

Disputable Matters

Series: "Freedom in Christ," Part 2 of 4

1 Corinthians 8:1-13

Garage Sale, Wellington, Missouri. _____

Christian Liberty

• 60 Years Ago: _____

• Today: _____

"Now for the matters you wrote about . . ." (7:1, 7:25, 8:1)

1. Marriage, Divorce and Singleness
2. Whether Engaged and Widowed Should Marry in Desperate Times
3. _____ Sacrificed to _____

A First Century Grey Area: Food Sacrificed to Idols

(1 Cor 8:1-3 NIV) Now about food sacrificed to idols: We know that we all possess knowledge. Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. {2} The man who thinks he knows something does not yet know as he ought to know. {3} But the man who loves God is known by God.

Two Groups:

- The "Weak" (vs. 10) = _____
- The "Strong" = robust _____ (not as _____)

"Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up"

Knowledge is proud that it knows so much; wisdom is humble that it knows no more.

—Socrates

"The man who loves God is known by God."

(1 Cor 13:2 NIV) *If I have the gift of prophecy and can fathom all mysteries and all knowledge, and if I have a faith that can move mountains, but have not love, I am nothing.*

FOUR WAYS TO EXERCISE LOVE IN THE GREY AREAS OF LIFE

Fully Celebrate Our _____ in Christ.
(John 8:31-32 NIV) *To the Jews who had believed him, Jesus said, "If you hold to my teaching, you are really my disciples. {32} Then you will know the truth, and the truth will set you free."*

(John 8:36 NIV) *So if the Son sets you free, you will be free indeed.*

(2 Cor 3:17 NIV) *Now the Lord is the Spirit, and where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is freedom.*

(Gal 5:1 NIV) *It is for freedom that Christ has set us free. Stand firm, then, and do not let yourselves be burdened again by a yoke of slavery.*

Recognize that "_____" are Not Intrinsically _____.
(1 Cor 8:4 NIV) *So then, about eating food sacrificed to idols: We know that an idol is nothing at all in the world and that there is no God but one.*

Embody _____ in Dealing With "Grey Area" _____.
(1 Cor 8:8 NIV) *But food does not bring us near to God; we are no worse if we do not eat, and no better if we do.*

Exhibit _____ for Others by Limiting Your _____.
(1 Cor 8:9 NIV) *Be careful, however, that the exercise of your freedom does not become a stumbling block to the weak.*

(1 Cor 8:13 NIV) *Therefore, if what I eat causes my brother to fall into sin, I will never eat meat again, so that I will not cause him to fall.*

Refusal to limit freedom can have _____.

Willingness to limit freedom demonstrates _____.

Sermon-based Small Group Discussion Guide

Week of September 20, 2009

I Corinthians 8 and 10:23-11:1

Icebreaker: Introduce yourself to the group and describe a humorous incident from last summer.

1. Why all the hubbub about meat offered to idols in the Corinthian church?

2. The issue at hand in 1 Corinthians 8 concerns something that is not *intrinsically* wrong. Look at the following list and try to discern between things that are wrong and things that are not intrinsically wrong. Check the ones you think are grey areas.

- Eating meat offered to idols
- Gambling
- Adultery
- Bowling
- Hiring illegal aliens
- Dancing
- Smoking
- Swearing
- Chewing
- Playing cards
- Attending Cardinals game on Sunday
- Murder
- Receiving offerings from gambling \$'s
- Swimming in mixed company
- Stealing
- Abortion
- Watching TV
- Viewing pornography
- Roller skating
- Drinking alcohol

3. Paul assumes that it is wrong to go against conscience, for then conscience may be damaged (8:12). What is the risk of a damaged conscience?

4. Conscience (8:7) is shaped. How can a Christian instruct and shape his conscience?

5. T / F. The “weak” brother (and sister) is more bound by rules than the “strong” brother. Both will adopt rules for things that are truly wrong, while the “weak” brother adds rules for things that are not truly wrong but that are at that point wrong for him, since he thinks them wrong. (Why is it T or F?)

6. Paul places primary onus of responsibility on the “strong” to restrict their own freedoms for the sake of others (8:9, 13) and not become a stumbling block. Do you agree? Why?

7. What rights would you be willing to give up for the sake of others? How might your actions demonstrate sacrificial love?

8. What does Paul mean when he says in 8:1, “Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up.?”

9. Paul makes a bold statement in Chapter 11:1, “Follow my example, as I follow the example of Christ.” What does he mean? Is he prideful?

10. Would you make a similar statement about yourself? Why?

11. Our nation is bitterly divided over many important issues. To name a few: school prayer, the Ten Commandments, evolution, the death penalty, abortion, homosexuality, assisted suicide, affirmative action, busing, the Confederate battle flag, the Duke rape case, Terri Schiavo, Iraq, amnesty, torture, death panels, global warming, socialism and ACORN. How do these affect people in the church? How do you think the Church in America can demonstrate the power of the gospel to our divided culture?

Prayer

There are many issues that can cause division in the church. Pray for love and unity in the Body of Christ.

Pray for one another: