

LOVE IS

1 & 2 Corinthians

Week 9: 1 Corinthians 8

5 Main Issues Addressed In 1 Corinthians

1 - Divisions in the church - Chapters 1:10-4:21

"I heard this other teacher - he's better than Paul!"

2 - Immorality in the church - Chapters 5:1-7:40

"What's the big deal? I'm forgiven!"

3 - Issues around idolatry - Chapters 8:1-10:17

"Idols aren't real. I can eat from idolatrous sacrifice."

- **Exodus 20:3-5** - You shall have no other gods before me. You shall not make for yourself an image in the form of anything in heaven above or on the earth beneath or in the waters below. You shall not bow down to them or worship them.
- **Deuteronomy 32:21** - They have made me jealous with what is no god. They have provoked me to anger with their idols.
- **Acts 15:19-20** - To incoming believers:
 - abstain from sexual immorality
 - abstain from the pollution/contamination of idols
 - abstain from strangled meat or meat with blood
 - Moses (the Torah) is being taught

1 Corinthians 8 - In a city dominated with idol worship, a lot of meat available in the marketplace has been sacrificed to idols. A lot of gatherings and groups meet in temple banquet halls. How does the Christian interact in this world?

Chapters 8-10 must be taken as a whole

- The teaching begins, Paul gives his personal example, and then the teaching is concluded

1 Corinthians 8:1-6

- 8:1-3 is the thesis of the coming chapters
- The attitude of some “all of us possess knowledge”
 - A carefree attitude - because idols aren't really gods
 - The carefree attitude puffs up the one, and doesn't build up others - we are back to the first issue: division
 - Paul reinforces doctrine: There is only one God
- Ambrosiaster: Only when a person has love can they be said to know what they should know.

1 Corinthians 8:7-8

- A person coming from a life of idolatry is likely to struggle with this issue
- Though the idol is nothing, the lure remains powerful
- The food itself is not the issue - just like other external issues brought up in this letter: circumcision and marriage

1 Corinthians 8:9-13

- The heart of the matter is not the freedom or the right to do it...but the harm to others by your example
 - Strong language: Stumbling block to the weak, sin against Christ and your brother, wounding their conscience
- Clement of Alexandria: Seek to be the master over food, and not the slave
- John Chrysostom: What is this? Christ died for your brother, but you can not even lift a finger to help him?
- Paul isn't done teaching on idols - but the first issue in this arena is the responsibility that mature Christians have towards weaker
 - Your responsibilities toward weaker Christians take priority over your personal freedoms