

Freedom & Love

Hope Chapel Tokorozawa

1Corinthians 8:1-13

“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? And so by your knowledge this weak person is destroyed, the brother for whom Christ died. Thus, sinning against your brothers and wounding their conscience when it is weak, you sin against Christ.” (1Corinthians 8:10-12, ESV)

Introduction

Before Christ redeemed believers from sin and death, believers were taught to maintain a righteous standing and relationship with God through offering various kinds of sacrifices and obeying various laws regarding personal relationships, cleanliness and diet. But once Christ died on the cross, righteousness was obtained by faith in Christ's sacrifice and not by one's efforts to make sacrifices and keep laws. However, freedom from sin and death is not the same as freedom from our debt of love to God and one another. God continues to hold us responsible to love God and to love one another as He has loved us.

1. While we cannot know everything, we can choose to love God. (1-6)

a) Some Corinthians believed that knowledge of the One True God alone would save them.

b) But Paul argued that obedience to God's commands to love Him and neighbor was vital.

2. We should love God and the believers with our freedom. (7-12)

a) While all believers have the same knowledge, remember that love is what is important.

b) When we cause someone to fall into temptation or sin, we have sinned against Christ.

3. We were freed from sin that we might live in love and righteousness. (13)

a) We have a responsibility to build up one another in the faith and not tear them down.

b) Neither liberty, nor pleasure, nor convenience, but love should be our motive in all.

For our prayerful study, discussion and application

1) Why did Paul begin this discussion in verses 1-6 by contrasting love with knowledge?

2) What does Paul mean in verses 10-11?

3) Compare 1Corinthians 8:9-12 with Romans 14:14-23. How should we apply this?

Conclusion

Paul's argument here is not that the abuse of our freedom may cause a believer to lose their salvation but that to choose not to love one another is to choose to sin against Christ.

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