

I Corinthians

Chapter 10

Let's open with prayer,

Our heavenly Father,

Again we stop to acknowledge that you are our God, our Savior, and our Lord. You inspired this book that we are studying together and we are dependent upon your Spirit to reveal to us its meaning and its message, and to look upon your Spirit to change and transform us as we learn more about you. So we commit this time to you for you to work out your will, according to your way, in Jesus' name, Amen!

So as we pick back up in our study of 1 Corinthians, and remember back in the beginning of our study, I said that I consider 1 Corinthians to be the expression of the condition of the church today.

Though it is not a biblical term, I consider us to be in the Corinthian church age. If you ever have the time, I would encourage you to do some research on the mystic religions of the east.

The mystic religions of the east promote a chanting until one reaches a euphoric state, an emotional high so that those that participate can leave feeling good.

And that's pretty much what a lot of the body of Christ has mixed in with it today, is an emphasis on the emotional. As I said earlier, we do not know the difference between emotional energy and the power of the Holy Spirit.

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People think that if they have a surge of some kind of feeling that that is the Lord, and it isn't. I've said this before, but think about it, you cannot feel the Spirit.

When we're talking about feeling, that's human, and spirit is spiritual. You cannot feel the Spirit. That's why we live by faith, not by sight, not by the human faculties.

Paul said in 1 Corinthians Chapter 3 that 5 years prior to this, he fed them with milk because they were still fleshly. And he says now 5 years later, you're still fleshly, or carnal.

But he used a different Greek word to indicate that it was abnormal and that they still needed milk to drink and not solid food of the word of God.

And so he's ministering to a very carnal church, and mostly ministering correctional things. These are not people who were right on.

And that's why when we get into the ministry of the gifts of the Spirit, it is not instructional, it is correctional. They thought that emotional ecstatic utterances and feelings was the moving of God's Spirit and Paul had to correct them.

So remember, we are dealing with a carnal church.

So far, we've studied the introduction in Verses 1 through 9 of Chapter 1. Also, the correctional part of his letter from the information he heard from the household of Chloe. They brought him word when he was over in Ephesus of things going on in the church.

So Paul ministered to them about the message of the gospel, the method of the gospel, the ministry of the gospel, the messenger of the gospel, the mandate of the gospel, and the morality of the gospel.

These were all areas in which the Christians in Corinth were having trouble. They were using a human message, and especially human methods to try to get people into the church and get them saved.

They tried to humanly apply the gospel. And even the messengers were not fit in their own personal life and walk with the Lord to preach the gospel.

And what the mandate of the gospel is, and what its morality is, is that we walk and live according to the gospel that we preach.

1 Corinthians Chapter 7 Verse 1 says now concerning the things of which you wrote. So they actually asked him questions about some things.

We saw in Chapter 7 the marriage instructions for Gentiles.

And we got into most of the meat offered to idols, and that's three chapters, Chapters 8, 9, and 10.

So we are in Chapter 10 but Chapters 8, 9, and 10, we are studying one subject, the meat offered to idols. Is it right for a Christian to eat meat that has been sacrificed to idols?

We saw at the beginning of Chapter 8 Verses 1 through 3, Paul says that in order to answer this question for this issue, as well as all issues about what a Christian should do or not do, all of the principles are here in these chapters.

Paul says the real problem is not what should I do or not do, or what can I do or not do, but the problem is knowledge.

He says now as touching things offered unto idols, we know that we all have knowledge. But knowledge puffs up, but charity, or love edifies or builds up.

He says we all have knowledge. A piece of meat is just a piece of meat. There's nothing spiritually wrong with a piece of meat.

They used to offer meat to idols in the idol worship. And then they would take the meat down to the marketplace and sell it. Paul had no trouble buying it out of the marketplace.

But he says there are other considerations besides the knowledge that you have as to whether it's right or wrong.

Knowledge puffs up. And knowledge has trouble with love, and love has trouble with knowledge. The people who pursue the knowledge of the bible get their heads so filled of the knowledge of the bible that it is not dispersed or ministered in love.

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And yet the people who say "I'm not interested in studying the bible, I just want love." They have problems with knowledge. And yes, that is a problem!

Paul said in Romans 10:2 "For I bear them record, concerning the Jews, that they have a zeal of God, but not according to knowledge."

Paul said there's a problem. The word zeal means to boil. We would say that a person's "On fire for the Lord." But if that is not controlled by the knowledge of the truth, then it's going to be out of control. So it goes hand in hand.

In fact, 1 Corinthians Chapter 8 presents the person with knowledge as the older believer. The person that starts out not interested in knowledge, they are the weaker or the younger believer even though they pursue love. But is there love according to knowledge?

When we get into 1 Corinthians Chapter 13, which is the chapter on love, it is interesting that God's love loves the truth.

So when someone says to me "I'm not interested in what the bible says, I just want to love people," well, don't you want to know what the truth is? "No I don't. It causes too much trouble when Christians start studying the bible and talk about the bible together."

Love is the main thing. But if it's not according to the truth, it's a human love, not a spiritual love. It's not the love that God's talking about.

So 1 Corinthians 8:1-3 presented the problem of knowledge. And then in Verses 4-8, he presented the knowledge itself, "As concerning therefore the eating of those things that are offered in sacrifice to idols, we know that an idol is nothing in the world, and that there is none other God but one."

An idol is just a statue. There's no life in it. It says in Verse 7, howbeit, there is not in every man this knowledge. For some with conscience of the idol unto this hour eat it as a thing offered to an idol, and their conscience being weak is defiled.

They associate the meat with idol worship. Paul says that once they get through with that meat in the idol worship service, and it's down in the marketplace for anybody to buy, Paul says "My conscience doesn't bother me at all."

But when somebody sees me buy that meat and they associate that meat with idol worship, I'm responsible for violating that other person's conscience, because to them, they are defiled if they buy that meat.

In 1 Corinthians 8:9-12, he issued the precaution concerning knowledge. It says in Verse 9 "But take heed, lest by any means this liberty, or freedom of yours, become a stumbling block to them that are weak.

You would think that if the more you came to know what the bible is saying, and the more freedom you had in Christ because you knew what to do and not to do, and your conscience is clear about the thing that you are going to do, you would think that that would be a great advantage.

But what he is saying is you use your liberty, but don't let your liberty be a stumbling block for people who are weak and that don't understand what you understand. They don't have the freedom to do what you have the freedom to do.

The portrayal of knowledge in Chapter 8 Verse 13, "Wherefore, if meat make my brother to offend, I will not eat flesh while the world stands, lest I make my brother to offend."

He goes on to say in Romans 14:17 that the kingdom of heaven is not meat and drink. It has nothing to do with food. If I happen to like McDonald's and somebody gets offended over some scripture they think the bible says about me eating McDonald's, I will not eat at McDonald's forever. I don't need to eat there. I don't need to have my own way.

That's freedom! I've said it before, but freedom is not being free to do whatever you want to do. Freedom is being free to not do things!

1 Corinthians Chapter 9 Verses 1 to 27, the position of Paul. Now after all of that, he is going to use himself as an example of knowledge and love, how his knowledge is ministered out of love.

Now in the position of Paul, in Verses 1 and 2, he issued the qualifications. He says "First of all, am I not an apostle? Are you not my work in the Lord?"

Secondly in Verses 3 to 6, the provision. "Do I not have the authority from scripture to eat and to drink? And do I not have the authority like the rest of the apostles to have a wife and a family and expect them to be taken care of too?"

He's making reference to Old Testament scripture, and he also quotes the Lord that he has the right. And it's a teaching of scripture that those who minister the gospel should be supported by the gospel.

He gives examples in Verse 7 to 10 about contribution. He presents three examples. First of all he says "Who goes to war at his own expense?"

How many soldiers do you know that are out serving our country at their own expense? No, they are getting paid. It might not be too good, but they are getting paid.

A farmer goes out and plants his field. Who plants a field and doesn't expect to eat of the crop? Who feeds a herd and doesn't expect to drink of the milk or eat of the meat of the herd? So it is with the things in the body of Christ.

And then Verses 11 and 12, as far as participation, he says "If we have sown unto you spiritual things, is it a great thing if we shall reap your fleshly or carnal things? If others be partakers of this power, literally authority over you, are we not rather? Nevertheless, we have not used this authority, but we suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ."

You would think that by the time he gets up to Verse 12, you're already pulling your wallet out, because he's showing the authority from scripture and the authority from the Lord Himself that those who are serving in the gospel should be supported by the gospel!

Everybody else in life has authority over your money. Whether you are pulling up for gas, going out to eat, or going to the store, people have the authority to ring up the tab and say this is what you have to pay me. And you pay them.

So Paul says if everybody else has this power over you, are not we rather? Shouldn't we be even more so than them?

And so while everybody is probably feeling guilty at this time, he says nevertheless we do not use this authority, but we suffer all things, lest we should hinder the gospel of Christ.

What he's saying is I just shared knowledge with you. Here's what the bible says. Here's what the scripture says. And here's what the Lord says, and I could have correctly walked in and said the bible says, in fact the Lord even says that those who preach the gospel should be ministered to by the gospel.

But then at the end he says "Nevertheless, we don't use this authority."

You see, that's love! He knows that if he were to share out of scripture what the bible says about support for those in position of ministry, it would be correct. It would be exactly what God's word says.

But people would be offended. "Oh, there he goes with the money thing again. All he's after is money!"

Paul says my number one concern is the preaching of the gospel. I want you to hear the gospel. If I felt like pulling this knowledge out of the word of God, and you're not mature enough to be able to handle this concept that I'm trying to share with you, and if I think that you're going to quit hearing the gospel because of it, then I'm not going to teach it. I'll go out and get a job or whatever it takes so that the gospel is not hindered!

Then his motivation in Chapter 9, Verses 15 through 18:

In Verse 18, he says what is my reward then? Verily that, when I preach the gospel, I may make the gospel of Christ without charge that I abuse not my power in the gospel.

Does he have a right to? Yes! Does he use that right? No! Out of love and out of a spiritual concern for them, because he knows they can't handle it because they are not mature enough and they would probably quit or leave or whatever the case may be, he says "That's why I preach the gospel free of charge!"

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Did he take support from other people? Yes he did! Did he take support from some of these people? Yes he did! But he didn't make that the basis for his ministry.

The summation in 1 Corinthian Chapter 9 Verses 19 through 23:

In Verse 19 it says, for though I be free from all men, yet I have made myself servant unto all that I might gain the more. What a tremendous verse!

And then we left off in Chapter 9 with preparation:

Paul just got through using himself as an example of someone who in discipline and in love functions in the truth, but yet he knows in his sensitivity and in his concern, what truth he can share and what truth he can't because it will offend people.

But he said in this preparation "Know you not that they which run in a race run all, that is everybody runs but only one receives the prize, so run that you may obtain. And every man that strives for the mastery is temperate, or self-controlled in all things. Now they do it to obtain a corruptible crown, but we an incorruptible."

An athlete goes through tremendous disciplinary schedules and issues in life: food, exercise, sleep, and he says they do it for a corruptible crown.

He says I therefore so run, not as uncertainly, that is "I know what I am running for, and I know what I'm doing when I'm running," so I fight not as one that beats the air. He's not shadow boxing. He knows who his opponent is and he goes right at him.

He says but I keep under my body, and I bring it into submission and subjection, lest that by any means when I have preached to others, I myself should be a castaway, or more literally, disqualified!

To think that they can train for these races in Paul's time, 7 to 8 months out of the year to get ready for a race, and if you do something wrong, you get disqualified. There goes 7 to 8 months down the drain!

Paul says I keep myself disciplined, lest after having preached to others, I should be disqualified because I'm not living, and I'm not following what I am preaching, and it can be a stumbling block to others.

Knowledge puffs up, but love builds up. Knowledge and love go together. Knowledge must be shared and ministered out of the motivation of love, not out of head knowledge because it will just bowl people over because there's no concern for anyone!

But that's what knowledge does for you. When you pursue that first, down through the years, love has got to catch up to where you can minister and be a ministry to others.

But as we begin Chapter 10, the subject that we're continuing is this word castaway, disqualification. The second illustration now is the example of those who were disqualified.

In Chapter 10, the final chapter in these three, he's still ministering about meat offered to idols. We know that idols are nothing. There's no life in them.

And the meat offered to them is not demon possessed. Paul can freely purchase it out of the marketplace after it's been offered to an idol. It's no big deal!

But there are other people that have a problem with it. That's where someone with the knowledge that says this person doesn't have the knowledge that I have.

They understand it differently than I do and I know the truth about this, but their understanding is they associate the meat with the idol, therefore it is up to me out of love to not purchase that meat for that person to not be offended, even though I think and know they are wrong.

It doesn't matter! What does matter is if we offend another person's conscience on where they are at because if we do offend their conscience, they might just bail out!

But a lot of time, our attitude is "What do I care? That's kind of a stupid thing anyway!" But Paul says no, that's not love.

You might know the truth, but if you share that truth and offend a weaker or younger believer, you are responsible for that offense.

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Now, Paul is now presenting those people who were disqualified, and he's going to use the presentation of the conduct of Israel in Verses 1 through 11.

1 Moreover, brethren, I would not that ye should be ignorant, how that all our fathers were under the cloud, and all passed through the sea;

Moreover, brethren, I would not that you should be ignorant.

He says that 6 times in his letters. If he tells you that, it means "I'm going to school you here with some important things!"

First of all, about the provision of the Lord to the children of Israel:

I want you to notice that there are 5 times in the first 4 verses that the word "all" is found in the text. All means everybody. Everyone received the provision from God.

Now we're talking about millions of people! But after we're through, the only people that entered into the promised-land were two people, Joshua and Caleb. That's it, only two out of millions!

So when he emphasizes all, he's trying to show that God provided for everybody. But not everybody entered in.

How that "all" our fathers were under the cloud, and "all" passed through the sea;

M.V. 1 Corinthians 10:2

2 And were all baptized unto Moses in the cloud and in the sea;

A perfect example of one of the definitions of baptism is identification.

There was no "baptismal ceremony" when God parted the waters and Moses took them through the sea. But they identified with Moses, so they were baptized into Moses in the cloud and in the sea.

3 And did all eat the same spiritual meat;

4 And did all drink the same spiritual drink: for they drank of that spiritual Rock that followed them: and that Rock was Christ.

The rock is Petra. It's the same word that Jesus used back in Matthew Chapter 16 Verse 18 when he called Peter a Petros, a pebble, but he says upon this Petra, meaning Himself, I will build the church.

Petros and Petra are two different words in Greek. Petros is the pebble, and Petra is the slab or the foundation stone.

But it is interesting that five times it is mentioned that everybody received the provision of God, and everybody ate the same spiritual meat and the same spiritual drink from the rock, and the rock that followed them was Christ.

But then in Verse 5, the rebellion:

5 But with many of them God was not well pleased: for they were overthrown in the wilderness.

But with many of them God was not well pleased:

It didn't say all. In the Greek text, it expresses the majority. Everybody but two. That's a lot of people! God was not well pleased, for they were overthrown in the wilderness. That is, their bodies were scattered in the desert. They were killed!

The application:

6 Now these things were our examples, to the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted.

Now these things were our examples.

So Paul is saying that if we study about how God dealt with the children of Israel through their physical circumstances, we can gain a spiritual example for us.

To the intent we should not lust after evil things, as they also lusted. Literally in the Greek text, it's not a verb. It's actually a noun. To the intent that we should not become lusters of evil things as they also lusted.

And so now there are four things that he lists that are characteristics of the lusters.

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K.V.

<u>1 Corinthians 10:7</u> <u>Exodus 32:6</u>

First of all in Verse 7:

7 Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, The people sat down to eat and drink, and rose up to play.

Neither be ye idolaters, as were some of them; as it is written, from Exodus 32:6, The people sat down to eat and to drink, and rose up to play.

This is a great text to understand human nature, and especially even in our day. That's where Moses went up on the mountain to get the 10 Commandments, and the people came to Aaron, Moses' brother, and said we're going to give you our jewelry. Let's melt it down and make it into a calf and we can worship it and have a party.

You see, back in Egypt, they worshipped the golden calf. That's where they got it from. But God delivered them from Egypt. And I think you've read the bible enough to know that the biggest problem they had out in the wilderness was that they kept remembering where God delivered them from.

God gave them manna every day, the same food every day. We're not talking about one's dipped in ketchup and one's dipped in mustard. This is the same food every day!

In fact, the Hebrew word Manna, Ma means what, and Na means is it. Manna means "what is it." Now God fed them every day. All they had to do is go collect it.

The bible says their clothes and their shoes did not wear out. They had everything provided for them. The book of Deuteronomy says the reason why God led them into the wilderness was to teach them that man shall not live by bread alone but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

God could have taken them a different way. He chose the desert instead of the plush country to teach them that you have nothing out here. There were no human resources. Every day they had to trust the Lord.

He says do not be idolaters. They wanted to make a golden calf and have a party while Moses was gone. And when Moses came down off the mountain with the original 10 Commandments on the two tablets, when he saw what they were doing, he threw them to the ground and broke them. He was so upset!

He went back up and got a second set. But I can't help but think that if the Lord comes back today, how much of the world have we brought into the church that we "must have" as part of our Christianity to make ourselves happy and satisfied?

He says don't be idolaters. And idolatry is worshipping any image, whether it's physical or mental. Now by that, I mean that it can be an ambition, a self-want that we rearrange all of our living schedule to accomplish. It's an idol. Or it can be a statue, anything other than Christ!

K.V.

I Corinthians 10:8
Numbers 25:1, 9

Secondly, in Verse 8:

8 Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed, and fell in one day three and twenty thousand.

Neither let us commit fornication, as some of them committed fornication, and fell in one day twenty three thousand people.

That's from Numbers Chapter 25 Verses 1 and 9. The Moabites sent out the women to seduce the Israelites to cause them to sin. And when they sinned, 23,000 were slain.

K.V.

I Corinthians 10:9
Numbers 21:5-6

Thirdly in Verse 9:

9 Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted, and were destroyed of serpents.

Neither let us tempt Christ, as some of them also tempted Christ, and were destroyed by the serpents, or snakes.

That is from Numbers Chapter 21 Verses 5 and 6. That's kind of strange! You think we can tempt Christ? Yes, we can tempt Christ.

Satan did that.

In Matthew Chapter 4 Verse 6, Satan takes Jesus up on one of the ledges of the temple and he says "Jump down, throw yourself down because God has promised you in Psalm 91, Verses 11 and 12 that He will give His angels charge over you, lest you dash your foot against the stone. God has promised it, so "claim the promise," and jump, prove God to be true!

Jesus quoted Deuteronomy 6:16 when He says you shall not tempt the Lord your God, but Him only shall you serve.

So we can tempt Christ. We can out Him in a place of testing Him out to see if He's going to do what He says He's going to do. Judgment also comes from that as the snakes came out of the rocks and bit the people and killed them for their sins.

K.V.

I Corinthians 10:10
Numbers 14:2: 27-30

Fourthly in Verse 10:

10 Neither murmur ye, as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed of the destroyer.

Neither murmur. That's the word complain. And since none of us ever do any of that, we don't have to worry about it, right?

Neither murmur as some of them also murmured, and were destroyed by the destroyer.

That phrase "the destroyer" at the end of Verse 10 is the same word for the angel of death that passed over Egypt and killed the first born of the Egyptians.

So he says don't complain! You see, every time we complain about anything, we're saying that God's will and what he's doing is wrong.

He's in charge of everything. So I'm complaining against Him because that's the way He has it. We have to be careful!

Verse 11, the admonition or warning:

11 Now all these things happened unto them for ensamples: and they are written for our admonition, upon whom the ends of the world are come.

Now all these things happened unto them for our examples: and they are written for our admonition. That's the word warning. Upon whom the ends of the world are come, and that's us. We have all the blessings of the end of the world. And so he says they are all written down for our warning.

We complain because of our lust. That's a factual statement! That's the only reason we complain, because what God is doing doesn't satisfy our lust, therefore we complain.

Where do I get that from? From the children of Israel in the wilderness! They didn't like the way God did it, and so they lusted for other food and for things to be done another way, and God didn't do it their way.

M.V.

I Corinthians 10:12

Now the precaution because of the conduct of Israel in Verses 12 and 13:

First of all he deals with perception in Verse 12.

12 Wherefore let him that thinketh he standeth take heed lest he fall.

Wherefore let him that thinks he stands, let him take heed lest he fall.

The deception is false confidence. When you think that you have arrived, "Okay, I got a handle on it now. I'm not going to fall for that anymore!"

The word "thinks," the one who thinks he stands, is the word presume. So whenever we live on the basis of presumption of our spiritual condition, which is false, the next step is to fall.

M.V.

I Corinthians 10:13

Verse 13, the temptation:

13 There hath no temptation taken you but such as is common to man: but God /s faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above that ye are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape, that ye may be able to bear it.

There has no temptation taken you but such as is common to man:

The word common to man is just one word that means human, what is common amongst human beings. In other words, he is saying that it is nothing special.

Even though all that trials that we suffer, because "you know, nobody knows the trouble I've seen! You say you're a Christian and I'm a Christian, and I really have some trials and you don't even know what trials are!"

He's saying that everything we suffer, it's all common because it's all common to the human.

He says but God is faithful, who will not suffer you to be tempted above, literally beyond what you are able; but will with the temptation also make a way to escape.

The term "way to escape" means a way out. But don't get carried away with that until you find out what it is. He says that you may be able to bear up under it, or carry it.

It's not a way out like escape so I can get out of this trial and not have to be affected by it.

I think I can stand and all of a sudden I find myself in a trial and I'm trying to bail out and I'm saying "God, take this away from me. What's happening to me?" And God says "See, you're not established as you think you are!"

God gives us the grace to handle anything. He doesn't have to change anything. We tell Him that He has to change things or I'm not going to be happy! But God is teaching us to trust Him.

Now I want to introduce this to you because this is very important.

In the bible, the children of Israel are used as an example of the Christian life. And there are three phases.

Number one, salvation:

The example of salvation is when God parted the sea and had Moses lead the people through the parting of the waters. And when the Egyptians came up behind them, God brought the waters back upon the Egyptians and they were drowned.

That's grace! All they had to do is walk in it and God provided it. The blood on the door posts and the passing through the Red Sea, that's all a symbol of salvation.

But then in the wilderness journey, after the children of Israel went through the sea and they went out into the wilderness to go to the promised-land, and by the way, it was an 11 day journey. It took the 40 years!

This is our spiritual growth. Every believer must go through the wilderness journey, where you feel that God has taken everything away from you.

All of the old life, you can't depend upon any of the human resources, nor any of the things of the old life, because God has saved you out of the old life and brought you into a new life.

And you go "Oh, I got saved from all the sin, all the worldly things that had a hold of me, off I go into my new life, and this is a desert!"

What happened here? At least back in Egypt, I had a place to live and there were different places we could go eat, even though we were in slavery.

Remember, they were out in the wilderness and they remembered the onions, and the cucumbers, and all the foods in Egypt, and God was giving them this Manna every day. Every day they complained. "Oh, you just brought us out here to kill us right?"

Have you ever felt that way? God saves you and it's like maybe He saved me to bring me out here and kill me. I don't know? It seems that way!

And why does God take us that way? Because it's the same reason why He took the children of Israel in the book of Deuteronomy, it says so that man will learn that man shall not live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God.

It is so that we learn to go by God's word even to the point that we consider God's word more necessary than our daily food. That's what Job said.

And then spiritual maturity is entering into the promised land of Canaan. Some people think the promised-land represents heaven.

That's not true! Heaven doesn't have giants or enemies. We aren't going to go fight anybody.

The promised-land is spiritual maturity. You see, in order to face the giants, and face the issues, we have to do it God's way. He's the commander!

And the reason why the children of Israel had to go around the mountain was that they were going through the wilderness and they kept complaining. They would not trust the Lord!

He says "Look, I brought you out here and I'm supplying everything for you." They just kept complaining. He says "Do you see that mountain over there? You can't go in to the promised-land. You're going to have to go around that mountain until you die."

So that generation died off. After 40 years, there's a whole new generation of people, plus two from the old generation.

It doesn't mean that they lost their salvation. It just means that for their whole life, they just went around the mountain. But those who entered into the promised-land, entered into spiritual maturity.

And that's why God wanted them out in the desert to trust the Lord with everything that He said and everything that He gave them, because when you go across the river Jordan and you face the giants, you have to obey God's word and not human reason and logic!

Remember when they went across the Red Sea, God parted the sea. But when they went across the river Jordan to enter into the promised-land, God says "When the soles of your feet hit the water, I will part the water."

You see, that's the first step. If you go all the way through the wilderness, and you come to the Jordan River and say "remember back there when God out of His grace just parted the waters and we walked right through?"

Well, He says that He'll do the same thing now, but I have to take a step of obedience and obey Him. And when my foot hits the water, I'm saying "Well, what if He doesn't part them when I hit the water?" Well, I guess I go under!

You see, that's why the ones who went through the wilderness had to learn to obey God, or else they would be standing on the shore saying "I'm not going in there. If He parts the water I will go. But I'm not going to step in it to see if God's going to part it or not!"

But to enter into spiritual maturity, you have to go by God's word. How many people would come to Jericho and see those big walls all around the city, and in fact, the walls were so thick that you could drive chariots over the tops of the walls that protected the city.

They had their own army. You couldn't penetrate the city. You couldn't defeat them. So here are the children of Israel lined up on the hill looking at this thing, and God says that's your first issue here. Now here's what I want you to do. I want you to march around this city once every day. And on the seventh day, I want you to march around seven times, I want you to blow the trumpets, and the walls will fall down.

Right! Who ever heard of that for a strategy? "Lord, just give us some cannons or some weapons because that's what you do, you attack!"

You see, the group that died in the wilderness, they would not have obeyed. They would have said "That's ridiculous." But they obeyed and they defeated Jericho!

I share this with you because this is one of Paul's favorite topics to teach believers that they are examples, *Tupos* is the word, which means types. They are types of our spiritual journey.

There are three phases. Many believers have trouble with the second phase, the wilderness journey. They're always complaining. They say things like "I don't like it, I'm glad I'm saved, but I miss my old life, and I miss the things of the world.

I have made this statement before but if you stop and think about it, Satan treats us better in the world than Jesus does. The Lord gives us what we need. Satan gives us whatever we lust for!

So the thinking back in the captivity in Egypt was that in the physical, in the human, we had it better back in Egypt. Out here in the wilderness, God brought us out here to kill us.

No He didn't! He's trying to teach you that you cannot live by bread alone, but by every word that proceeds out of the mouth of God. It's God's word. We will obey, or we will go around the mountain!

Now Paul gets to the main teaching or instruction that he began back in Chapter 8 Verse 1. So for all of this time, 2 and ½ chapters, he's still dealing with the meat offered to idols.

But he wanted to present all of the factors involved, not only in this subject, but for any issue, is that knowledge must be motivated by love that is concern for other people.

So he says in Verses 14 to 33, the participation with idols:

14 Wherefore, my dearly beloved, flee from idolatry.

Run from idolatry!

15 I speak as to wise men; judge ye what I say.

Verses 16 to 18, about communion or fellowship:

16 The cup of blessing which we bless, is it not the communion of the blood of Christ? The bread which we break, is it not the communion of the body of Christ?

17 For we *being* many are one bread, *and* one body: for we are all partakers of that one bread.

18 Behold Israel after the flesh: are not they which eat of the sacrifices partakers of the altar?

So then in Verse 19, he applies the knowledge:

19 What say I then? that the idol is any thing, or that which is offered in sacrifice to idols is any thing?

In other words, it's not. An idol is nothing, and the meat is nothing but a piece of meat. But it's the association and identification with the object to whom it is being directed.

20 But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to devils, and not to God: and I would not that ye should have fellowship with devils.

But I say, that the things which the Gentiles sacrifice, they sacrifice to demons.

The word devils is literally the word demons. And they do not sacrifice to God. I would not that you should have fellowship with demons.

21 Ye cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of devils: ye cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of devils.

You cannot drink the cup of the Lord, and the cup of demons: you cannot be partakers of the Lord's table, and of the table of demons.

22 Do we provoke the Lord to jealousy? are we stronger than he?

M.V.

1 Corinthians 10:23

Then he presents what turns out to be his third principle for life.

The first one is back in 1 Corinthians 6:12.

23 All things are lawful for me, but all things are not expedient: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not.

He says all things are lawful for me. That's my freedom. But all things are not expedient: that is beneficial. All things are lawful for me, but I will not be brought under the authority of any.

So I have freedom in Christ. But he says the principles I go by are, is this thing beneficial to me in my relationship with the Lord? Is it beneficial to other people?

Secondly, is this thing going to bring me under its authority? Am I going to become addicted or obsessed? Is it going to have authority over me?

So in Verse 23 he says all things are lawful for me, but all things are not beneficial: all things are lawful for me, but all things edify not. There's the third thing.

But now he says that all things do not edify. The word edify is a construction term that means to develop or to build.

I'm free, but you know, all things don't develop a relationship with the Lord. All things don't contribute to other people in their development and their growth in Christ.

So he says that's what I go by. There's my freedom. All things are lawful for me. I'm free in Christ. But all things are not beneficial. I will not be brought under the authority of anything. And all

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things do not serve for spiritual development. For himself, and for others, those are his considerations.

So he says, putting it in a summary form, this life is not about acquiring for oneself, but rather how your life influences another person's life.

It's not about acquiring or getting for oneself. It's about how my life influences the person or people around me. You either pull them down or build them up. You'll either turn them away from Christ or turn them to Christ.

So then in Verse 24, he gives two commands.

24 Let no man seek his own, but every man another's *wealth*.

First of all, let no man seek his own, but every man seek that of another.

Now here's the second command:

25 Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, *that* eat, asking no question for conscience sake:

Whatsoever is sold in the shambles, and the King James says "shambles," but it is actually the Greek word for marketplace.

The command is eat it, asking no question for conscience sake:

If it's sold down in the marketplace and there's no tag on it saying that it's offered to an idol, it's just a piece of meat. Go ahead and eat it!

K.V.

1 Corinthians 10:26
Psalm 24:1: 50:12

26 For the earth *is* the Lord's, and the fullness thereof.

That's a quote from Psalm 24:1.

Now under the second command, there are now two sub-commands:

27 If any of them that believe not bid you *to a feast*, and ye be disposed to go; whatsoever is set before you, eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

If any of them that are not believers should bid, or invite you to a feast, and you are disposed, or you desire to go; whatever is set before you, and here's the command: eat, asking no question for conscience sake.

K.V.

I Corinthians 10:28 Psalm 24:1: 50:12
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28 But if any man say unto you, This is offered in sacrifice unto idols, eat not for his sake that shewed it, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fulness thereof:

But if anyone says to you, as they're serving you, this is offered in sacrifice unto idols, then the command is don't eat it, for his sake that pointed it out to you, and for conscience sake: for the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof:

Again quoting Psalm 24:1.

29 Conscience, I say, not thine own, but of the other: for why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

He says now conscience, I say, not your own conscience, but the other person:

Remember, conscience is that information gathering part of the brain. If they tell me that the meat has been offered to idols, and I should participate with eating that meat after they tell me that, I am developing their conscience to accept idol worship as being okay!

Now in my own conscience, that doesn't mean that to me. But to this person that just pointed it out to me, now I have to represent Christ and I have to say I can't eat it.

But you see, it's for his conscience. All of a sudden his conscience is taking in different information. What do you mean you're not going to eat it? Well, we serve Christ. We do not serve idols. And so you can get into a dialog or explanation of it.

But then Paul presents two questions:

For why is my liberty judged of another man's conscience?

It's kind of the little "snippy" attitudes we get into and it's like "Why should my freedom be taken away from me just because of them?"

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30 For if I by grace be a partaker, why am I evil spoken of for that for which I give thanks?

I know that I can eat that meat and it's not going to mean anything to me. And I'm giving God thanks for it and I receive it as a gift from God. But somebody else doesn't see it that way and it could lead them down the wrong road as far as seeking of truth goes!

M.V.

I Corinthians 10:31

So his conclusion:

31 Whether therefore ye eat, or drink, or whatsoever ye do, do all to the glory of God.

It doesn't make a difference what you do. Everything that you do, do it for the glory of God.

The word glory, just in summary, and we've gone over this word before, but it's the word Doxa and it means substance. The glory of God is the substance of God.

Do everything that people will see the very nature and substance of God. That should be the motivation. And if it involves the "touchy" area of what kind of food you're eating verses offending other people, just don't eat it. It's no big deal. It's just food!

So that's the third main command in Verse 31, do all to the glory of God!

The fourth command in Verse 32:

32 Give none offence, neither to the Jews, nor to the Gentiles, nor to the church of God:

33 Even as I please all men in all things, not seeking mine own profit, but the profit of many, that they may be saved.

Quite a teaching in those last three chapters!

**Let's close with prayer,
 Our heavenly Father,**

Again we thank you. We look forward to each opportunity you give to us to sit under the ministry of your Spirit taking your word and ministering it to our hearts and minds.

We pray that you will continue to draw us closer to you so that we might learn from your word and that we might grow in Christ. We pray this in Jesus' name, Amen!