

“Knowledge Vs. Love”
1 Corinthians 8:1-13
5/30/21
Message 17

Introduction

- Title of the Message is: “Knowledge Vs. Love”

• Review

- **We have been in a Study in 1st Corinthians**
 - We have been asking What was wrong in the Church of Corinth
 - But what we can really ask is what is wrong with the church of today
 - So MANY Similarities
- **Chapter 1-6** - Paul dealt with known SINS in the Church of Corinth
 - **DIVISION**
 - **CARNALITY**
 - **IMMORALITY IN THE CHURCH**
 - **SERIOUS NATURE OF SEXUAL SINS**
- **Chapter 7** - Paul Switches Gears – Answers Questions
 - **The Questions that they had asked him**
 - Celibacy - Marriage (1 Cor. 7:1, 25)
 - Food Offered to Idols (1 Cor. 8:1)
 - Spiritual Gifts (1 Cor. 12:1)
 - The Resurrection of the Dead (1 Cor. 15:1)
 - The Missionary Offering for the Jews (1 Cor. 16:1)
 - **The FIRST Question he addresses**
 - Celibacy - Marriage
 - The Corinthians thought that it was more spiritual (holy) to stay celibate
 - Married couples were defrauding each from Sex
 - Paul Tells them to STOP doing that

- He will ALSO Give several Principles that Apply to Marriage
 - Give AFFECTION due each other
 - Talked about how we as men need to step it up
- **The SECOND Question He addresses...**
 - Marriage is for LIFE
 - Covenant between God and your spouse
 - Take it seriously
 - What are the Condition for Divorce
 - Adultery
 - Non - Believer Abandons Believer
- **The THIRD Question he addresses...**
 - The Importance Of Being Content vs. 17-24
 - Whatever your STATUS of Life Slave Free Etc...
 - Be Content and Serve the Lord
 - Don't wait for your circumstances to change before you serve the Lord Do it now
 - The Instructions To Stay Focused vs. 25-40
 - Verse 29 – Time is SHORT
 - Don't Let the CARES of Life distract you from His Mission

• **Now To Chapter 8**

- **1st What Paul is NOT SAYING**
 - **Paul is NOT saying we DON'T have Defend – Stand for the Word of God**
 - This may appear unloving BUT it is NOT
 - We MUST SHARE the TRUTH IN LOVE

- There has been so much confusion in the church
- Wiersbe; “Unloving orthodoxy and loving compromise are both hateful to God”
- Preaching GRACE without TRUTH leave the person wondering why they need GRACE and preaching TRUTH without GRACE, creates Pharisees and legalism!!! Our message needs to His message GRACE & TRUTH
- **Now Please permit me to say a few things in regards to the season we are in before we get to the text**
 - On Wednesdays I have been giving Prophecy update before I teach the text
 - It's IMPORTANT that we understand as best we can the times and season we live
 - Some may have mistaking this as being Negative – Debbie Downer-Doom and Gloom – Just sit around and wait for Jesus
 - That is NOT even close to what I am communicating
 - Let me clear up a few things
- **1st False Teaching in the “Church”**

2 Thessalonians 2:1–3 (NKJV)

- 1** Now, brethren, concerning the coming of our Lord Jesus Christ and our gathering together to Him, we ask you,
2 not to be soon shaken in mind or troubled, either by spirit or by word or by letter, as if from us, as though the day of Christ had come.
3 Let no one deceive you by any means; for that Day will not come unless the falling away comes first, and the man of sin is revealed, the son of perdition,

2 Timothy 4:3–5 (NKJV)

- 3** For the time will come when they will not endure sound doctrine, but according to their own desires, because they have itching ears, they will heap up for themselves teachers;
4 and they will turn their ears away from the truth, and be turned aside to fables.
5 But you be watchful in all things, endure afflictions, do the work of an evangelist, fulfill your ministry.

- **Over the years people have asked me...**
 - **Why do you Talk about false teaching that takes place in the church?**
- **Comments I have heard over the years...**

- Mainly from outside sources – Old Friends
- It's Negative
- It does not affect us
- It's Not your job
- Just preach the word
- Some people have even gone as far to say I am unloving

- **Here is the Reason Why...**

- 1st The Bible tells me to

Jude 3 (NKJV)

3 Beloved, while I was very diligent to write to you concerning our common salvation, I found it necessary to write to you exhorting you to contend earnestly for the faith which was once for all delivered to the saints.

- 2nd Almost all the Epistles – Warn about False teaching in the church
- 3rd Sadly Because the church has been dumbed down
 - Yes it's Been going on from the beginning – hence the warning Epistles
 - The Modern Church has embraced
 - Wokeness
 - Social gospel
 - BLM
 - Feel good messages
 - Some of you are here because your church went that way and you had discernment to leave
 - Examples - Show Slides
 - Spurgeon Quote
 - Sugar Coating the Gospel Quote
 - Tozer Quote

- As a Result - Only 6% of Americans have a 'biblical worldview'
 - Read Article
- Support for Israel among young US evangelical Christians drops sharply - survey
 - Since 2018, backing for Israel dropped from 75% to 33%; nearly half of evangelicals aged 18-29 say they favor establishment of Palestinian state, voted for Biden over Trump
- Anti-Semitism is on the rise – alarming what is taking place – similar to 1930's and 40's
- 4th We MUST be PREPARED
 - God is Purifying His Church
 - Churches Closing Article
 - Now is the Time for us
 - Pray
 - Boldness
 - No Fear
 - For Such a time as this
 - These are exciting times to be a Christian
- 5th My Passion is for TRUTH and SOULS
 - I will NEVER apologize for defending the faith – I will Apologize for the way I have done it at times –
 - But please Understand my passion – SOULS are at stake
- Please Understand – this will not make me popular
 - Standing Strong on God's Will NOT make you or me popular – even in MANY church circles
 - BUT we MUST Understand What God Said
 - And We MUST not be worried about what man thinks
 - We MUST be faithful Servants

John 15:20 (NKJV)

20 Remember the word that I said to you, 'A servant is not greater than his master.' If they persecuted Me, they will also persecute you. If they kept My word, they will keep yours also.

Proverbs 29:25 (NKJV)

25 The fear of man brings a snare, But whoever trusts in the LORD shall be safe.

Isaiah 56:9–12 (NKJV)

9 All you beasts of the field, come to devour, All you beasts in the forest.

10 His watchmen are blind, They are all ignorant; They are all dumb dogs, They cannot bark; Sleeping, lying down, loving to slumber.

11 Yes, they are greedy dogs Which never have enough. And they are shepherds Who cannot understand; They all look to their own way, Every one for his own gain, From his own territory.

12 "Come," one says, "I will bring wine, And we will fill ourselves with intoxicating drink; Tomorrow will be as today, And much more abundant."

▪ **2nd God Judging America**

- This one comment I made after the first debate made more people mad... a few leave
 - MANY other Bible teachers John MacArthur
 - Romans 1 - Exchanged the Truth of God for a Lie
 - Show Pic Calvin
- NOW - I am not saying quite the fight!!! –
 - On the contrary what I am saying is keep the fight going
 - Let do the things we need to do – Vote, run for Office, Etc...
 - BUT let's make sure we keep our priorities straight
 - Keep Being Salt and Light
- BUT Please Keep the RIGHT focus
 - Our HOPE is NOT in a America or a System – It's IN GOD
 - Remember
 - Jesus is OUR ONLY HOPE
 - Saving AMERICANS not America is what will bring lasting change

- **2nd What Paul is Saying...**

- **How do you use your Christian Liberties?**

- One of the Biggest Debates with Christians
- Has centered around questionable practices
- Practices that some believers feel to be wrong
- But that are not specifically forbidden in Scripture
- The Bible doesn't specifically say not to do them
- It's NOT Black OR White
- It's not like God's Top 10
 - That are very clear
- Some of the key issues have been... Go over each of them
 - Drinking alcoholic
 - Smoking
 - Card playing – Gambling
 - Wearing makeup
 - Dancing
 - Styles of music
 - Going to movies or
 - Watching T.V.
 - Tattoos

- **Two common extremes are often followed in regard to “gray area” issues**

- LEGALISM
- LICENSE

- **Legalism**

- Legalists live more by rules rather than by the Spirit
- They classify everything as either good or bad, whether the Bible mentions it or not
- They develop exhaustive lists of do's and don'ts
- They will actually attach Spiritual Health or Salvation to them

- License
 - License is the opposite extreme
 - It's like legalism in that it too has no gray areas—but neither does it have much black
 - Almost everything is white; everything is acceptable as long as it is not strictly forbidden in Scripture
 - That seems to have been the philosophy of the group Paul addresses in 1 Corinthians 8
 - Doing what they wanted and not be concerned how it affected others

- **So Let get the Background in Corinthian**

- **1st The Practice:**

- Things Sacrificed To Idols
 - Is one word in Greek and can be translated simply as “idol sacrifices”
 - The sacrifices were food offerings, symbolically presented in worship to various gods
- The Issue
 - Was eating food that had been offered in those sacrifices.
 - The Greeks and Romans were polytheistic, worshiping many gods
 - They believed the air was filled with evil spirits of all kinds
 - It was believed that the evil spirits were constantly trying to invade human beings and that the **easiest way to do that was to attach themselves to food before it was eaten.**
 - The only way the spirits could be removed from food was through its being sacrificed to a god.
- The sacrifice did two things:
 - It gained the favor of the god
 - It cleansed the meat from demonic contamination.

- **2nd The Problem:**

- 1st The meat was associated with pagan gods and goddesses, because it had been offered to them, and
- 2nd It was associated with the superstition that it had once been contaminated by evil spirits
- This meat was served at
 - Most social occasions
 - Including weddings
 - Involved pagan worship of some sort
 - A great many of the festivities were held in temples
- The Problem
 - Should we eat it or not –
 - People were concerned about their Witness if they ate the meat
 - The Spiritually mature said why not – it a bargain and it taste great
 - The Spiritually Immature were stumble by this

• **This Morning 3 Main Points on how to handle this conflict**

- Paul's Concern with Knowledge vs. 1-3
- The Contrast Between Idolatry & The Lord vs. 4-6
- The Challenge We Face Regarding Liberties vs. 7-13

Paul's Concern with Knowledge vs. 1-3

• **First: They Developed An Arrogant Heart v. 1a**

1 Corinthians 8:1 (NKJV)

1 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge.
Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

- **1st We know that we all have knowledge**
 - Arrogant in their Knowledge
 - You can see in Paul's words that it reflected a feeling of superiority.
 - They knew enough about God's Word to know that pagan gods and idols were not real and that food sacrificed to them was still just food.
 - They knew that eating the food could not contaminate them spiritually

- They felt totally free to eat whatever they wanted, no matter what others thought
- BUT they forgot that those around them might be stumbled
- **2nd Lesson**
 - You can have Knowledge and still be Carnal –
 - **The KNOWLEDGE MUST Pass from Your Head to YOUR heart**
 - Let me just say –
 - I have seen many believer who have knowledge but they don't know how to use it

• **Second: They Disregarded The Need For Love 1b, 3**

1 Corinthians 8:1 (NKJV)

1 Now concerning things offered to idols: We know that we all have knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love edifies.

1 Corinthians 8:3 (NKJV)

3 But if anyone loves God, this one is known by Him.

- **1st These believers were mature in knowledge, but not mature in love.**
 - They were solid in doctrine but weak in love
 - Love edifies, or builds up others; and they didn't have it
- **2nd Verse 3 tells us if anyone loves God, he is known by Him.**
 - It is impossible to know God and not love Him.
 - Loving God is the most important evidence of a right relationship with Him.
 - Loving and being loved by God is everything.
 - Knowledge is important, very important...but, as everything else, without love it's nothing.
- **3rd Love is the key to behavior**
 - Knowing what is not forbidden is not enough
 - 1 Cor 13

1 Corinthians 13:1–3 (NKJV)

- 1 Though I speak with the tongues of men and of angels, but have not love, I have become sounding brass or a clanging cymbal.*
- 2 And though I have the gift of prophecy, and understand all mysteries and all knowledge, and though I have all faith, so that I could remove mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*
- 3 And though I bestow all my goods to feed the poor, and though I give my body to be burned, but have not love, it profits me nothing.*

- SHOW YOUR LOVE

Philippians 2:4 (NKJV)

4 Let each of you look out not only for his own interests, but also for the interests of others.

- Love sets the limits of Christian liberty
- Love edifies, or builds up others; and they didn't have it

- ***Third: They Deceived Themselves v. 2***

1 Corinthians 8:2 (NKJV)

2 And if anyone thinks that he knows anything, he knows nothing yet as he ought to know.

- DON'T deceive YOURSELF

The Contrast Between Idolatry & The Lord vs. 4-6

- ***First: He Reveals The Truth About Idols v. 4-5***

1 Corinthians 8:4–5 (NKJV)

- 4 Therefore concerning the eating of things offered to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is no other God but one.*
- 5 For even if there are so-called gods, whether in heaven or on earth (as there are many gods and many lords),*

- ***1st He agrees that there's really nothing behind an idol***
 - The stone, metal, or wood is real, but there's no god behind it.
 - It only reflects the imagination of the one who designed it, or the impersonation of the demon who deceives through it

Psalms 115:4–7 (NKJV)

- 4 Their idols are silver and gold, The work of men's hands.*
- 5 They have mouths, but they do not speak; Eyes they have, but they do not see;*
- 6 They have ears, but they do not hear; Noses they have, but they do not smell;*
- 7 They have hands, but they do not handle; Feet they have, but they do not walk; Nor do they mutter through their throat.*

- ***Second: He Reminds Us Of The Truth About God v. 6***

1 Corinthians 8:6 (NKJV)

6 yet for us there is one God, the Father, of whom are all things, and we for Him; and one Lord Jesus Christ, through whom are all things, and through whom we live.

○ **1st Paul repeats the truth that there is but one God.**

- This verse is a powerful and clear confirmation of the equality of God the Father and the Lord Jesus Christ.
- The truth is, idols aren't real, so-called gods aren't real
- The only real God is the God of the Bible revealed in Jesus Christ

The Challenge We Face Regarding Liberties vs. 7-13

• **First: Realize This Issue About The Weaker Christian v. 7**

1 Corinthians 8:7 (NKJV)

7 However, there is not in everyone that knowledge; for some, with consciousness of the idol, until now eat it as a thing offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.

○ **1st The Struggle**

- Not all believers were mature in their knowledge and understanding of spiritual truths.
- Some were new Christians
 - Freshly out of paganism and its many temptations and corruptions.
 - They still imagined that idols, though evil, were real and that the gods the idols represented were real.
- So to participate in any way was to be tempted to fall back into former practices.
 - Some new converts wanted to take no chance of being contaminated again by the evil influences
 - The pagan gods were not real, but the wicked practices associated with them were real and fresh on their minds
 - So they recoiled from having contact with anything associated with their past paganism.
 - They were not yet mature enough to eat idol food without it violating their consciences

○ **2nd Lesson – Illustration**

- Drinking Alcohol –
- A person has just come out of the world – they were an alcoholic
- They go over to another believer's house see them drinking a beer –
- Yes, this is not a sin
- Yes, there is liberty
- But Love say – Put the beer away
- DON'T try and tell them it's okay – they may just fall back into that same world
- This is why Pastor are not to drink -

• **Second: Remember That Food Is Just Food v. 8**

1 Corinthians 8:8 (NKJV)

8 But food does not commend us to God; for neither if we eat are we the better, nor if we do not eat are we the worse.

○ **1st Eating or not eating food doesn't bring you closer to God**

- The general point is that doing things that are not forbidden by God can be spiritually neutral.
- Food is an excellent illustration of that fact.

Mark 7:15 (NKJV)

15 There is nothing that enters a man from outside which can defile him; but the things which come out of him, those are the things that defile a man.

1 Timothy 4:4 (NKJV)

4 For every creature of God is good, and nothing is to be refused if it is received with thanksgiving;

- There are liberties that we have in the Lord that don't bring us closer to Him nor hinder our relationship
- But they can be a huge issue with someone else

• **Third: Recognize The Importance Of Your Example vs. 9-13**

1 Corinthians 8:9–13 (NKJV)

9 But beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block to those who are weak.

10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will not the conscience of him who is weak be emboldened to eat those things offered to idols?

11 And because of your knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

12 But when you thus sin against the brethren, and wound their weak conscience, you sin against Christ.

13 Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.

○ **1st Beware lest somehow this liberty of yours become a stumbling block:**

- Again Paul says, "You Corinthian Christians who say you have knowledge are claiming your rights; what about the rights of the weak brother?"
- Because of your knowledge, shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?

○ **2nd Those who are weak:**

- Why is the brother who will not eat the meat sacrificed to an idol considered weak?
- Many Christians would consider that one to be the "stronger" Christian.
- However Paul is not speaking about being weak or strong in regard to self-control, but in regard to knowledge
- Yes you understand the beer is nothing – but the weaker believer does not

○ **3rd A stumbling block to those who are weak:**

- To influence the weak brother to go against his conscience (and thereby wound their weak conscience) is actually to sin against Christ.
- The Corinthian Christians who abused their liberty might have thought it was a small matter to offend their weak brothers, but they did not understand they offended Jesus Christ.

○ **4th Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never again eat meat:**

- Paul makes the principle clear.
- Our actions can never be based only on what we know to be right for ourselves.
- We also need to consider what is right towards our brothers and sisters in Jesus.

Closer

- Put ON LOVE