



1 Corinthians 10:14-33_Final Arguments against Idolatry

April 6, 2014

Text: 1 Corinthians 10:14-33

- Having now written quite a bit to the Corinthian church concerning their idolatrous and prideful ways, Paul begins to sum up this particular part of his teaching to them.
- These verses are readily understandable and clear. Let us take them as such...

1Co 10:14-33

(14) Therefore, my beloved, flee from idolatry.

- Now having understood that knowledge without love puffs up (8:1), that “rights” should not be allowed to be stumbling blocks to the weak (8:9), that such idolatry is sin against Christ and other Christians (8:12), that sometimes we are called to surrender rights for greater purposes (pretty much all of chapter 9), that we are called to discipline (9:24-27), and that the history of God’s people is riddled with the destruction that idolatry brings (10:1-11)...whew!
- FLEE Idolatry! Run! Get as far away as possible from setting anything or anyone above Christ!

(15) I speak as to sensible people; judge for yourselves what I say.

- *1Co 10:15 CEV* I am speaking to you as people who have enough sense to know what I am talking about. (LOL!)
- There may in fact be some sarcasm in this verse since the Corinthians thought they were so smart.... ☺ But let’s take this exhortation as it is. Let the preacher present truth, and trust God to convince the hearer!
- *“It is no dishonour to an inspired teacher, nor disadvantage to his argument, to appeal for the truth of it to the reason and consciences of his hearers. It comes upon them with the greater force when it comes with this conviction. Paul, an inspired apostle, would yet, in some cases, leave it with the Corinthians to judge whether what he taught was not conformable to their own light and sense.”* Matthew Henry

(16) The cup of blessing that we bless, is it not a participation in the blood of Christ? The bread that we break, is it not a participation in the body of Christ? (17) Because there is one bread, we who are many are one body, for we all partake of the one bread. (18) Consider the people of Israel: are not those who eat the sacrifices participants in the altar?

- Paul appeals to the magnificence of the Lord’s Supper! He is drawing a clear line of **distinction** between that which is godly and that which is not.
- By referencing the Blood and Body of Christ...in other words the basis of the Gospel...he sets up a devastating argument:
- **Truth Christians are in “participation” (Gr. Koinōnia) or communion and fellowship with Christ! Are participation should only be in “one bread” with “one body.” All who partake of the Table should be Christ’s, and belong to no one else!**

(19) What do I imply then? That food offered to idols is anything, or that an idol is anything? (20) No, I imply that what pagans sacrifice they offer to demons and not to God. I do not want you to be participants with demons.

- So it really isn’t about the food; it’s not about the **worship**. It’s about the fight behind the fight.
- We must understand that any form of idolatry, if followed to the end, will honor flesh, the world, and ultimately the devil.

- This is serious business church. There is no **neutrality**....
- *Mat 12:30 ESV Whoever is not with me is against me, and whoever does not gather with me scatters.*
- There is no such thing as innocent paganism, innocent humanism, or innocent pluralism. There are no neutral sins. I believe that certain things can be redeemed, but that redemption comes through Christ....
- **Jesus is Savior, Lord, and King. Any declaration other than that leads to the demonic.**
- *Eph 6:12 ESV For we do not wrestle against flesh and blood, but against the rulers, against the authorities, against the cosmic powers over this present darkness, against the spiritual forces of evil in the heavenly places.*
- *2Co 4:3-5 ESV And even if our gospel is veiled, it is veiled only to those who are perishing. (4) In their case the god of this world has blinded the minds of the unbelievers, to keep them from seeing the light of the gospel of the glory of Christ, who is the image of God. (5) For what we proclaim is not ourselves, but Jesus Christ as Lord, with ourselves as your servants for Jesus' sake.*

Let me ask you a question: Do you want to be participants with demons?

(21) *You cannot drink the cup of the Lord and the cup of demons. You cannot partake of the table of the Lord and the table of demons.*

- Choose! ☺
- Get the gist of Paul's argument to this prideful group: *yes the food is nothing and the idol is in and of itself is nothing, but that is no excuse to worship a **demon!***
- He's saying that the Christian's fellowship is with Christ not devils, and to knowingly be involved in devil worship is a great sin!
- How might we apply the same wisdom in our cultural battles?
- Look at current constructs that look and sound ok to most people. Look at our entertainment, education, worldview, money handling, views on social issues, etc.
- If we look carefully and soberly, we might find many places where we are sitting with pagans at a demon feast saying, "Pass me a rib and some sauce!" And the results (fruit) will show that.
- Are we willing to take a **peek** behind what we are defending?

(22) *Shall we provoke the Lord to jealousy? Are we stronger than he?*

- Remember the many examples Paul listed for their remembrance (10:1-11). In those examples, the Lord was provoked to jealousy, and terrible prices were paid. Thousands died.
- Now on this side of the Cross, we walk in **grace** and **love** yet we still must never spurn the Son of God, trample the Blood of the Covenant or outrage the Spirit of Grace! (Heb 10:29)

(23) *"All things are lawful," but not all things are helpful. "All things are lawful," but not all things build up.*

- The quotes here and in 1 Corinthians 6:12 around this phrase may indicate that Paul is actually dealing with a slogan or mantra popular in Corinth. In other words, the "It's yo thang, do what you want to do" of their day. Or more updated for 2014, "Do you, cause I'm doin me." LOL!
- If so, Paul is debunking the slogan! "All" things are not lawful as we know! And even if something is lawful, if it hurts a brother or sister, it certainly hasn't built up.
- Christian liberty isn't base in sin but rather in what is helpful according to Scripture.

(24) *Let no one seek his own good, but the good of his neighbor.*

- Christian liberty is also based in putting others before one's self. Let's not mistake prideful or fleshly impulses for liberty.

(25) Eat whatever is sold in the meat market without raising any question on the ground of conscience.

(26) For "the earth is the Lord's, and the fullness thereof." (27) If one of the unbelievers invites you

to dinner and you are disposed to go, eat whatever is set before you without raising any question on

the ground of conscience. (28) But if someone says to you, "This has been offered in sacrifice," then

do not eat it, for the sake of the one who informed you, and for the sake of conscience--(29) I do not

mean your conscience, but his. For why should my liberty be determined by someone else's

conscience? (30) If I partake with thankfulness, why am I denounced because of that for which I give thanks?

- Bringing a wonderful balance, Paul writes specifically concerning the eating of meat in normal circumstances (as opposed to pagan temple worship) to shop as normal. No reason to walk around paranoid!
- Go to dinner! Eat and be a blessing to an unbeliever as opposed to bringing an unnecessary offense when their lives are at stake!
- HOWEVER, be **wise** concerning other's consciences. When notified of an issue, particularly by a weaker Christian, better to potentially offend an unbeliever than injure another's walk with Christ above your own rights.

(31) So, whether you eat or drink, or whatever you do, do all to the glory of God.

- The Scripture sums up the whole line of reasoning. Essentially, remember *Soli Deo Gloria* (God's glory alone!) and you'll do well in tricky ethical situations!

(32) Give no offense to Jews or to Greeks or to the church of God, (33) just as I try to please everyone in everything I do, not seeking my own advantage, but that of many, that they may be saved.

- Since we know that the Gospel itself is an **offense**....

1Co 1:18 ESV For the word of the cross is folly to those who are perishing, but to us who are being saved it is the power of God.

Gal 5:11 ESV But if I, brothers, still preach circumcision, why am I still being persecuted? In that case the offense of the cross has been removed.

- We are not to offend unnecessarily. Though our first duty is to please Christ....

Gal 1:10 ESV For am I now seeking the approval of man, or of God? Or am I trying to please man? If I were still trying to please man, I would not be a servant of Christ.

1Th 2:4 ESV but just as we have been approved by God to be entrusted with the gospel, so we speak, not to please man, but to please God who tests our hearts.

- ...We must also attempt to walk in peace and love.

2Ti 2:24-26 ESV And the Lord's servant must not be quarrelsome but kind to everyone, able to teach, patiently enduring evil, (25) correcting his opponents with gentleness. God may perhaps grant them repentance leading to a knowledge of the truth, (26) and they may come to their senses and escape from the snare of the devil, after being captured by him to do his will.

Heb 12:14 ESV Strive for peace with everyone, and for the holiness without which no one will see the

Lord.

1Th 5:15 ESV See that no one repays anyone evil for evil, but always seek to do good to one another and to everyone.

- It's a delicate balance.
Let us as a church, try to walk that balance in the power of Jesus Christ, and may we flee, QUICKLY, from any form of idolatry...
- **for the glory of our King.**

Amen.