

17 August

 Break the ice

Write down what God is saying to you in today's message:

TOPIC: 1 Corinthians – week 14



Let's hear your story

1. Tell of a time when you had to explain to a friend or family member what the Word of God says about Christian liberty?
2. What does v.1 tell us about knowledge and love? (**We know that all of us possess knowledge. This knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.**)
3. What does v.4 tell us about idols? (**We know that an idol has no real existence, and that there is no God but One.**)
4. What does v.6 tell us? (**For us there is one God, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ...**)



Let's go deeper

5. What does v.8 tell us? (**Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.**)
6. What is the warning in v.9? (**But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become a stumbling block to the weak.**)
7. How can we make someone stumble according to v.10? (**For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, to eat food offered to idols?**)
8. What does v.13 tell us is to do? (**If food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat lest I make my brother stumble.**)



Let's apply this

- 9. 1 Corinthians 8:4 & 8;** Therefore, as to the eating of food offered to idols, we know that an idol has no real existence, and that there is no God but one. **v.8;** Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do.
- Is there anything we can eat or do to bring us closer to God? (No, only faith in Jesus Christ unites us to God – Ephesians 2:8)
 - Is there anything in my life that can become a stumbling block to a fellow Christian?
 - Ask the Holy Spirit to help you be wise about Christian liberty.

SUMMARY:

Week 14 – Be wise about Christian liberty

Read: 1 Corinthians 8: 1 – 13

There were two sources of meat in the ancient world: the regular market (where the prices were higher) and the local temples (where meat from the sacrifices was always available). The strong members of the church realized that idols could not contaminate food, so they saved money by purchasing the cheaper meat available from the temples. Furthermore, if unconverted friends invited them to a feast at which sacrificial meat was served, the strong Christians attended it whether at the temple or in the home.

All of this offended the weaker Christians. Many of them had been saved out of pagan idolatry, and they could not understand why their fellow believers would want to have anything to do with meat sacrificed to idols. There was a potential division in the church, so the leaders asked Paul for counsel.

vv. 1 – 2; The stronger believers knew that an idol was nothing, merely the representation of a false god who existed only in the minds of those who worshipped it. The presence of an idol in a temple was no solid proof that the god existed. So, the conclusion was that a non-existent god could not contaminate food offered on his altar.

vv. 3 – 6; Love and biblical knowledge must go together, “speaking the truth in love” (Eph. 4:15). Knowledge is power and it must be used in love. The strong believers in the church had biblical knowledge, but they were not using their knowledge in love. Instead of building up the weak saints, the strong Christians were only puffing up themselves. When spiritual knowledge is used in love, the stronger Christian can take the hand of the weaker Christian and help him to stand and walk so as to enjoy his freedom in Christ.

vv.7 – 13; The word conscience simply means “to understand or to become aware of.” Conscience is that internal court where our actions are judged and are either approved or condemned. Conscience bears witness to God's moral law. But the important thing is this: conscience depends on biblical knowledge. The more we grow in biblical knowledge and act on, the stronger the conscience will become. **v.10;** warns that the immature believer might decide to imitate his stronger brother and thus be led into sin.

These four questions can help to make good godly decisions:

- What does the bible say, can I do it?
- What does my conscience say, should I do it?
- What are my strengths and weaknesses?
- What does my friend need in this moment?