



The Oaks Baptist Church
Grand Prairie, Texas

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Studies in 1 Corinthians

<u>Date</u>	<u>Lesson</u>	<u>Text</u>
12/05	Introduction	
12/12	Why Can't We Get Along	1:1-17
12/19	Remember the Cross	1:18-2:2
12/26	NO CLASS - CHRISTMAS	
01/02	Spiritually Mature	2:14-3:16
01/09	Servant Leadership	4:1-21
01/16	Immoral World	5:1-13 and 6:9-20
01/23	Marriage & Singleness	7:1-35
01/30	Life's Grey Area	8:1-13 and 9:19-26 and 10:14-33
02/06	Worship	11:2-16
02/13	Lord's Supper	11:17-34
02/20	Are You Gifted	12:4-31
02/27	Greatest Way to Live	13:1-13
03/06	Place to Proclaim	14:1-29
03/13	Hope	15:3-57
03/20	Summary and Review	

Food for Thought

Freedom

Christ came to give us liberty
By dying in our place; Now with new
freedom we are bound to share His love
and grace. Freedom doesn't give us the
right to do what we please, but to do
what pleases God.

*For you were called to freedom, brethren;
only do not turn your freedom into an
opportunity for the flesh, but through love
serve one another. (Gal 5:13 NASB)*

From "Our Daily Bread", July 4, 2009)

Wrestling with Life's Grey Areas

1 Cor 8:1-13; 9:19-26; 10:14-33

What This Lesson Is About

Members of a small rural church were in disagreement on whether or not a reference to abstention from the sale and use of alcohol as a beverage should be included in their church covenant. When the church finally voted to retain that wording, two men were so incensed about it that they left the church. In contrast, the use of wine and beer as table beverages is simply not an issue in many European churches; yet, a Hungarian congregation regarded smoking as grounds for expulsion from the church. Such issues have provoked controversy among Christians from the beginning. At Corinth, the practice of eating meats that had been dedicated to some pagan deity produced conflicting points of view. In this lesson, Paul addresses that question.

Explore The Bible Passage

Let us begin our study by reading chapters 8 and 9 of 1 Corinthians in their entirety. As you read, note what Paul had to say to those believers who had no scruples against partaking of food that had been dedicated to idols. Then read 1 Cor. 10:14-33, where Paul is still dealing with the same subject.

Take A Closer Look

1. In 1st-century Corinth, it was a common practice to dedicate a dinner to one of a multitude of pagan gods. But the problem was broader. Most of the meats for sale in the market were left over from such occasions.
2. Many Christians in Corinth carried over the superstitions that had been instilled in them during their pagan upbringing, and were convinced that food offered to idols was infected by demons. (Paul alludes to this in 8:7.) For them to partake of such food, doing deliberately what they thought was wrong, this would be sin.
3. But the attitude voiced by Paul in 8:4 and 10:19-20a, (i.e., "an idol has no real existence") seems to have been the majority opinion; and those who held this point of view saw no reason to avoid foods dedicated to various deities that had no real existence.
4. While those who had scruples about eating such foods could be quite annoying, by insisting that others abide by their taboos, those who had more lenient views might be guilty of tempting their more cautious brethren to do what they really thought was sinful.
5. In Paul's writings he repeatedly reaffirms the principle of freedom in Christ (9:1-4; 10:29b-30); but, just as frequently, he insists that the exercise of freedom must be controlled by Christian love (8:9, 13).

Think It Through

We would do well to remember that even beliefs that make no sense to us can be matters of deep conviction in others. Paul identifies the driving force behind all that he does in 9:23. His concern for the spiritual welfare of brothers and sister in Christ was of much greater importance than his desire to assert his own rights. Shouldn't that be the fundamental motive of all Christians? Voluntarily giving up our rights for Jesus' sake is sometimes more honorable than doggedly defending them.

(adapted from "Studies in 1 Corinthians" by Lucien Coleman)

NOTES AND CROSS-REFERENCES

1 Cor 8:1-13

- Knowledge and Love - It takes both in responding to doctrinal differences
 - Knowledge can bring pride and arrogance (Prov 18:2; Prov 26:12)
 - 2 types of knowledge
 - Factual - based on accepted truths and logic (Prov 18:15; Prov 23:12)
 - Relational - based on experiences (relationships) (Job 42:5; Col 3:10)
- Dealing with the "weak" in faith
 - True freedom doesn't always mean to do, but the ability to chose (Rom 6:18-22)

1 Cor 9:19-26

- To really reach people there must be a common ground
 - Language (Col 4:3-4)
 - Respect (James 2:1-4; 1 Peter 2:16-17)
 - Service (1 Peter 4:10; Eph 6:7)
- As Christians we must be committed to the Gospel
 - By being God's servants - meeting the needs of others (James 2:14-16; 2 Cor 9:12-13)
 - By being committed to complete the tasks assigned by God (1 Tim 4:7; Matt 24:45-46)

1 Cor 10:14-33

- Idolatry - Flee from it and therefore keep the unity of the Body of Christ (Col 3:5-11)
- Do not be unequally yoked with unbelievers (2 Cor 6:14-17)
- Do not be a stumbling block to other believers (Luke 17:1-3)