

24 February 2021

1 Corinthians 8:1

In Acts 17, after Paul had departed from Thessalonica and Berea, he came to Athens, Greece:

This is where he preached Christ on Mars Hill after he saw the city wholly given to idolatry. When he left Athens, he came to Corinth, also in Greece.

Greece was the home to idolatrous gods many, it was woven into the fabric of their entire society and culture; keep that in mind as we read Paul's answer to the question of the Corinthians.

Apparently, there were many places in which meat was sold or served to the people of Corinth that had been offered up to idols in these false places of worship.

**As we begin (C8), Paul is still answering the letter that the Corinthians wrote to him: (7:1):
"Now concerning the things whereof ye wrote unto me"**

In (C7), Paul addressed sexual immorality, marriage, and our own personal callings in this life. At this point, he is answering their question about eating food offered to idols:

(V1): Paul here, I think was answering a statement in their that they knew that an idol was nothing; "we know that we all have knowledge"

Meaning, we all have knowledge and understand that an idol is nothing, therefore, there is nothing wrong with eating food that was offered to idols.

So far so good.

The problem with many of the Corinthian Christians was, their knowledge (in regard to this) made them arrogant. (READ: V1B)

It is true that meat does not commend us to God, but they weren't considering the weak consciences of some of their own brethren in regard to eating things offered to idols. Their knowledge puffed them up!

Now, we understand that knowledge and truth is a necessity in the Christian life:

Proverbs 1:7, 29, Colossians 1:9-10, 2:3, 3:10, 1 Timothy 2:4

Yes, knowledge is vital to the Christian life, but if our knowledge is not accompanied with, or coupled with the love of Christ, it will only inflate us in pride, and we'll end up hurting our Christian brethren with the truth!

For many of the Corinthian believers, their knowledge was not coupled with charity, or the love of Christ, and so their knowledge puffed them up and made them arrogant. This is what Paul was dealing with:

1 Corinthians 4:6, 18-19, 5:2, 13:4

Paul adds in (V2): “And if any man thinketh that he knoweth anything, he knoweth nothing yet as he ought to know”: Proverbs 26:12, Galatians 6:3

(V3): But if any man (with the knowledge of God) loves God; the same is known of him. That is because he doesn't behave arrogantly with the knowledge of God that he possesses; but when he does speak the truth, he speaks in love, or when he does use the knowledge which he has of God, he uses it in love toward his brother or sister in Christ and his neighbor.

(V4-6): Paul returns now to the subject of idols:

Idols are nothing, there is only One true God. *(Read V6)*

(V7-10): But there are weaker brethren who don't have THIS KNOWLEDGE: Romans 14:13-23, 1 Corinthians 10:23-31

Paul brings in their puffed-up KNOWLEDGE again, note.

(V10-11): “If any man see thee, which hast knowledge sit at meat in the idols temple, shall not the conscience of him which is weak be emboldened to eat those things which are offered to idols; and through thy knowledge shall the weak brother perish, for whom Christ died?”

So because you didn't consider your weak brother, he might be emboldened to violate his conscience, which to him would be sin, all because of what he saw you do, whom he holds in high esteem because of your knowledge.

Because you, who have knowledge, did not behave charitably toward him.

So, it's true that an idol is nothing, and there is nothing wrong with eating meat that was offered to an idol; (V8); meat does not commend us to God.

But when we don't consider our weaker brethren, we're not acting charitably or in love toward them, and we may cause them to violate their conscience which would be sin to them. *(Read V12-13)*

This can be applied to many areas in our lives; if someone's conscience tells them that something is sin to them...behave charitably toward them, even if you know and believe it to be no sin for you to do whatever it might be.