

Why Christians Should Keep the Law (Part 60) –Food Sacrificed to Idols

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The following text is a message from Corner Fringe Ministries that was presented by Daniel Joseph. The original presentation can be viewed at <https://www.cornerfringe.com/media/9qmsgcq/part-60-food-sacrificed-to-idols>

***Portions of this document have been edited from the video message to better present a comprehensive, written document. Special attention was given to preserving the original context, but this document is not verbatim. Scripture verses are in the red text with other quotes in blue. Therefore, it is recommended that this document is printed in color. The Hebrew words are generally accompanied by the transliterate, English word. In most cases, the Hebrew is to be read from right to left.**

Welcome, everyone, to Episode 60 of *Why Christians Should Keep the Law*.

In our last episode we saw James bring four specific commands to the table. Commandments that were to be implemented immediately upon those Gentiles, specifically, who are turning to the Lord Jesus in faith. You are not to waste any time; these things must be placed upon them before anything else. They must do these. And the first one we saw was *porneia*. It was sexual immorality, fornication. That is immediately to be placed upon the Gentiles. So, if they had been engaging in fornication, it is immediately to stop, to cease. They are no longer to engage in that behavior.

Well, today we are going to begin to look at the other side of the tracks, the food laws. There are three specific laws. We will take the first one today; those things that have been polluted by idols.

To kick it off, I want to take you back to the Torah, back to the law. I want to take you to Exodus 34, verse 15. This is what we read Exodus 34:15 — ¹⁵ **lest you make a covenant with the inhabitants of the land, and they play the harlot with their gods and make sacrifice to their gods, and one of them invites you and you eat of his sacrifice,** (Emphasis added.)

So, a warning is going out. You cannot participate in this activity. As the children of God, as Israel, you must abstain from eating food sacrificed to idols. Now, jumping into the New Testament, the apostle Paul gives a beautiful and comprehensive explanation of this. When Paul writes to the Corinthians, you've got to appreciate that Corinth is an epicenter of total paganism. I mean, it is steeped in immorality and idol worship. So, Paul giving this commandment in the way that he does, and expressing it as comprehensively as he does, is extremely relevant. Listen to his words.

1 Corinthians 10:18 — ¹⁸ **Observe Israel after the flesh: Are not those who eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?** (Emphasis added.)

So, if you understand the sacrificial system, there would be times where, for example, an offeror or someone from Israel, just a typical Israeli, would come and bring a peace offering. God would get His appointed portion, the priest would get his appointed portion, and the offeror himself, who brought the sacrifice, would also eat of it. From the priesthood to the offeror, they are partakers of the altar. The significance of that is, you are partaking in something where you are adoring and worshipping the Lord.

The altar, very much so, is a place of worship. So, it's very sacred. When you eat of that, you are honoring and acknowledging the Lord. And so, it's very significant.

Then he goes on and he says this in 1 Corinthians 10:19-21 — ¹⁹ **What am I saying then? That an idol is anything, or what is offered to idols is anything?** ²⁰ **Rather, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice they sacrifice to demons and not to God** — Paul is drawing from Leviticus 17 here. He goes on and says, — **and I do not want you to have fellowship with demons.** ²¹ **You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons; you cannot partake of the Lord's table and of the table of demons.** (Emphasis added.)

This is why we, as Christians, cannot eat of food that has been sacrificed to an idol. Because you can't be a partaker of Jesus Christ and at the same time be an eater of food, consume food, that has been offered to a demon. In that whole act of worship and adoration, it's been dedicated to a demon. Paul said you can't do both. That whole act is an abomination to God.

Now Paul goes on and he says this in 1 Corinthians 10:25 — ²⁵ **Eat whatever is sold in the meat market, asking no questions for conscience' sake;** ²⁶ **for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."** (Emphasis added.)

Paul has given a criterion here, a method, by which we are called to approach the public meat market. And that is, don't ask. If you got hamburgers laying out there, OK, that looks good. Don't ask whether or not it's been offered to an idol. In fact, he takes the idea even further, he says in 1 Corinthians 10:27 — ²⁷ **If any of those who do not believe invites you to dinner, and you desire to go, eat whatever is set before you, asking no question for conscience' sake.** (Emphasis added.)

So, even if someone who is an unbeliever invites you over and would like to get to know you better, you don't ask when he brings out the plate of food to show hospitality and show kindness. You don't ask whether it's been offered to an idol. However, Paul goes on to say this in 1 Corinthians 10:28 — ²⁸ **But if anyone says to you, "This was offered to idols," do not eat it for the sake of the one who told you, and for conscience' sake; for "the earth is the Lord's, and all its fullness."** (Emphasis added.)

Everything changes once you come to the knowledge that that food had been offered to an idol. You do not want to partake of the Lord's table and the table of demons. And for the conscience even of the one who told you, if you go over to somebody's house, they lay that food down and say, "Here, I really like you. Here's this food. I want to show you hospitality. You know, this was offered to idols, but I want you to eat it now." For his sake, and for your own, you are to declare "I will not eat that." I will not eat this, and this is why. It is an abomination to the Lord. That food has been dedicated to a demon.

Now, let's jump to Revelation and look at the teachings of Jesus. Listen to what He says in Revelation 2:14 — ¹⁴ **But I have a few things against you, because you have there those who hold the doctrine of Balaam, who taught Balak to put a stumbling block before the children of Israel, to eat things sacrificed to idols, and to commit sexual immorality.** (Emphasis added.)

These two things, God hates them. And if you've ever read the story of Balaam and Balak, it's fascinating how Balak tried over and over to get the prophet Balaam to curse Israel. Balaam's response was "how can I curse that which God has blessed?" He didn't have the power to remove the blessing from Israel.

Here's where the story gets interesting. The only way to do this was for Balaam to instruct Balak to teach the Moabite women to seduce the men of Israel. They willingly partake and start eating the sacrifices of the altar to Baal of Peor and committing immorality. Do you know that the blessing of God was removed, and the curse followed the very thing that Balak wanted to do? He had no ability to do it, and Balaam had no power to do it. It ended up happening because Israel got seduced and willingly went and did something that is an abomination to God. Now I make this point because you better believe if you're a born-again Christian, the devil is coming, and he is going to attempt to try to seduce you to eat food sacrificed to idols and to commit sexual immorality.

Well, stay tuned. We'll be looking at the other two in the following episodes. So, the Lord bless you and keep you.