



Go for God!

“REGARDING CHRISTIAN LIBERTY!”

1 Corinthians Chapter 8

(v1-3) KNOWLEDGE vs. LOVE

Pastor John MacArthur gives cultural insight regarding **“things offered to idols”**

- The Greeks and Romans were polytheistic (worshipping many gods) and polydemonistic (believing in many evil spirits). They believed that evil spirits would try to invade human beings by attaching themselves to food before it was eaten, and that the spirits could be removed only by the food’s being sacrificed to a god. The sacrifice was meant not only to gain favor with the god, but also to cleanse the meat from demonic contamination. Such decontaminated meat was offered to the gods as a sacrifice. That which was not burned on the altar was served at wicked pagan feasts. What was left was sold in the market. After conversion, believers resented eating such food bought out of idol markets, because it reminded sensitive Gentile believers of their previous pagan lives and the demonic worship.

- **“Knowledge puffs up, but LOVE EDIFIES” – What is knowledge?** Knowledge is the truth or facts of life that a person acquires either through experience or thought. The greatest truth that a person can possess with the mind or learn through experience is truth about God (Ps 46:10; John 8:31-32). This cannot be gained by unaided human reason (Job 11:7; Rom 11:33). It is acquired only as God shows Himself to man-in nature and conscience (Ps 19; Rom 1:19-20); in history or providence (Deut 6:20-25; Dan 2:21); and especially in the Bible (Ps 119; Rev 1:1-3). Mental knowledge by itself, as good as it may be, is inadequate; it is capable only of producing pride (1 Cor 8:1; 13:2). Moral knowledge affects a person's will (Prov 1:7; Phil 3:11-12; 1 John 4:6). It is knowledge of the heart, not the mind alone. (from Nelson's Illustrated Bible Dictionary)

- **In Psalm 119:66 - Teach me knowledge and good judgment, for I believe in your commands.**

- **Proverbs 1:7 - The fear of the LORD is the beginning of knowledge, but fools despise wisdom and discipline.**

- **Hosea 4:6 - My people are destroyed for lack of knowledge.**

- **Knowledge is good if it is used in love. The word knowledge is found 132 times in the Bible, whereas, love is found 551 times.**

- **Knowledge puffs up – puffs up** in Greek is *phusioo*, which means *to inflate, to blow up, to make proud, to be haughty*.

- **Love edifies** – Love is the agape love of God, the love that is found within every Christian believer by the power of the Lord Jesus Christ through the Holy Spirit. The word *edify* in Greek is *oikodomeo* which means *to be a house-builder, i.e. construct or (figuratively) confirm*.

- **Let’s read 1 John 4:7 – 5:5 - Beloved, let us love one another, for love is of God; and everyone who loves is born of God and knows God. He who does not love does not**

know God, for God is love. In this the love of God was manifested toward us, that God has sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. In this is love, not that we loved God, but that He loved us and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins. Beloved, if God so loved us, we also ought to love one another. No one has seen God at any time. If we love one another, God abides in us, and His love has been perfected in us. By this we know that we abide in Him, and He in us, because He has given us of His Spirit. And we have seen and testify that the Father has sent the Son as Savior of the world. Whoever confesses that Jesus is the Son of God, God abides in him, and he in God. And we have known and believed the love that God has for us. God is love, and he who abides in love abides in God, and God in him. Love has been perfected among us in this: that we may have boldness in the day of judgment; because as He is, so are we in this world. There is no fear in love; but perfect love casts out fear, because fear involves torment. But he who fears has not been made perfect in love. We love Him because He first loved us. If someone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for he who does not love his brother whom he has seen, how can he love God whom he has not seen? And this commandment we have from Him: that he who loves God must love his brother also. Whoever believes that Jesus is the Christ is born of God, and everyone who loves Him who begot also loves him who is begotten of Him. By this we know that we love the children of God, when we love God and keep His commandments. For this is the love of God, that we keep His commandments. And His commandments are not burdensome. For whatever is born of God overcomes the world. And this is the victory that has overcome the world — our faith. Who is he who overcomes the world, but he who believes that Jesus is the Son of God?

(v4-6) IDOLS vs. JESUS

(v4-5) Check out what Isaiah says about idols in chapter 44:9-20. Perhaps the best definition of an idol is something we ourselves make into a god. It does not have to be a statue or a tree. It can be anything that stands between us and God or something we substitute for God. Read Psalm 115:1-8. When it comes to the idols and lords of our modern era what do these religions believe? Buddhism – Hinduism – Islam. (Quote by Dave Hunt)

(v6) God is our Father and Creator, Jesus Christ is the Son of God our Savior, listen to Paul's argument in Acts 17:22-34.

(v7-13) LIBERTY vs. LOVE

Jesus said in Matthew 15:17-20 - "*Don't you see that whatever enters the mouth goes into the stomach and then out of the body? But the things that come out of the mouth come from the heart, and these make a man 'unclean.'* For out of the heart come evil thoughts, murder, adultery, sexual immorality, theft, false testimony, slander. These are what make a man 'unclean'; but eating with unwashed hands does not make him 'unclean.'"

“The Best Offense Is a Good Defense”

1 Corinthians Chapter 9

- You've heard of "TED TALK," this is better, it's "**PAUL TALK!**"

(v1-18) Let's talk Stewardship!

(v1) Here we find four rhetorical questions in defense of Paul's ministry to the Corinthians.

(v2-6) **Paul's grand slam defense:**

#1 – (v2) In regards to his apostleship - Saul of Tarsus (later called Paul) was afterwards added to the number of the apostles (Acts 9:3-20; 20:4; 26:15-18; 1 Tim 1:12; 2:7; 2 Tim 1:11).

#2 - (v4) In regard to food & drink – Col 2:16-17 - *Therefore do not let anyone judge you by what you eat or drink, or with regard to a religious festival, a New Moon celebration or a Sabbath day.*

#3 – (v5) The right to be married – In Mark 1:30 - Cephas is another name for Peter, he was married - *But Simon's wife's mother lay sick with a fever, and they told Him about her at once.*

#4 – (v6) The right to work, to invest, to provide for oneself (Listen to the wisdom of Proverbs regarding the "*Sluggardly vs. the Industrious*").

(v7-18) Paul adds one more issue to his defense regarding compensation for evangelizing, preaching, and teaching the gospel. (Galatians 6:6 - *Let him who is taught the word share in all good things with him who teaches.* 1 Timothy 5:17-18 - *Let the elders who rule well be counted worthy of double honor, especially those who labor in the word and doctrine. For the Scripture says, "You shall not muzzle an ox while it treads out the grain," and, "The laborer is worthy of his wages."*)

(v19-23) Let's talk Servanthood!

- Here Paul defends his ministry by making himself a "**SERVANT TO ALL!**" Paul says he becomes all things to all men to **WIN** (notice 5 times) them to Christ! He doesn't engage in the sins of others, but rather engages the sinner with the Savior, no matter their race, religion, culture, condition, or socio-economic status.

(v19) **Who is a TRUE SERVANT of CHRIST?**

(1) One who follows **HIS EXAMPLE** in John 13:1-17.

(2) Displays His **HEART** and **ATTITUDE** - Matthew 23:11-12 - *The greatest among you will be your servant. For whoever exalts himself will be humbled, and whoever humbles himself will be exalted.*

(3) In **WORKS OF SERVICE** in the church - Ephesians 4:11-16 - *And He Himself gave some to be apostles, some prophets, some evangelists, and some pastors and teachers, for the equipping of the saints for the work of ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ, till we all come to the unity of the faith and of the knowledge of the Son of God, to a perfect man, to the measure of the stature of the fullness of Christ.*

- The “*SERVANT TO ALL*” has a goal: To WIN, WIN, WIN, WIN, WIN people to Christ!!!!!!

(v24-27) Let's talk Salvation!

(v24-25) Paul uses sports analogies to describe the believer's work in spreading the good news of Christ's salvation throughout the world. He warns us not to become disqualified in the process.

- Let's go for the prize, receive the “imperishable crowns” - James 1:12 - *Blessed is the man who endures temptation; for when he has been approved, he will receive the crown of life which the Lord has promised to those who love Him.*

2 Timothy 4:6-8 - *For I am already being poured out like a drink offering, and the time has come for my departure. I have fought the good fight, I have finished the race, I have kept the faith. Now there is in store for me the crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, will award to me on that day — and not only to me, but also to all who have longed for his appearing.*

- For Pastors - 1 Peter 5:1-4 - *The elders who are among you I exhort, I who am a fellow elder and a witness of the sufferings of Christ, and also a partaker of the glory that will be revealed: Shepherd the flock of God which is among you, serving as overseers, not by compulsion but willingly, not for dishonest gain but eagerly; nor as being lords over those entrusted to you, but being examples to the flock; and when the Chief Shepherd appears, you will receive the crown of glory that does not fade away.*

(v26-27) There are two main areas of DISQUALIFICATION:

(1) FALSE DOCTRINE!

- Galatians 5:7-9 - *You ran well. Who hindered you from obeying the truth?*

(2) SIN!

- Hebrews 12:1-2 - *Therefore we also, since we are surrounded by so great a cloud of witnesses, let us lay aside every weight, and the sin which so easily ensnares us, and let us run with endurance the race that is set before us, looking unto Jesus, the author and finisher of our faith, who for the joy that was set before Him endured the cross, despising the shame, and has sat down at the right hand of the throne of God.*

- Jesus declares to all believers - Revelation 22:12 - *"And behold, I am coming quickly, and My reward is with Me, to give to every one according to his work."*