

# 1 Corinthians 8 - Treat One Another With Love

1Co 8:1-13 ESV **Now concerning food offered to idols:** we know that "all of us possess knowledge." This "knowledge" puffs up, but love builds up. 2 If anyone imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know **as he ought to know**. 3 But if anyone loves God, he is known by God.

Starting in Chapter 7 he is responding to things they wrote to him about, here it is about -- **Food offered to idols** - some burned in sacrifice, some eaten in a meal, some sold in meat markets

## "All of us possess knowledge"

- But **knowledge** is not always the best way to approach a thing
- But some kinds of **knowledge puffs up, whereas love builds up**
- But sometimes we don't know **WHAT WE OUGHT TO KNOW**

## Paul contrasts - knowledge and love

- A contrast of **Knowledge puffs up** -- **Love** builds up
- A contrast of **knowing something** vs **loving** God

## If anyone loves God, He is known by God

### **It is so important to be known by God**

- Mat 7:21-23 ESV "Not everyone who says to me, 'Lord, Lord,' will enter the kingdom of heaven, but the one who does the will of my Father who is in heaven. 22 On that day many will say to me, 'Lord, Lord, did we not prophesy in your name, and cast out demons in your name, and do many mighty works in your name?' 23 And then will I declare to them, '**I never knew you; depart from me, you workers of lawlessness.**'"

### **We are known by God if we LOVE Him, how do we know we love Him?**

- **OBEDIENCE** -- Joh 14:15 ESV "If you love me, you will ***keep my commandments***."
- **LOVE OTHERS** -- 1Jn 4:20-21 ESV If anyone says, "I love God," and hates his brother, he is a liar; for ***he who does not love his brother whom he has seen cannot love God whom he has not seen.*** 21 And this commandment we have from him: whoever loves God must also love his brother.

## What we know

4 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.**" 5 For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth--as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"-- 6 yet **for us there is one God**, the Father, from whom are all things and for whom we exist, and one Lord, Jesus Christ, through whom are all things and through whom we exist.

- An idol has no real existence
- And There is no other God but one
- There are many so-called gods

## An idol is NOTHING, Jesus is EVERYTHING

- **There is one God** - The Father **from whom** are all things and *for whom we exist*
- **And one LORD** - **Through** whom are all things and *through whom we exist*

## But not everyone has this knowledge

7 However, **not all possess this knowledge**. But some, through **former association with idols**, eat food as really offered to an idol, and their **conscience, being weak, is defiled**. 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.

We don't necessarily deal with this kind of issue in our world today, but **we do deal with similar issues**, things where one person make think a thing is evil and another person does not - how are we to deal with this? (examples, playing cards, wearing makeup, watching movies or TV, how we celebrate holidays, drinking a beer, body piercings, tattoos etc - you can probably think of other things). There are things specifically prohibited by God (sexual immorality in Chap 7), and there are other things that are not as clearly defined.

## You may have right knowledge about something - but not everyone does

- **Some are still affected by their former association**
  - Through former association with idols some eat food **really offered to an idol**
  - Their conscience is weak/defiled (they don't have the same knowledge as you)
- **Proper knowledge**
  - Food will not commend us to God
  - We are not more spiritual if we refrain, and we are not more sinful if we don't refrain

## Love tempers what do we do with our knowledge

9 But take care that this right of yours does not somehow become **a stumbling block to the weak**. 10 For if anyone sees you who have knowledge eating in an idol's temple, will he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? 11 And so **by your knowledge** this weak person is destroyed, **the brother for whom Christ died**. 12 Thus, **sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience** when it is weak, **you sin against Christ**.

### **I have a right to do such and such**

- But don't let it become a stumbling block

### **How**

- They see you eating in an idol's temple
- They are encouraged to follow your example - and in his conscience he is eating food offered to idols
- So your KNOWLEDGE actually DESTROYS a brother

### **The bigger picture**

- Jesus died for this brother
- You are sinning against Christ

## Living for eternal values that affect others

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

### **I will never do something that makes my brother stumble**

## Summary

First of all - Love God & be known by god

Second, let that love become a reality so that it spills over into my relationship with others

Love must be first

- Though I have knowledge about the food (or something else)
- Though I have the right to eat the food (or partake of something else)
  - I don't want to become a stumbling block to others
  - I don't want to wound their conscience
  - I don't want to sin against Christ

Rom 14:1-23 ESV As for the one who is weak in faith, welcome him, but not to quarrel over opinions. 2 One person believes he may eat anything, while the weak person eats only vegetables. 3 Let not the one who eats despise the one who abstains, and let not the one who abstains pass judgment on the one who eats, **for God has welcomed him.** 4 Who are you to pass judgment on the servant of another? It is before his own master that he stands or falls. And he will be upheld, for **the Lord is able to make him stand.** 5 One person esteems one day as better than another, while another esteems all days alike. **Each one should be fully convinced in his own mind.** 6 The one who observes the day, observes it in honor of the Lord. The one who eats, eats in honor of the Lord, since he gives thanks to God, while the one who abstains, abstains in honor of the Lord and gives thanks to God. 7 For none of us lives to himself, and none of us dies to himself. 8 For if we live, we live to the Lord, and if we die, we die to the Lord. So then, whether we live or whether we die, we are the Lord's. 9 For to this end Christ died and lived again, **that he might be Lord both of the dead and of the living.** 10 Why do you **pass judgment** on your brother? Or you, why do you **despise** your brother? For we will all stand before the judgment seat of God; 11 for it is written, "As I live, says the Lord, **every knee shall bow to me, and every tongue shall confess to God.**" 12 So then each of us will give an account of himself to God. 13 Therefore let us not pass judgment on one another any longer, but **rather decide never to put a stumbling block or hindrance in the way of a brother.** 14 I know and am persuaded in the Lord Jesus that nothing is unclean in itself, but it is unclean for anyone who thinks it unclean. **15 For if your brother is grieved by what you eat, you are no longer walking in love.** By what you eat, do not destroy the one for whom Christ died. 16 So do not let what you regard as good be spoken of as evil. 17 For **the kingdom of God is not a matter of eating and drinking** but of righteousness and peace and joy in the Holy Spirit. 18 Whoever thus serves Christ is acceptable to God and approved by men. 19 So then **let us pursue what makes for peace and for mutual upbuilding.** 20 Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God. Everything is indeed clean, but it is wrong for anyone to make another stumble by what he eats. 21 **It is good not to eat meat or drink wine or do anything that causes your brother to stumble.** 22 **The faith that you have, keep between yourself and God.** Blessed is the one who has no reason to pass judgment on himself for what he approves. 23 But whoever has doubts is condemned if he eats, because the eating is not from faith. For whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.