

Chapter Eight

THE PROBLEM OF CONSCIENCE

(8:1-13)

IDEAS TO INVESTIGATE:

1. Why is Paul so antagonistic to “knowledge”—is he anti-intellectual?
2. Why were Christians having a problem with foods offered to idols?
3. If eating or not eating is irrelevant, why all the fuss?
4. Is it fair to hold me responsible for someone else’s weak conscience?

SECTION 1

The Principle (8:1-3)

Now concerning food offered to idols: we know that “all **8** of us possess knowledge.” “Knowledge” puffs up, but love builds up. ²If any one imagines that he knows something, he does not yet know as he ought to know. ³But if one loves God, one is known by him.

8:1a Provocation of Idolatry: Idolatry was a way of life. Greek cities were “full” of idols (Acts 17:16-34). In Corinth an inscription has been unearthed by archaeologists marking the location of a “meat market” in the probable vicinity of the temple of Apollo. The well of one of the shops along the south stoa has yielded a stone fragment reading, “Lucius, the butcher.” In Pompeii archaeologists have found a configuration of buildings including both a chapel of the imperial cult and a counter for the selling of sacrificial meat. In the ancient world it was almost impossible to secure meat which had not been offered to an idol. Some of the pagan temples appear to have provided auxiliary “clubrooms” which offered social dining as well as the more religious cultic meals. The cultic meals, according to William Baird, were held in recognition of a host of public occasions—marriage, victory in battle, honor to a hero. The prominence of such dining customs made it difficult for the Corinthian citizen to avoid sacrificial meat. When he was invited out to dinner, it was inevitably served as the main course. If his host were a devotee of Artemis, a successful hunt would be consummated by an elaborate banquet after the animal had been sacrificed to the patron deity. Could a Christian attend such a party? If he attended should he eat the sacrificial meat?

Please study Romans, chapter 14, in connection with I Corinthians 8, 9, and 10.

Hellenistic banquets were fabulous affairs. Petronius writes in *The Satyricon*:

Let's see, first off we had some roast pork garnished with loops of sausage and flanked with more sausages and some giblets done to a turn. And there were pickled beets and some wholewheat bread made without bleach. . . . Then came a course of cold tart with a mixture of some wonderful Spanish wine and hot honey. . . . Then there were chickpeas and lupins, no end of filberts, and an apple apiece. . . . The main course was a roast of bear meat. . . . It reminds me of roast boar, so I put down about a pound of it. Besides, I'd like to know, if bears eat men, why shouldn't men eat bears? To wind up, we had some soft cheese steeped in fresh wine, a snail apiece, some tripe hash, liver in pastry boats and eggs topped with more pastry and turnips and mustard and beans boiled in the pod and—but enough's enough.

Besides the Greek idols, the Roman emperors were attempting to insure allegiance by enforcing emperor worship. It was not participation in formal rituals of idol worship that bothered these Corinthians. That was strictly forbidden by apostolic command (cf. Acts 15:20, 29; I Cor. 10:14; II Cor. 6:16; Gal. 5:20; I Thess. 1:9; I Peter 4:3; I John 5:21; Rev. 9:20-21). But the worship of idols had so thoroughly saturated the culture of the first century everyone was brought directly into contact with it one way or another—even the Jews.

Practically every morsel of meat sold in public markets (I Cor. 10:25) of Greek and Roman cities had, in one way or another, been part of a sacrifice to an idol. There were public, formal worship services in pagan temples at which foods were offered; there were private, home services in honor of idols at which foods of all kinds were dedicated to the gods. So completely was this the case, the word in Hellenistic Greek "to sacrifice" had come to mean simply "to kill or to butcher." A native citizen of a Greek city like Corinth—especially if he were poor—would consider himself unfairly deprived if he were forbidden to participate in the public festivals at which idol sacrifices were served because it might be his only opportunity to eat meat for several months. These public festivals were probably held in the courts of the idol temples where tables were set up (cf.

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8:10; 10:14-22) for the public. The citizen of Corinth who became a Christian would have a very difficult time trying to continue social amenities among neighbors and relatives who were not Christian. It was a tradition practiced by many pagans to take some of their sacrificial animal's carcass home with them from the ritual and serve it on their own tables to friends and relatives.

Idol worship, feasting, and the immorality that went along with it were part of the very essence of Corinthian social life and culture. It was all part of everyday living. Some Christians easily settled the issue in their own minds. They knew, "an idol is no god." Actually, some non-Christians had also decided, philosophically, that idols were not gods. The Epicureans considered the worship of idols to be nonsense. One Hellenistic writer says of the gods that they "are far away, or they have no ears, or they do not exist, or they pay not the least attention to us." The Stoics, also, abandoned polytheism for a kind of pagan monotheism or pantheism. These pagan "atheists" practiced the forms of idolatry for practical political reasons but did not believe the myths. The majority of non-Christians, however, did eat such foods as *really* offered to an idol (I Cor. 8:7). And some Christians had *not* settled in their minds that an idol was not a god. Some Christians, especially those from Jewish backgrounds, abhorred all the trappings associated with idolatry and felt as if they had sinned if they even touched such things or looked upon them.

Some idolatrous rituals pronounced holy formulas over the sacrificial animals which allegedly turned the sacrifices into the god who was to receive it. In this ritual the god himself was allegedly sacrificed and when the priests and the worshipers ate the meat of the sacrifices, the strength and glory of the god supposedly passed into the worshipers. Many pagans also believed one way to protect themselves from having demons come inside them through their mouths was to eat meat sacrificed to a *good* god (whose presence would be in the sacrificial meat) and this would put up a barrier against the evil god who might come into them through some food.

This presented a very serious problem for the infant church. It involves the most crucial elements of Christian community—love, liberty, conscience, temptation, knowledge and spiritual maturation. The apostolic resolution of the question was, and is, of immense importance. If it were a prohibition of Christianity under any circumstances to eat meat sacrificed to idols, then the Gentile convert becomes bound to a legal system as condemning as the Mosaic law

and a legalism as impossible as the Jewish rabbinical traditions. If, on the other hand, the Greek Christian was free to do as he pleased in every circumstance, he was given license to carelessly trample upon the tender scruples of a weaker brother and probably cause him to sin.

Paul suffered slanderous misrepresentation and hateful persecution as a consequence of his teaching concerning Christian liberty (see Acts 21:21-24). Although Paul was in full accord with this teaching, it was not merely his but the Holy Spirit's. And anyone who opposed it was "severed from Christ, fallen from grace" (see Gal. 5:1-12).

8:1b-2: Problem of Intellectualism: Paul is not against knowledge or use of the intellect. He "reasoned" from the Scriptures (Acts 18:4, 19). He appealed to logic and deductive processes as befitting Christians (Rom. 12:1-2). He told the Philippians to "think logically" on Christian virtues (Phil. 4:8). His warning here is against *intellectualism*. Intellectualism is the arrogant doctrine that the ultimate principle of reality is human reason. Intellectualism holds that it is possible for the human mind to discover everything man needs to know. It thus dispenses with the need for a revelation from God—eventually dispensing with the need for God at all.

Paul uses two Greek words *oida* and *ginosko* interchangeably or synonymously for *knowing* and *knowledge*. Paul does not seem to be using these two words with as much difference as most commentators allege. It is apparent from the context that he is using irony when he says we know that "all of us possess knowledge." In fact, he is probably quoting a statement from some of the Corinthians themselves. Some of them were enamored of "knowledge" (see I Cor. 1:18-31; 2:1-16; 3:18). These may have been intellectuals agreeing with the gnostic Christians who supposed that the acquisition of mystical, divine knowledge freed one from any moral qualms about participating in the expressions of pagan culture.

The trouble with intellectualism is that it *inflates* (Gr. *phusioi*) the human ego. Those who "know better" than others are always in danger of feeling superior. Knowledge which does that is not true knowledge. There is a wide distance between human knowledge and heavenly wisdom (cf. James 3:13-18). Intellectualism seeks to tear down those of inferior knowledge in order to inflate self. *Love* (Gr. *agape*) seeks to *edify* (Gr. *oikodomei*, build up) the intellectually inferior by denying self. Knowledge is necessary. It certainly is not all that is necessary in man's relationship to God and his fellow man. Just because a person has something analyzed logically, scientifically

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and judiciously does not mean he is prepared on that basis alone to make an ethical decision about another man's salvation or standing before God. Paul clearly admonishes Christians *not* to judge others on the basis of knowledge alone (cf. Rom. 14:14-15). Knowledge must be tempered with love. Love is the motive that will make the right use of knowledge.

The apostle challenges the intellectualistic approach to Christian brotherhood by saying, "If any one *imagines* (Gr. *dokei*, supposes, believes) that he knows something, he does not yet know as he *ought* (Gr. *dei*, is obligated, necessarily, is required) to know." Egocentric knowledge falls short of God's mark for man. There is more to ultimate truth than accumulation of knowledge for knowledge's sake. Man has a higher obligation than knowledge (I Cor. 13:1-13)—that is to *love!*

8:3 Presentation of Ideal: The object of true knowledge is not human intellectual superiority, but a participation in the divine nature (cf. II Peter 1:3-4; II Cor. 3:18; John 6:63) of God Himself. Paul puts it this way, "But if one loves God, one is known by him." The object of true knowledge is not "something" but Some One—an experiential knowledge of God and Jesus Christ, His Son (cf. John 17:3). God cannot be reduced to fact or doctrines, although he cannot be known apart from his deeds. Paul is not referring to knowing *about* God. He is talking about the knowledge of God that only comes at the point where personal commitment in faith and love is made by the whole person of man to the whole Person of God. The ultimate method of knowing is *agape* (love)—personal commitment which surrenders all of self to God. Paul's view of ultimate knowledge rests on divine revelation wherein God's knowledge of man has priority. No man can *know* God unless he first lets God know him. Man cannot even love God until he allows God to love him first (I John 4:19). As long as a man elevates himself through pride in human reason, he will not *humble* himself to be *ruled over* by God. Unless Christ takes complete possession of us we cannot know him (see John 13:6-9) because we are not letting him know us. Paul uses this same idea in Galatians 4:9—to be known by God is to know him. The point is this: when God knows us as his own, in a relationship akin to marriage (but deeper and surer), it is only then that we *know* the blessedness of being related to him. Certain aspects of the divine nature may be known factually from nature (cf. Rom. 1:19-20), but experiential, intimate and personal knowledge of God comes only

to those who do his will (John 7:17). Being known by and possessed by God, enables man to see things from God's viewpoint (II Cor. 5:14-17). Only then does man begin to have proper knowledge of anything—most of all, proper knowledge about whether he may eat food sacrificed to idols or not.

Man must love God with all his mind, soul, heart and strength, and his neighbor as himself. When that decision is made we will take everything we know about God's revealed will, about the experiences of life, and about our neighbor and use it to build up the kingdom of God in people's lives. To love God is to be known by Him (I John 4:20). Love requires proper concern for a brother's lack of understanding. It is love that controls the Christian from acting according to knowledge (even when such knowledge may be correct enough in itself) when it would tempt, alienate, or otherwise cause a brother to sin who does not see the issue as clearly or as innocently as I suppose I do.

SECTION 2

The Persons (8:4-7)

4 Hence, 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." ⁵For although there may be so-called gods in heaven or on earth—as indeed there are many "gods" and many "lords"—⁶yet 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.

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

8:4-6 The Sure: After digressing toward the subject of true knowledge, Paul comes back to the question of eating meat sacrificed to an idol. He appeals to the validity of using empirical knowledge to establish that an idol is not a god. He uses an interesting idiom in Greek to say this. Literally it reads, *oidamen hoti ouden eidolon en kosmo*, or, "we know that no an idol in the world (is) . . ." The RSV translated it, ". . . we know that an idol has no real existence." Idols are "out of this world." They do not exist.

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Throughout chapters 8, 9, and 10 of this epistle, and in Romans chapters 14 and 15, Paul deals with the problems arising in the area of opinions because some Christians are “strong” and some are “weak.” The terms “strong” and “weak” are not referring to spiritual strength or weakness—nor to morality. Both categories of brethren, if they have not love, consider themselves spiritually superior to the other. Without love, the one who “abstains” (or “the weak”) will consider the other *worldly*. Without love, the one who “partakes” (or “the strong”) will categorize the scrupulous as *pharisaical*. The terms “weak” and “strong” have to do with matters of opinion or individual preferences. They have to do with an individual’s cultural, psychological, traditional background and experience. The translation “weak” and “strong” is unfortunate. It would be better to translate, “him who abstains” and “him who eats” as in Romans 14:3; or, better yet, “the sure” and “the suspicious” as we have done in our outline.

Since Paul classifies “the weak” (8:7) as those whose scruples cause them to *abstain* from eating meat that had been sacrificed to idols; by inference, we classify the “strong” as those who could, with good conscience, *eat* meat sacrificed to idols because they *knew* that an idol was not a god.

It should be a matter of certain knowledge to every Christian that there is only one God. He is God of the whole universe, God of all men, Creator of everything that exists, and there is one Lord, Jesus Christ, co-equal with God. It was clear to every Jew (Deut. 6:4). If there is only one God, it is clear that “an idol has no real existence.” Therefore, the worship of idols is sheer folly; it is the worship of nothing.

8:7 The Suspicious: But such knowledge was not so certain in the minds of some of the Christians at Corinth. To some of the Greek-Christians the images (idols) did represent *something*. In the pagan world there were many so-called gods and lords in the heavens and on earth. So, in the mentality, opinions, or “suspicions” of the Greek-Christians these images were real beings called “gods.” Paul repeats his admonition in chapter 10:19-20 that an idol has no real existence, but he warns there that eating meat sacrificed to an idol may endanger even a “sure” Christian of fellowship with demons!

The Greek phrase, *‘All’ ouk en pasin he gnosis*, is literally, “But not in all the knowledge.” The RSV translation, *possess*, is not a good translation. No doubt, every Christian in Corinth had been

taught that there was only one God, Jehovah, and one Lord, Jesus Christ. They undoubtedly acknowledged the teaching. But what they acknowledged was not “in” them—that is, not integrated into their willingness. The knowledge that there was only one God was something about which they still had emotional reservations. Paul wrote in Romans 14:23, “But he who has doubts is condemned, if he eats, because he does not act from faith; for whatever does not proceed from faith is sin.” These Greek-Christians had been taught there was only one God—they had mentally acknowledged it—but they still didn’t *trust it!* In Romans 14:5, Paul writes, “Let every one be *fully convinced* in his own mind.” The Greek verb there is *plerophoreistho*, meaning literally, “completely carried.” It is the same verb as in Hebrews 10:22, translated, “full assurance” of faith. In other words, unless the knowledge is “carried fully” by the mind, the “weak” or “suspicious” Christian should not engage in the action.

The question of urgency, however, is, *why* do not all Christians have full assurance that idols are nothing? Paul’s answer is, “some, through being hitherto accustomed to idols, eat food as really offered to an idol; and their conscience, being weak, is defiled.” The reason for their weakness is a life-time consciousness of idols as gods. RSV translates the Greek word *sunetheia* by the word *accustomed*, but it means literally, “to know with.” It would be better translated, *consciousness*. The word does *not* emphasize *compulsion* to *do* right, as we think of *conscience*. It emphasizes a conscious *knowledge* of what *is* right or wrong. Paul’s point is that these Greek-Christians had lived so long with idolatry in their every-day consciousness, they were simply conditioned or trained to accept the idea that an idol was really a god. People may live in an environment where what is false is so widely accepted and practiced as true, and never challenged, they grow up assuming it is true. Such attitudes become so deeply ingrained on the mind through constant exposure and the pressures of circumstance they are not easily wiped out of the mind. Jewish Christians had difficulties changing their minds about many things in the Mosaic system abrogated by the New Testament.

The Greek phrase, *hos eidolothuton esthousin*, is literally, “as an idol offering they eat. . . .” They felt they were still partaking in the *worship* of the idol by eating food which had been offered in the pagan sacrifices. Missionaries today have similar experiences. A belief in witchcraft or voodoo long continues to lurk in otherwise well taught Christians and they allow themselves to be bothered by it.

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Plummer offers this comment: "It is the force of habits which lasts. . . . They have been so accustomed to regard an idol as a reality, as representing a god that exists, that . . . in spite of their conversion, they cannot get rid of the feeling that, by eating food which has been offered to an idol, they are taking part in the worship of heathen gods; they cannot eat from faith (Rom. 14:23)."

The meat, in itself, was neither clean or unclean. It was indifferent. But since they could not help feeling it was defiled by having been offered to idols, they went against their own judgment of what was right and thereby judged themselves. While Paul plainly classifies this as a sign of intellectual weakness, he also makes it clear in the remainder of the chapter that such weakness was entitled to forbearance and respect from Christians who were not bothered by the weakness. Foods have nothing in themselves which will bring guilt upon a person (see Mark 7:18-19; Luke 11:41). When people do something they are convinced is wrong they bring condemnation upon themselves. God is greater than our mind, and if our own mind condemns us, we will stand condemned (cf. I John 3:19-21). An un-instructed mind may condemn what is *not* wrong, or allow what *is*; but in any case, it ought to be obeyed until it is instructed.

SECTION 3

The Practice (8:8-13)

⁸Food will not commend us to God. We are no worse off if we do not eat, and no better off if we do. ⁹Only take care lest this liberty of yours somehow become a stumbling block to the weak. ¹⁰For if any one sees you, a man of knowledge, at table in an idol's temple, might he not be encouraged, if his conscience is weak, to eat food offered to idols? ¹¹And so by your knowledge this weak man is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. ¹²Thus, sinning against your brethren and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ. ¹³Therefore, if food is a cause of my brother's falling, I will never eat meat, lest I cause my brother to fall.

8:8-9 The Sanction: Those who because of their superior knowledge eat meat sacrificed to idols without guilt are not esteemed by God any higher than those who abstain because of guilt. While

Paul is concerned here with the "strong" being careless toward the "weak," it is clear (from Romans chapter 14) the "weak" are not relieved of obligation to understand the "strong" person's liberties and, in love, allow him freedom to exercise his knowledge (cf. I Cor. 10:29). The abstainer is as responsible to love as the non-abstainer! But here in I Corinthians 8, Paul is addressing his admonition to the non-abstainers. They were apparently contemptuous of the abstainers and continuing to eat meat sacrificed to idols with the attitude that they *did not care* how their actions affected their brethren. Food, no matter what it is, is a matter of indifference. Peter had to be given a divine revelation about this matter (cf. Acts 10:9-16). Paul says, "We gain nothing by eating; we lose nothing by not eating." The issue is not eating or abstaining from any particular food. Food has nothing to do with the spiritual in man. It sustains the body only. Paul is not, of course, dealing with gluttony, or taking poisonous substances into the body which would do physical harm. He is dealing with all foods as to where purchased and what association they may have had prior to the Christian's contact with them.

The issue is: *how much do you love your brother!* The admonition is that we must be prepared to sacrifice any liberty we have concerning *things* to save a *person*. The sanction is not against food of any kind. It is against an unloving attitude.

In verse 9 Paul uses the Greek word *exousia* and it is translated, *liberty*. It is the word most commonly translated, "authority, right, power." The most common Greek word for *liberty* is *eleutheria*; also often translated, *freedom*. Paul is evidently emphasizing the *rights* the knowledgeable Christian has because of a clearer understanding. Such a one has the *right* to eat anything he pleases without guilt. But just because it is an inalienable right does not mean it cannot be willingly surrendered out of love. The Christian brother whose knowledge (cultural, experiential, or scriptural) permits him to be free of guilt in some matter of opinion, dare not practice it if it will cause another brother (who understands the practice from a different cultural or moral background) to stumble and fall in his spiritual journey. Paul uses the Greek word *proskomma* for *stumbling-block*; it means, "an obstacle against which one may dash his foot, or a hindrance over which one trips and falls." That which one Christian may do with freedom from guilt may, because of the doing, produce a serious failure in another Christian who may be encouraged to do what he considers wrong.

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8:10-11 The Sin: To lead someone by your liberty to do something he believes he is not free to do, causes him to sin, to incur guilt, and destroys his union with Christ. The exercise of rights by the “strong” may destroy the fundamental moral resolve of a “weaker” brother against sinful practices so that he may be led to engage in practices *clearly prohibited* in the scriptures. Paul wrote to Roman Christians, “. . . it is wrong for anyone to make others fall by what he eats” (Rom. 14:20).

It is sinful to do anything that would cause anyone else to violate his own conscience. It is a sin to carelessly flaunt one’s Christian liberty and undermine the moral decisiveness of another. Too many think of their *own* “rights” first. Paul said we ought to endure anything rather than put an obstacle in the way of the gospel of Christ (I Cor. 9:12). It is a sinful attitude that does *not* think *first* of pleasing one’s brother for his good to edify him (Rom. 15:1-2) because our Lord did not please himself (Rom. 15:3). These principles apply to things Christians may have every right to do; things the knowledgeable Christian is certain are not at all sinful in themselves; things the Christian may do without any guilt. If, through any right we may have, a brother may be morally injured we *must suspend* that right for his salvation.

8:12-13 The Seriousness: Paul uses the Greek present participle *tuptontes* which is translated *wounding*. In present, participial, form the word means a continuous, violent, *beating*. It is the same word used to describe the beating the soldiers gave Christ (Matt. 27:30; Mark 15:19). Earlier (8:11) Paul said causing a weak brother to sin against his own conscience was to *destroy* the brother for whom Christ died. Now (8:12) he says such sin against a brother is sin against Christ. That is serious. Destroy another human being and you are actually attempting to destroy God. Paul warned the Romans “Do not, for the sake of food, destroy the work of God” (Rom. 14:20). Trample upon another human being’s weaknesses and you are despising the work of God in that person’s life—you are despising God! It is that serious! To have one’s own way (even if that way is correct and guiltless in itself) at the expense of another person’s relationship to Christ is to commit a grievous sin against the Lord.

In verse 13 Paul uses the double negative in Greek *ou me* to state emphatically that if eating meat would cause a brother to *stumble* (Gr. *skandalizei*, be scandalized, trapped, ensnared), he would *never* eat meat again. The Greek text also includes the phrase, *eis ton aiona*,

which would be translated, “unto the end of the age, or world.” In other words Paul is saying, “I am ready to give up any practice of my life, even if it is harmless and enjoyable and may be done with a clear conscience, *if it causes any brother to destroy his relationship with Christ.*” Only those who are willing to do the same are fit for the kingdom of God (Rom. 14:15-21).

SECTION 4

THE PROVISIO

The self-denial of the “strong” brother should be allowed a proviso (i.e., a qualification). This will be amplified at more length in chapters nine and ten. Suffice it to say here, the non-abstaining brother is not obligated to give up his Christian liberty in some cases: (a) there are definite scriptural examples (as well as commands) by both Jesus and Paul (Matt. 15:1-20; Mark 7:1-13; Gal. 2:3-5; Gal. 2:11-14; 5:1-12; Col. 2:16-23) that when certain “brethren” tried to bind on them traditions and opinions as *necessary* for salvation, the Christian is *obligated to resist*; (b) there are people, minutely scrupulous (“nit-pickers”), who may try to use an appeal to their scruples against some area of liberty to serve their own selfish ends. This is also wrong. Christian judgment faces one of its most demanding tasks when the performance of some opinion might injure a tender conscience, while its non-performance would be surrendering to pharisaic traditionalism and harm the cause of Christian liberty. This is sometimes the case in the Christian struggle to promote liberty and Christian unity at the same time.

It would not be fitting to end comments here without suggesting some areas in modern society where the Christian love Paul is calling for may be practiced along with decisions to resist legalism:

- a. Entertainment, pastimes (movies, television, games, hobbies).
- b. Foods (Jewish *kosher* foods; Roman Catholic taboos; use of alcoholic beverages—although the Bible does not *command* total abstinence, this principle of stumbling blocks would make total abstinence the safest practice).
- c. Cultural traditions (dress and grooming; worship traditions; some economic practices; political preferences).
- d. Vocations (if a Christian works at a vocation which might cause someone to stumble, shouldn't the Christian find another vocation?)

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APPLICATIONS:

1. Are there today articles or commodities or things used in or associated with ungodliness which might be neutral in themselves but injurious to a Christian's conscience? Name some.
2. Would Paul's instruction about things sacrificed to *idols* apply today in some foreign countries? Where? Why?
3. What should a Christian do in a foreign country where idols are worshiped?
4. If there are brethren in a congregation who seem to be *too* scrupulous about some things, what should the congregation do?
5. If there are brethren in a congregation who seem to be insensitive to other's scruples, what should the congregation do?
6. Would you classify yourself as "weak" or "strong"?
7. Where would you classify a Christian who thought attending movies was wrong? . . . Who thought playing cards was all right?
8. Do you think one Christian should give up *any* right he has just because another Christian *thinks* it is sinful?
9. Do you think Christian liberty is a threat to Christian unity?
10. Do you think the "weak" Christian brother is a threat to Christian unity?

APPREHENSIONS:

1. Why did some Christians *know* that an idol was not a god, and others did *not know*?
2. How pervasive was idolatry in ancient Corinth?
3. What kind of "knowledge" was Paul talking about?
4. Is it knowledge Paul objects to, or is it the misuse of knowledge?
5. How is knowledge to be used?
6. What is man's highest obligation?
7. What is the ultimate object of knowledge?
8. Who are the "strong"?
9. Who are the "weak"?
10. Why do some Christians think an idol is really a god?
11. Would a Christian who knows an idol is not a god be superior in his spirituality in the eyes of God?
12. How serious is it to do something that causes a weaker brother to feel guilty?
13. When would a strong Christian be obligated to resist the demands of a weaker brother?
14. In what areas of modern life does Paul's principle of liberty versus love apply?