idols (who are nothing!!) are actually in reality sacrificing to demons themselves.**

An obvious...

[**Hollywood movies about demons**—of course those are “nothing”!!!—BUT... it's not what's on the screen... its what's underneath the screen (so to speak)].....

IDOLS—NOT REAL.....DEMONS—REAL.....DEMONS USE IDOLS!....take away?... (14) **FLEE FROM IDOLATRY!**.... **you can't have a foot in a pagan temple and a foot at the Lord's table!**

Read verses 21-22

Don't anger the Lord by participating in things that dishonor Him...you can't handle those things anyway!... the rest of the chapter Paul gives us some practical instruction...practical application for our lives in all of this... we need this!..... let's call this

Five Basic Principles in Using Our Christian Liberty for God's Glory

This brings everything we've seen in chapters 8, 9 and 10 together for some life principles...

1. Edification over Gratification

Read verse 23

We went over this in chapter 8... Paul brings it up again to emphasize its importance...another way to say this is... **while all things are lawful, permissible, not all things BUILD UP THE CHURCH.**

“Build-up” means the same thing as to “edify”... edify is actually a term referring the building a house from the foundation up... building up a house... beginning with a firm foundation... using good building materials... following a blue print... doing things in order... with quality craftsmanship will yield a solid house that can withstand the elements... keep you safe from the outdoors and helps you to enjoy life!

Paul is simply saying do things that will build-up not tear down... do things that will build up the church... all believers in Christ.... Not tear down.

There is a tension in the Christian life regarding Christian liberty/freedom:

1. Christian liberty is to be defended and protected at all costs from Pharisees and legalists... we are free in Christ.... Don't let anyone put you under the yoke of legal slavery... Paul emphasizes that in his letter to another church in Galatians 5:

(1)It was for freedom that Christ has set us free. Therefore stand firm! And do not subject yourself to a yoke of slavery—legalism.

2. Christian liberty should be put next to the standard—NOT TO CAUSE THE WEAK TO STUMBLE OR FALL See the tension we are to live in?... we are to protect our freedom in Christ... yet... edifying...building up the church/other Christians trumps our freedoms....edification of gratification.... Which goes with the next principle:

2. Others over Self

Read verse 24

(Gal. 5:13) For you were called to freedom, brothers, do not turn your freedom into an opportunity for the flesh, but through love serve one another.

Getting satisfaction in life is not at the cost of others... Philippians 2:3-4 **Consider one another as more important than yourself...**[my most quoted scripture verse!]

Paul then gives an example of this... while giving us another principle:

3. Liberty over Legalism

Here's the example... actually three examples...both in the context of eating meat offered to idols...getting tired of that yet?

Example 1

Read verse 25

You know that the pagan temple sells off their extra meat that has been offered to idols to local butcher shops... so there is a *chance*... that when you go to buy meat at the butcher shop... IT COULD BE some of that meat... what do you do Christian?

Remember... the meat is NOT the issue...so you walk into the butcher shop and NOT DO WHAT?... ask the butcher whether or not the meat was offered to idols...stay in your ignorance about the origin of the meat....

You can ask if it was corn fed... or free range... but don't ask if the meat was used as a sacrifice to pagan gods....take it home AND EAT IT!... being in ignorance... your conscience hasn't been stirred up... because your conscience knows what?... THAT MEAT IS MEAT!

LIBERY= you can eat the meat..... **LEGALISM**=Search for any reason you can find to prohibit you from eating meat you are allowed to eat.

I know this is a bit strange... but it really is very practical!... you go into a grocery store and you look at the steaks.... You pick up a beautiful juicy looking steak... that's all you know about that steak... you don't know ANYTHING about where it came from... what the rancher's religion is... what the rancher does with the money he makes from the selling of his steaks...

you buy it because YOUR CONSCIENCE HAS NOT PRICKED YOU FROM DOING SO.... BUT... if you went to the butcher and asked him if he knew anything about the rancher.... And he said *as a matter of fact I do, he's an atheist and all the proceeds from his beef go to fighting Christianity.....* what does your conscience say now?!

Reread verse 25

If it only concerns YOUR conscience... if your conscience says "buy the meat...buy the meat!"... [by the way... this assumes that you are a mature Christian whose conscience has been formed by dwelling on God's word... this isn't telling us to tell everyone just do whatever your conscience tells you to do...you may have a heathen conscience! Verse 15... **I speak to you as prudent people**]...**read verse 26**.....liberty over legalism....now... example 2...

4. Fellowship over Legalism

Example 2

You get a call from one of your non-Christian friends inviting you over for dinner...

Read verse 27

Your non-Christian friend plops down a juicy fillet mignon in front of you... you know.... Living in Corinth... that there's a very good chance that meat was left over idol sacrifice meat... what do you do?...

Same thing! DON'T ASK QUESTIONS!... your conscience is free due to ignorance... your unbelieving friend does not have a conscience problem with it.... he eats this every day... EAT THE STEAK!.....BUT!....BUT!...THIS IS VITAL...

Example 3

5. Love over Liberty

Read verses 28-29

Ok... you're sitting ignorantly down at the table of your non-Christian friend... ready to eat... and he all of a sudden... as you are about to take your first bite... *looks so good!...smells so good!*

And now... the verse suggest there are others at the table as well... right before you take that bite... someone says *This meat has been consecrated to idols*.... GAME CHANGER.... DON'T TAKE THAT BITE!.... "Seriously?"... why not?... meat is meat!

Paul says **for the sake of the one who informed you AND for conscience sake...**

An implication is that by the very fact it was mentioned likely means someone is thinking someone may have an issue with it... you usually don't bring up problems no one has issues with... "*this meat came from a cow*"...no need to say that.... Everyone knows that... *this meat has been offered to idols*... there could be an issue with that!

Point—it won't hurt you to eat the meat... but it might derail the weaker brother in the room!...Paul asks another rhetorical question in verse 29... **for why is my freedom judged by another's conscience?**... well... it is!

YOU DON'T EAT THE MEAT FOR YOUR BROTHER'S CONSCIENCE!... by politely abstaining you are eliminating the possibility of that person drawing the wrong conclusions regarding the relationship between your faith in Jesus Christ and what goes on in pagan worship.

All that brings us to where we began... the overarching principle for all of the Christian life...

Read verse 31

To what extent?

Read verses 32-33

“Be imitators of me, just as I also am of Christ.”