

“WHEN LOVE RESTRAINS US”
1 Corinthians 8:1-13

INTRODUCTION

This section of scripture answers questions about eating meat used in idol sacrifice. It was good for them to ask about this. It showed that their conscience was alive. Certainly that was better than a dead, seared conscience. It is always good to ask, “Am I compromising?”, “Does this please the Lord?” Some can have a sharper conviction about a particular subject than others. Either way, we must be sensitive to the faith and convictions of those that we fellowship with.

KNOWLEDGE AND LOVE

We all have knowledge, but some have more than others when it comes to Bible knowledge. At times knowledge can give us an over-inflated, prideful view of ourselves and we think we are superior. We then try to impose restrictions on others. Notice that love builds up, however. It’s constructive! The best relationships are built on love, not just knowledge, **v.3.** (If you love God, He knows you! **Matthew 7:21-23**). Relationships based on love are better than relationships based on only knowledge. You want to spend time with someone you love!

In Corinth they thought that the meat offered to idols was affected by the idol. Jesus said that was not true, **“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.”** **Mark 7:15.** The meat is nothing, so it doesn’t get us closer or farther away from God.

THE REAL GOD

Idols are still around in many forms. There is only one true God, however. Jesus Christ is God! **“In the beginning was the Word, and the Word was with God, and the Word was God”,** **John 1:1.** **“Thus says the LORD, the King of Israel, and his Redeemer, the LORD of hosts; I am the First and I am the Last; besides Me there is no God,”** **Isaiah 44:6.** *Do you love the Lord with all your heart, soul, mind and strength, or has someone or something else stolen the affection that rightly belongs to God?*

DON'T STUMBLE

Our primary call is to not stumble others. This could happen with various holidays that we celebrate, the clothing that we wear, or even the drinking of alcohol. There is not a prohibition against drinking alcohol, but there is a prohibition against drunkenness or being under its influence. (Leadership should avoid it. **Prov. 31:4-5**). While there is liberty to drink, we must be careful to not stumble others with it or flaunt it. Many families have suffered severe problems because of alcohol abuses. We have to be careful that we are not offensive in our actions that are seen by our brothers and sisters in Christ. We are living to build them up. Even in our liberty, if we wound the conscience of another, we are in sin! If we sin against a brother, it is a sin against Jesus!

CONSIDER

Love leads to other-centeredness. We *are* responsible to our neighbors. While it seems that many want to flaunt their liberties on social media today that type of action is not always in the best interest of other Christians. **“Do you have faith? Have it to yourself before God”.** **Romans 14:22.** **“Let each of us please his neighbor for his good, leading to edification”.** **Romans 15:2.** *Remember, while certain actions may not be sin, in and of themselves, stumbling a brother or sister is a sin against our Lord! Is there anything that you are doing that is stumbling others? Let’s mature in grace and purpose to live to bless others!*

(All scripture quotations are NKJV).

PRAY

- *As elections approach, it reminds us to pray for our leaders and soon to be leaders! 1 Timothy 2:1-2.
- * For the Veterans Day Assembly on Monday, November 12th. Many vets need inner rest!
- * For thankful hearts as we consider what God has done for us. Let’s join together for a night of praise on Nov. 21st.