

## 1 Corinthians 10:14-11:1

**One Point: As Christians, we shouldn't use our freedom to get as close to sin as possible, but we should use our freedom to get as far away from sin as possible.**

This passage mirrors Ch. 8: 4-12

Verse 14

Earlier in 1 Corinthians we heard "flee from sexual immorality." We are to treat association with false Gods the same as we treat association with sexual promiscuity.

Verse 15

Put on your thinking caps

Verses 16-17

When we take the Lord's Supper, we go as far to say we participate with him, and in communion with those who worship him. Eating the "Feast of Christ" is an act of association.

1 Corinthians 1:9, "we participate with the Son, Jesus Christ."

2 Corinthians 2:13, "we participate with the Spirit."

2 Corinthians 8:4, "we participate in the relief of the ministry."

Philippians 3:10, "that I may know him and the power of his resurrection, and may share his sufferings, becoming like him in his death" – connects to sharing in the communion (bread, breaking of body; wine, blood death) when we partake in communion we participate in the death of Christ.

Verse 18

Jewish worship and customs were a good example of this premise - the Jews who ate of the sacrificed meats were putting themselves under the forgiveness of those sacrifices, and were surely worshiping the God to whom those sacrifices were offered. Joining in the eating of food sacrificed to a false God knowingly and willingly makes one guilty of worshiping that idol.

The faulty idea with this association was that it was purely physical when someone joined their pagan friends in feasts to idols. There was no spiritual association with the act, just a way to get free food! Paul rebuts that thought, saying that association in feasting is equivalent to worship.

Verses 19-21

The food itself was not an issue – whether clean to the Jews or unclean. Paul says that any food is really clean to eat in itself. And the idol itself is not threatening to God. Hanging out with friends

who worship idols isn't necessarily bad. But joining them in eating food sacrificed to idols as worship is joining demons in dark places – false worship.

#### Verse 22

And doing so causes the Lord to be jealous. Zechariah 8:2 says "I am jealous for Zion with great jealousy, and I am jealous for her with great wrath." Matthew Henry says "It is a dangerous thing to provoke God's anger, unless we could withstand his power. Shall we arouse the Almighty wrath? Are we a match for God?" Paul says in verse 22, "Are we stronger than he?"

The Bible is full of examples of God dealing with idolaters. If you want to know the outcome of those people, read Deuteronomy 7, 16, 17, Jeremiah 17, 25, Revelation 21, 22. Paul's advice to the Corinthians is the same as John's as he ends his 1<sup>st</sup> letter: "Little children, keep yourselves from idols."

#### Verse 23

Same claim of the Corinthians quoted by Paul from Chapter 6, verse 9 "All things are lawful for me." And Paul answers the same way. "But not all things are helpful." This time he adds, "not all things build up."

#### Verse 24

Paul tells us that the point of Christian life is not to skate by, but to build other up.

#### Verse 25

When you are shopping at the grocery store, you don't have to be as scrupulous as to ask the butcher whether or not the meat he's selling has been offered to idols. If you aren't joining in the worship, you aren't provoking God to jealousy.

#### Verse 26

Animal meat was okayed by God for us to eat. Like he said in verse 19, the food was not evil.

#### Verse 27

A similar example: if you're at a friend's house- even if you know they tend to join in idol worship – you can eat what they give you without provoking God to jealousy, as long as you aren't joining in the worshipful feast, but just casually having dinner.

#### Verse 28

But if another Christian or non-Christian raises the question about whether or not the meat has been offered to idols, THEY obviously have a problem with it by their conscience. And if someone else has a problem with the eating of food offered to sacrifice – then you should join them in their caution and forgo eating the questionable food. Chapter 8:10-13 says, "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. Therefore, if food makes my brother stumble, I will never eat meat, lest I make my brother stumble.”

Verses 29-30

If a brother isn't with you who has a problem with the meat, then you should feel free to enjoy that food for which you are thankful and God provides. But as soon as it affects another's conscience, your liberty in Christ is restricted – or rather, you are free to build him up, not tear him down.

Verse 31

This principle carries over to all aspects of life – drinking alcohol (without getting drunk)... When we were on a camping trip, I wanted to go in the restricted area but the others in the group felt it was wrong because of the sign saying the water was off-limits. I thought since we weren't going in the water, we were fine to go around the chained stanchion. But I stayed with the group and didn't try to persuade them when their conscience told them not to go passed the stanchions.

Verses 32-33

Do this around non-believers too, as possible. If they think something is morally wrong, don't partake in it, as to show them that you serve God, and to not turn them off as immoral.

Verse 1

Paul wants the followers of Jesus to imitate Him, not blindly, but as much as he imitates Jesus – so as to honor Jesus himself. Philippians 2:5 “Have this mind among yourselves, which is yours in Christ Jesus”

You may technically be allowed to do something, but your freedom may be restricted under two conditions:

- 1) How it affects me
- 2) How it affects others

How it affects me

10:12 “Therefore let anyone who thinks that he stands take heed, lest he fall.”

You can think you're alright. You can run your liberty out to the edge, but you might be in trouble.

**The correct question of Christian life isn't “How close can my freedom let me come to the line?” but “How far away can my freedom allow me to flee from the line?”**

### How it affects others

How did Christ act? What was Christ's mentality when it came to the holiness of His church? Did he care about his own holiness and forget about the holiness of the others? NO! He gave up his own holiness! He yielded away his perfect relationship and communion with the Father in order to make his church clean and free from sin!

**The correct attempt of Christian living is not just to look out for our own selves, our own holiness, but for the holiness of our brothers and sisters.**